Quine: Before and After the Commitment to Naturalism

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Abstract

There is little in Quine's philosophy that is more significant and more puzzling than his commitment to naturalism. On the one hand, naturalism seems to play an unparalleled role in explaining the development and unorthodox nature of Quine's views. On the other hand, however, naturalism is deeply elusive. Not only is there disagreement amongst commentators about how to understand the nature and development of naturalism, but also Quine's own characterisations of naturalism are often thinly sketched and leave us with few clues as to how we should understand naturalism and its origins. In light of these reasons, it is a significant challenge to arrive at an accurate picture of what naturalism amounts to and how it fits into Quine's philosophical development.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an analysis of Quine's commitment to naturalism, and to highlight the ways in which this analysis illuminates the surrounding landscape of his philosophical views. Here, I endeavour to show that careful analysis into what Quine's commitment to naturalism amounts to establishes that this commitment is not as longstanding as is often thought. More specifically, I argue that Quine is not committed to naturalism until shortly after 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism', and this reveals that Quine's philosophical work cannot be felicitously understood as revolving around a stable commitment to naturalism. Having established this, I then explain the ways in which this analysis informs a thorough interpretation of several vital aspects of his thought, such as the development of his attitude towards analyticity, and his sustained commitment to empiricism. I believe that these findings motivate and lay the foundations of a cautious and appropriately nuanced understanding of Quine.

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I confirm that this thesis is my own work and that I have: (i) read and understood the University of Glasgow Statement on Plagiarism, (ii) clearly referenced, in both text and the bibliography or references, all sources used in the work; (iii) fully referenced (including page numbers) and used inverted commas for all text quoted from books, journals, web, etc.; (iv) provided the sources for all tables, figures, data, etc. that are not my own work; (v) not made use of the works of any other student(s) past or present without acknowledgement. This includes any of my own works, that has been previously, or concurrently, submitted for assessment, either at this or any other educational institution; (vi) not sought or used the services of any professional agencies to produce this work; (vii) in addition, I understand that any false claim in respect of this work will result in disciplinary action in accordance with University regulations.

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Introduction

> Names of philosophical positions are a necessary evil. They are necessary because we need to refer to a stated position or doctrine from time to time, and it would be tiresome to keep restating it. They are evil in that they come to be conceived as designating schools of thought, objects of loyalty from within and objects of obloquy from without, and hence obstacles, within and without, to the pursuit of truth.[1]

> There is a key to unlocking a correct interpretation of Quine which many of his critics and commentators have overlooked. That key is Quine's commitment to naturalism.[2]

Amongst the many puzzles associated with the philosophy of W.V. Quine, one stands out due to its complexity, centrality, and importance: the problem of Quine's naturalism. On the one hand, naturalism plays an unparalleled role in explaining the development and unorthodox nature of Quine's views, but on the other, naturalism is deeply elusive. Commentators often diverge widely in their interpretations of what naturalism amounts to and how it develops in Quine's philosophy, and some don't even acknowledge its presence at all. Moreover, Quine himself, with his penchant for precise but poetic language over the prosaic, often characterises naturalism in ways that seem to differ subtly from each other and that leave us with few clues about how naturalism was brought into the world. It is therefore a major challenge to arrive at an accurate picture of what naturalism amounts to and how it fits into Quine's philosophical development.

The purpose of this thesis is to provide an analysis of Quine's commitment to naturalism, and to highlight the ways in which this analysis illuminates the surrounding landscape of his philosophical views.[3] Here, I argue that Quine's naturalism amounts to a substantial view on the nature of philosophical inquiry that casts a light on a number of often dimly lit aspects of and developments in his thought. Namely, I argue that Quine's naturalism is not as longstanding a commitment as is often thought, i.e. that Quine is not committed to naturalism

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[1] Quine, W.V. 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.461. Henceforth, I suppress the name of the author when it's Quine.
[2] Gibson, R. 1992. p.17
[3] For a similar approach, see Verhaegh, S. 2018

until shortly after his monumental paper 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism' (1951).[4] This prompts a more careful understanding of both the nature of Quine's overall view — since it cannot always be viewed as naturalistic — and the development of his naturalism. By providing a careful examination of Quine's commitment to naturalism, which consequently informs a thorough interpretation of the development of Quine's philosophical thought, I aim to lay the foundations for a more nuanced and cautious understanding of his work.

In this introduction, I contextualise and motivate my project by identifying a number of important and directly related problems; problems which make addressing the puzzle of eliciting Quine's naturalism difficult but vital for understanding his philosophy, as well as his place in the history of philosophy. There is no clear consensus over what naturalism is, but roughly, it encompasses a family of views that emphasise some form of continuity between philosophy and science. Precisely how we should understand Quine's naturalism will be made clear in Chapter 1.

Let me begin by surveying briefly the different uses of the term 'naturalism' in recent philosophy and some associated problems, as well as indicating ways in which Quine figures into this landscape. Getting a clear and accurate picture of naturalism is crucial not just in gaining a better understanding of the evolution of analytic philosophy and one of its key figures, but it is especially important today where naturalism seems to be the prominent metaphilosophy, or at least the prominent methodological approach to philosophy. As Hacker claims, naturalism is supposedly "*the* distinctive development in philosophy over the last thirty years."[5] This claim is from a little over ten years ago, but times have not changed. Glock describes Quine's stress on the continuity between science and philosophy as the "orthodoxy".[6] And, as Foley stresses, naturalism is a movement that's spreading fast into each recess of philosophy.[7] Analytic philosophy itself is sometimes defined in terms of its respect for science, and so the naturalist, in pushing philosophy and science closer together, is in some sense the analytic philosopher *par excellence*.[8]

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[4] Hereafter I refer to this as 'Two Dogmas'.
[5] Hacker, P.M.S. 2006. p.231
[6] Glock, H. 2003. p.25. See De Caro, M. and Macarthur, D. 2004. pp.1-2
[7] Foley, R. 1994. p.243
[8] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.5 f11

Whatever naturalism amounts to, there seems to be universal acknowledgement from both naturalists and those reacting to naturalism that Quine is not only an important figure, but some sort of founder of the movement – at least for its contemporary incarnation. Hacker claims that "[c]ontemporary American naturalism originates in the writings of Quine".[9] Paul Churchland praises Quine for pushing the idea that philosophy and science are continuous and for helping to stop philosophers from relying on the method of armchair reflection.[10] Dreben stresses Quine's influence even more strongly, without restricting it to naturalism, writing: "Quine has set the terms in which an enormous amount of contemporary philosophy is done….hardly anyone…does not do theoretical philosophy in the terms that Quine has set."[11] Naturalism, then, is an immensely popular movement in philosophy, and Quine is often acknowledged to be an important figure in this movement.

However, while many philosophers stress that contemporary naturalists are following or are at least influenced by Quine, I want to stress that this is often very superficial, not least because it's poorly understood what Quine's naturalism is. Also, as has been well noted, it's unclear whether there's any way of giving a general characterisation of naturalism that does any sort of justice to most of the positions that are viewed as naturalistic. The idea that we can capture the essence of Quine's philosophy and see how well it aligns with his supposed present-day allies is too optimistic, or, at least, it underestimates the complexity (and perhaps even the determinacy) of the proposed task.

For a while, philosophers have become aware of just how problematic a label 'naturalism' is. Giedymin notes how different naturalism is from philosopher to philosopher:

> Naturalism in philosophy is by no means as simple a doctrine as it appears at first sight. Because of inherent ambiguities and because of the curious turns in its recent evolution, it is not really one coherent philosophical theory. When two naturalists say the same, they do not (necessarily) mean the same.[12]

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[9] Hacker, P.M.S. 2006. p.231. See De Caro, M. and Macarthur, D. 2004, p.8
[10] Churchland, P. 1986. pp.2-3
[11] Dreben, B. 1990. p.88
[12] Giedymin, J. 1972. p.45

The term is ambiguous (perhaps inherently ambiguous) in that it refers to a number of distinct approaches to philosophy, and also distinct aspects of philosophy. For example, some view naturalism as a metaphilosophy while others instead view it as a methodological restriction.

In addition to its ambiguity, some have complained that naturalism is vague *by definition*. Indeed, it has even been argued that this vagueness is a constitutive feature of naturalism:

> …the idea is to make sure that our philosophical theories are compatible with science. Put roughly, *and it may be that it cannot be put any other way*, this means that in our philosophical theories we are to make use only of those properties that are either reducible to or supervene upon properties that science countenances.[13]

Moreover, as a further issue, naturalism is not new, nor is the appeal to natural investigation or objects. For this reason, viewing the naturalistic turn as a novel development, where Quine acts as a founder of the movement, also seems problematic. This is a point that has been raised strongly by Stroud:

> The idea of "nature," or "natural" objects or relations, or modes of investigation that are "naturalistic," has been applied more widely, at more different times and places, and for more different purposes, than probably any other notion in the whole history of human thought.[14]

Given worries like these, then, finding some common or essential feature of naturalistic views seems implausible. That being said, a number of philosophers seem to have had some success. For example, Giedymin thinks that naturalistic theories share "the claim that the method of natural science is the only legitimate or appropriate method to be used in attempting to acquire knowledge of whatever kind."[15] Although this seems to capture something minimal but generally accepted by naturalists, it's clear that naturalists differ widely over their specific views. Giedymin thinks that the reason for this disagreement is because this common principle, that the method of science is the only one we can use to get knowledge, is ambiguous in many ways. For example, naturalists disagree about what the

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[13] Foley, R. 1994. p.243. My emphasis.
[14] Stroud, B. 1996. p.43
[15] Giedymin, J. 1972. p.45

scientific method is and whether mathematics is to be included in science. For these reasons, using a general principle to understand the nature of naturalism instead ends up being "a matrix which generates widely divergent methodological programmes."[16] Quine is certainly no exception here; he has specific answers to all of these questions which gives him a very distinctive version of naturalism that differs in important ways from other naturalists.

We've seen that there are significant problems in finding a general characterisation of naturalism. But whatever naturalism signifies generally, one's own brand of naturalism is often presented as a methodological approach to philosophy, and so a spirit that embodies a philosopher and guides their answers to all questions from epistemology to ethics. However, in practice, we tend to see philosophers applying naturalism to specific areas of philosophy. This is one way in which Quine stands out because he has a deeply systematic approach, as I'll explain shortly.

Perhaps the most prominent area where naturalism has taken root is in epistemology, and Quine's influence here is often claimed to be foundational. Kim, for example, claims that Quine is the main influence cited by naturalists in epistemology, especially in stressing science's relevance to epistemology and in rejecting traditional approaches. Naturalists reject traditional epistemology as being an *a priori* subject.[17] It's vital, then, that we are clear about the nature and plausibility of Quine's naturalism to better understand not just the general position of naturalism, but also more particularly both Quine's actual influence on contemporary epistemology, as well as Quine's naturalised epistemology.

Beyond focussing on naturalism specifically, there is a lot of evidence that Quine's philosophy has been poorly understood. A common claim to find at the start of a serious and detailed interpretation of Quine is a statement that people are still not really clear on his views. For example, Kemp claims: "much of what is most powerful and deeply interesting in Quine is not widely understood…"[18] Similarly, philosophers often emphasise that the lack of an understanding about Quine's overall philosophy is an important reason for writing about

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[16] Ibid. pp.45-6
[17] Kim, J. 1988. p.385, pp.394-99. Kim doesn't think that epistemological naturalists tend to actually be Quinean, however, because Kim thinks that Quine eliminates normativity from epistemology whereas epistemological naturalists generally retain it.
[18] Kemp, G. 2006. ix

him. We see this in the introduction to Gibson's monograph *Enlightened Empiricism*: "[a] premise of this book, and a justification for its existence, is that Quine's philosophy is not well understood by most philosophers…"[19]

Indeed Quine, who has supposedly influenced the dominant view in contemporary philosophy the most, is viewed as putting forward sceptical, implausible and dismissive views in most areas of philosophy. The reason that most philosophers writing about Quine misunderstand his views is usually that Quine's deeply systematic approach to philosophy, his naturalism, is not appreciated.[20] While philosophers working thoroughly on Quine disagree about the nature of his naturalism, there is general agreement that Quine is a deeply systematic philosopher, that naturalism is Quine's systematic approach to philosophy,[21] and that this complex systematicity is a large part of what makes Quine's philosophy so difficult to understand.[22]

Indeed, part of the reason that Quine's philosophy is so poorly understood is because the nature of naturalism is so connected to Quine's views; views which are, often by themselves, difficult to grasp. The systematic nature of Quine's naturalism might be the key to understanding his philosophy, but this doesn't make clarity easy to obtain. Difficult and often radical views on specific philosophical issues which need to be understood in the context of an overall difficult and radical approach to philosophy make Quine's views especially challenging to decipher.[23]

A further reason that's often highlighted for explaining why Quine's philosophy is so poorly understood is the difficulty of his prose. Part of what makes Quine so impenetrable is that his writing is often very brief. The reason for this is that Quine tends to take time explaining things in detail only when he himself finds the point not obvious, or when enough people have failed to appreciate the point that Quine feels he has to set the record straight.[24] As

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[19] Gibson, R. 1988. xv
[20] See also Becker, E. 2012. ix
[21] Creath is an exception, claiming that pragmatism is a more basic commitment. Creath, R. 1990b. p.17
[22] See Gibson, R. 1988. xv-xvi. Glock, H. 2003. p.27. Kemp, G. 2012. p.15. Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.6-7. Hylton, P. 2007. p.2
[23] See Gregory, P. 2011. p.1
[24] See Ibid. Johnsen, B.C. 2005

Foley stresses: "[w]hen faced with the choice of expressing his views with great elegance or maximum clarity, he [Quine] rarely chooses the latter."[25]

A good place to see this problem is in the reviews of *Word and Object*, often taken to be Quine's most important monograph, especially in relation to naturalism.[26] Here we see the difficulty of Quine's prose leading to complaints from his audience. Oesterle, for example, claims that "what [Quine] finally avows is not wholly clear."[27] Wells claims that Quine's style is "very demanding", that "if the ship of science…is not merely to stay afloat but to sail, it should not drag anchor."[28] Quine, Wells claims, gives up rigour in favour of "fluency of exposition."[29] And Presley claims that Quine's prose "is sometimes condensed to the point of enigma."[30]

Quine was aware of this problem. He notes that while he tried to keep parts of *Word and Object* succinct, Dreben later told him that he went too far.[31] That being said, Quine's later work doesn't become drastically less concise, so even if Quine was aware of this problem, he didn't quite learn the lesson. It doesn't help that Quine's approach to writing often flouts the norms for what's usually expected in philosophical papers. Quine, especially after 1950, rarely mentions his contemporaries unless to reorient his own position against them. He doesn't, for example, present various views on a topic and then proceed to show why they are wrong before presenting his own solution to the problem.

With all of this in mind, then, here's the crux of the problem that this thesis will address. The lack of an understanding of naturalism (as evidenced by its ambiguity, vagueness, etc.) leads to significant issues when it comes to evaluating Quine's philosophy. For example, Gregory notes that many common objections against Quine, like that his view is circular, or that his epistemology isn't normative, "tend to be based on the very presuppositions concerning epistemology and human knowing that Quine is at pains to reject or alter" because of Quine's

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[25] Foley, R. 1994. p.245
[26] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.151-61
[27] Oesterle, J.A. 1961. p.119
[28] Wells, R. 1961. p.696
[29] Ibid. p.697
[30] Presley, C.F. 1961. p.175
[31] *Time of My Life*, p.34, p.44. 'Philosophy', p.42

naturalistic perspective.[32] More generally, Gibson argues that a number of common problems for Quine's philosophy only arise because people haven't appreciated the role of naturalism.[33] Because the nature of Quine's naturalism is not understood, and thereby not taken into account when explaining and evaluating his view, this means that Quine's position is viewed as being far less plausible than it would otherwise be and far more radical than is reasonable.[34] Given how important Quine's naturalism is to his later philosophical work, an authentic interpretation and evaluation of Quine's philosophy requires a proper understanding of his naturalism.

However, to be clear, it's not merely that the nature of naturalism is misunderstood. What makes things worse is that that the *development* of Quine's naturalism is poorly understood and appreciated, perhaps even more so than the nature of the view itself. It's only recently that the development of Quine's naturalism has started to be studied rigorously, especially in relation to Quine's earlier work.[35] Moreover, a related problem that Verhaegh stresses is that what's also missing is studies of how Quine's work was received by philosophers. This is part of a more general problem that analytic philosophy, as opposed to philosophy more generally, has tended to lack such studies. The fact that philosophers are beginning to pay attention to the history of Quine's views seems to be part of a more general move to see the history of analytic philosophy as valuable for analytic philosophy itself.[36] This is especially important for understanding Quine because his naturalism emerges out of his reaction to philosophers that he has some sort of kindred spirit with, especially Carnap.[37] It will be crucial throughout to look at how Quine interpreted Carnap, as well as other important philosophers for his development like Russell and Hume. It's this perspective, i.e. Quine's interpretation of these figures, that will be crucial for my views, for it is Quine's interpretation that is affecting his own philosophical position. Note that, in this pursuit, I'm not attempting to offer my own historical analysis or exposition of views like Carnap's.

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[32] Gregory, P. 2011. p.1
[33] Gibson, R. 1992.
[34] Quine appreciates this. He writes: "Gibson plausibly surmised that the major obstacle to understanding my position is a failure to take my commitment to naturalism seriously". 'Reply to Gibson', p.367
[35] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.79-80
[36] See Floyd, J. 2009. p.157
[37] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.4-5

So, there is a cluster of problems surrounding both the development and nature of Quine's naturalism and, more generally, concerning how we can pinpoint his location within the naturalist tradition. These problems show how important it is to understand the nature, the development, and the extent of Quine's naturalism. Here, by establishing that Quine's naturalistic perspective is absent in his earlier work, I aim to both provide an interpretation of Quine's pre-naturalistic views, as well identify ways in which these views relate to his later naturalistic position. Let me summarise how I will do so.

In Chapter 1, I argue that Quine was not always a naturalist. I do this by first motivating the idea that there is a tendency to view Quine as having been, at least to some significant extent, a naturalist very early in his work. I then provide a detailed characterisation of Quine's naturalism which shows naturalism to be a developed, nuanced and restrictive approach to philosophical inquiry. Naturalism is restrictive in that it requires the philosopher to always work within science and reject theorising that is first philosophical. I then argue that Quine's early work cannot felicitously be viewed as naturalistic because Quine is open to a form of phenomenalist theorising that would be prohibited by a naturalistic outlook until at least 1951. I conclude the chapter by examining Quine's later argument against phenomenalism. Doing so, I contend, provides evidence for the idea that the emergence of Quine's naturalism takes place soon after 1951.

In Chapter 2, I turn my attention to 'Two Dogmas'. This is often cited as *the* critical paper for Quine's move towards naturalism. However, I provide reasons that undermine the idea that Quine undergoes an important change in his perspective in this paper. The apparent conflict between these claims, I take it, prompts a more thorough analysis of Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' and the evolution of his philosophical thought leading up to it. To better understand the nature and significance of Quine's views on analyticity, including their relation to the development of naturalism, I undertake a careful investigation into the development of Quine's evolving attitude towards analyticity. This analysis reveals that Quine's views towards analyticity are multifaceted and that they develop in a subtle but natural way from fairly friendly optimism to bleak pessimism. That being said, I contend that Quine's view on the cusp of 'Two Dogmas' is not quite as negative as it would be in the paper. This is because it appears that Quine only pushes a holistic picture of inquiry directly against the root of the analytic/synthetic distinction, i.e. verificationism, from 'Two Dogmas' onwards. I end the chapter by providing some thoughts concerning the importance of 'Two Dogmas' for Quine's

development towards naturalism.

In Chapter 3, I endeavour to elucidate one of Quine's most notable philosophical commitments, i.e. his commitment to empiricism, in light of the above analysis of Quine's naturalism and the surrounding landscape of his pre-naturalistic views. To this end, I conduct a thorough investigation into the relationship between the forms of empiricism that are important to Quine. More precisely, in pursuit of explicating the distinctive nature of Quine's naturalized epistemology, I offer an analysis of the forms of empiricism that Quine both considers and engages with at different points in his development. I demonstrate that these views share a number of minimal but vital features, such that it seems fair to view them as forms of the same view, i.e. empiricism, as well as forms of empiricism that are occupied with the same sort of epistemological project. However, I argue that close inspection of these similarities shows that there are also a number of important differences between these empiricist views. This establishes that although a commitment to empiricism may be sustained throughout Quine's development, this can only true in a minimal way. I take these findings to prompt a more nuanced understanding of Quine's empiricism.

Chapter 1
The Limits of Quine's Naturalism

1.1 Chapter Introduction

In this Chapter, I argue that Quine was not always a naturalist. Naturalism, as I'll explain, is a developed, nuanced, and deeply restrictive approach to philosophy in that it involves an in-principle rejection of first philosophy, and a stress on the fact that we begin and remain theorising within science. I establish the fact that Quine, until approximately 1952, was open to ways of theorising that qualify as first philosophical, and so would be prohibited by naturalism. From 1952, Quine's perspective changes in such a way that he comes to reject theorising that attempts to transcend science as illegitimate. This difference in outlook represents Quine's development to a perspective that is naturalistic. Crucially, however, before this change takes place, Quine cannot be viewed as a naturalist.

Recall from the Introduction that something distinctive about Quine's philosophy is the deeply systematic approach he has, and that this system is often taken to be his naturalism. As many commentators have emphasised, getting a stable grasp of Quine's naturalism is very difficult, and one of the most effective ways to do so is to see how Quine puts his methodology to use. For example, one might look at how Quine naturalistically approaches philosophical issues like meaning, or how he naturalizes an area like epistemology.[38] Naturalism, as the supposedly universal and systematic core of Quine's philosophical output, performs a significant role in the literature in explaining Quine's overall philosophy, and in supposedly influencing contemporary naturalists.[39] Part of the reason that my interpretation is important is that if many of the moves we think of as being distinctly Quinean cannot be the result of Quine's naturalism, since Quine makes those moves in work before he can be described felicitously as a naturalist, then this affects how we ought to explain the scope and nature of naturalism itself, and so how we ought to understand Quine's overall philosophy. My interpretation requires that we read Quine in a different and more complex light.

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[38] This is the motivation behind Hylton, P. 2007. See esp. pp.1-2. See also Kemp, G. 2010. p.292

[39] Gibson even claims: "…Quine's philosophy is nothing if not naturalistic!" Gibson, R. 1988. p.23

This is especially important not just for the light that it shines on the development of Quine's naturalism and the nature of Quine's view, but also because there is a trend to see Quine's commitment to naturalism as extending back into his earlier work. Quine's naturalism is often read as either one of his earliest philosophical commitments, or as something that takes root early and then emerges more visible and strongly as his philosophical output continues. The argument in this chapter directly challenges this common reading of Quine's view and argues that this picture is too simplistic, given that Quine's early work lacks a commitment to naturalism. Let me explain how I will do this.

In §1.2, I motivate the idea that while Quine's early work doesn't contain the term 'naturalism', it is still generally considered to be naturalistic. I do this by highlighting interpretations of Quine's view that claim his very early work was, at least to some degree, naturalistic. I also provide evidence for the idea that understanding the nature of Quine's early work, and the development of his naturalism, is a difficult task. Notably, this evidence includes the fact that Quine's reflections on the development of naturalism are not particularly clear.

§1.3 provides a thorough characterisation of Quine's naturalism. This is required to appreciate that naturalism is not only a nuanced and developed approach, but that it's also a deeply restrictive one. Appreciating this will allow us to see that there is a time in which Quine lacks such a view. I start by examining the ways in which Quine characterises naturalism, and then highlight two elusive strands that seem vital to his view: (i) the idea that we begin and remain working within our ongoing scientific theory when investigating the world, and (ii) a rejection of first philosophy. Following this, I clarify these two aspects of Quine's naturalism. I then look at Quine's conception of science in detail. Quine's conception of science is distinctive, but I argue that properly understanding naturalism requires grasping the esoteric notion of science that is at the centre of it.

Finally, having established that Quine's early work is often considered to be naturalistic, and having characterised the vital aspects of Quine's naturalism, §1.4 then argues that Quine was, in fact, *not* always a naturalist. I do so by, first, establishing that, in his early work, Quine was open to a form of theorising that would qualify as first philosophical, namely, a form of phenomenalist theorising. Given that first philosophical theorising is prohibited by naturalism, then, this openness shows that his early work cannot be felicitously considered to

be naturalistic. I then conclude this section, and Chapter 1, by examining the eventual change in attitude that Quine displays towards phenomenalist theorising in his later work (i.e. as an approximation, from 1952 onwards). This change in attitude, I take it, is indicative of Quine's development into a view that *is* naturalistic.

1.2 Implicit Naturalism

Quine is best known for his work after 1948, with the publication of 'On What There Is', and especially from 1951 onwards, with the emergence of 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism'. In 1960, we have another landmark, *Word and Object*, where we see Quine's naturalism come into full bloom. It is around this point and beyond that the philosophical focus of Quine's work is most often appreciated. Yet Quine's daunting output of publications began far earlier than this. While Quine introduces the term 'naturalism' into his work in the late 1960s, it's almost universally acknowledged, or tacitly presupposed, that the introduction of the term in Quine's work doesn't represent a substantial change in attitude; rather, it gives a name to something implicit in his earlier work. In this section, I motivate the idea that while Quine's early work doesn't contain the term 'naturalism', it is still generally considered to be naturalistic. I do this by highlighting a number of interpretations of Quine's view that claim Quine's early work was to some degree naturalistic. In placing Quine's naturalistic conversion roughly in 1952, as I will argue in §1.4, I agree broadly with this idea. However, philosophers often stretch naturalism back much earlier than this. It is therefore important to demonstrate this general trend in interpreting Quine to appreciate the significance of the overall argument in this chapter. I also explain some reasons that make understanding the development of Quine's naturalism difficult.

Interpretations of Quine's early work (i.e. before 1952) as naturalistic fit into a more general problem of reading Quine's mature views into his early work. A number of philosophers have highlighted this phenomenon. For example, Creath argues that philosophers tend to read Quine's stronger views on analyticity into 'Truth by Convention'.[40] Hylton highlights a problem with reading Quine as a holist in the Carnap lectures and 'Truth by Convention'.[41]

[40] Creath, R. 1987. p.486
[41] Hylton, P. 2001. pp.269-70.

Doing so, Hylton claims, makes Quine appear to have a substantive epistemology to account for logic and mathematics which he doesn't actually have. Similarly, Verhaegh argues that we tend to read Quine's epistemology as more developed in 'Two Dogmas' than it really is.[42]

Returning to the specific instance of reading naturalism into Quine's early work, it is often unclear *how* far back in Quine's work naturalism is meant to extend. Kemp suggests, in line with Hylton, that 1951's 'Two Dogmas' plays a crucial role in Quine's development towards naturalism:

> Naturalism did not make its explicit appearance in Quine's philosophy until mid-way in 'Epistemology Naturalized'…. But this was only the culmination of tendencies present in his earlier work, including…'Two Dogmas of Empiricism'…It was not in any substantive sense a *change* in the direction of his thinking so much as an increased self-consciousness and confidence in what was suggested by his criticism of Carnap – which actually dates from 1933…[43]

On Kemp's view, what's crucial for Quine's development towards naturalism is both his views in 'Two Dogmas' and how they trace back to worries he had much earlier. What ties these pieces together are worries about Carnap's project, especially his use of analyticity. I'll save an examination for the precise role of Quine's worries about analyticity for Chapter 2. However, for now, it's worth stressing that Kemp traces Quine's naturalism, in some sense, as far back as 1933. Similarly, Creath traces Quine's naturalism in "embryonic form" to the same year.[44]

As a further example of this, Isaac seems to read Quine's early work as naturalistic. Isaac claims that: "[t]he basic tenets of Quine's mature thought set in early in his studies."[45] Isaac thinks that Quine's early work views philosophy as part of science, and science as the main

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[42] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.98
[43] Kemp, G. 2010. p.284. He links this to Hylton, P. 2007. p.1
[44] Creath, R. 1990b. pp.28-9
[45] Isaac, J. 2005. p.205. Emphasis removed. Dreben has a similar view, though he doesn't mention naturalism explicitly. He claims that Quine's dissertation displays "the deepest philosophical impulses that have characterized and governed Quine to this very day." According to Dreben, Quine's more famous views then evolve out of this attitude already present in Quine's thesis. Dreben, B. 1990. p.81

way of gaining knowledge about the world. Here we have something like a trademark of naturalism. The way in which Quine's early work is naturalistic is seen in Isaac's reading of Quine's empiricism. Isaac emphasises the role that naturalism plays in validating Quine's empiricism—empiricism is a discovery made within science—and he thinks that this applies to Quine's early view too.[46] On this topic, Chapter 3 will look at the contrast between Quine's pre-naturalistic and naturalistic views towards empiricism. For now, however, it's important to stress that Isaac is committed to attaching this naturalistic attitude to early Quine when he argues that Quine's naturalistic empiricism provided a basis for Quine to extrapolate the following:

> …his famous doctrines: meaning holism, radical translation, underdetermination of scientific theory, and ontological relativity. Each can be taken as an instance of the broader philosophical enterprise that Quine called "naturalized epistemology." Such were the doctrines towards which Quine was moving as he made this way through college, graduate school, and the early stages of his academic career.[47]

Like with Kemp and Creath's readings, we have a picture where the early Quine is in some sense moving towards being fully naturalistic, but where the seeds of naturalism are already sown in some substantial sense.

We also see that Isaac reads Quine's early work as naturalistic when he claims that Quine's problem with *Principia Mathematica* was the reliance it had on a metamathematical solution to the paradoxes of membership rather than a definitional one. This is described as a problem "[f]or a naturalist like Quine" and this is a problem Quine grappled with as a graduate student.[48] In this reading, Isaac presents a more direct interpretation of Quine's early work as naturalistic, rather than a reading where Quine is moving towards being fully or more naturalistic.

Moreover, Ebbs also sees Quine's early work as naturalistic. He thinks that Quine's arguments against convention are naturalistic, and these are some of Quine's first philosophical views to appear in print. Ebbs writes:

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[46] Ibid. pp.211-12
[47] Ibid
[48] Ibid. pp.227-28

> Quine's criticisms of the thesis that logic is true by convention are not directed against a truth-by-convention thesis that Carnap actually held, but are part of Quine's own project of articulating the consequences of his scientific naturalism. Quine found that logic is not true by convention in any naturalistically acceptable sense.[49]

On Ebbs' reading, the standard interpretation of Quine's arguments against convention, i.e. where Quine is criticising Carnap's view that logic is true by convention, not only gets Carnap wrong, but rather it involves Quine arguing against a view of Carnap's that Quine was aware Carnap didn't hold. Instead, Quine is assessing the idea that logic is true by convention from a naturalistic perspective.

Similarly, Verhaegh seems to characterise naturalism as an implicit commitment throughout Quine's early work. Verhaegh writes: "[i]n the first forty years of his philosophical career, his [Quine's] naturalistic commitments were largely implicit".[50] However, Verhaegh rejects the idea that Quine was *fully* naturalistic in this period: "[Quine] did not adopt a fully naturalistic perspective until the mid-1950s."[51] And, sitting somewhere between these claims, he writes: "[Quine's] views were already *fairly* naturalistic in the early 1940s".[52]

Exactly what counts as not being fully naturalistic is unclear. And the claim that Quine's "naturalistic commitments were largely implicit" isn't as strong as reading Quine as a fully flourished naturalist from the beginning, but a reading like this puts some emphasis on there being naturalistic aspects to Quine's early work. Verhaegh's reading is similar to Kemp and Creath's in this respect. Moreover, this type of reading goes against my view because, as I'll explain in §1.4.3, naturalism isn't something that admits of degrees for Quine. It constitutes a strict constraint that Quine's early work lacks; one either is a naturalist or not.

Indeed, perhaps we don't even need to turn to a Quine scholar for evidence of Quine's early view being naturalistic. Quine himself says something to similar effect:

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[49] Ebbs, G. 2011. p.193
[50] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.7
[51] Ibid. p.11
[52] Ibid. p.12. My emphasis. Similarly, Verhaegh claims that an earlier book Quine was working on in the early 1940s was "naturalistic in many respects". p.81

> 'Two Dogmas' is occasionally quoted for my depiction of [t]he totality of our so-called knowledge or beliefs…[as] a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only along its edges.…Clearly my metaphor needed unpacking, and that was largely my concern in the ten years between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object*. Becoming more consciously and explicitly naturalistic, I stiffened up my flabby reference to 'experience' by turning to our physical interface with the external world…[53]

Now, Quine's comments here are less clearly an admission of being naturalistic in his earlier work than what, say, Ebbs claims. It could be that Quine means that naturalism takes root in 'Two Dogmas' and then emerges "more consciously and explicitly" as we approach *Word and Object*, but that it's not part of his view before then (this is roughly in line with my view), or it could mean that the naturalism was present in some form in his work before 1951, and it's in 'Two Dogmas' that it emerges "consciously and explicitly". This idea is found, we saw above, in Kemp's reading of Quine's development.

This is one of the many reasons that this problem is so difficult to answer; nowhere does Quine clearly and explicitly say when his naturalism first emerged, or whether it was a commitment he already held before important developments in his view, like his problems with analyticity, emerge. This is in noticeable contrast with other central commitments Quine has, e.g. to extensionality and empiricism, where he is proud of such commitments and stresses their roots.[54]

A related problem that makes it difficult to understand the nature of Quine's early views and their relation to his later naturalistic view is that with a few exceptions (for example, nominalism and empiricism) Quine doesn't identify with any particular 'ism-views' there. As Verhaegh has shown, Quine was reluctant to identify with ism-views because he felt that he had more questions than answers, at least in 1938.[55] Adopting ism-views is something that Quine somewhat reluctantly confesses to in his later work; they are

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[53] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.398
[54] See, for example, 'Confessions of a Confirmed Extensionalist'. 'Five Milestones of Empiricism'
[55] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.154-55

described as "a necessary evil".[56] Pragmatically ism-views help recall to our mind views that we're familiar with, but, at the same time, they suggest shared allegiances and prejudices which can be deeply misleading.[57]

The fact that one of Quine's few identifications with an ism-term in his early work, 'nominalism', led to problematic interpretations of him as a strict nominalist couldn't have given him much confidence in adopting further labels.[58] And in relation to empiricism, which might seem like an easy view to attribute to Quine, I'll explain in Chapter 3 that applying the label to Quine's overall philosophy is liable to give a much too simplistic picture of his development. Interpreting the early Quine as falling within a broad position, then, is often done with this hurdle (i.e. his reluctance to adopt any informative ism-views) in place.

On the face of it, this seems significant. A lack of identification with ism-views indicates a lack of identification with widespread traditions in the history of philosophy, or schools of thought that are common amongst contemporary philosophers. It singles one out as a sort of philosophical lone wolf. This perhaps fits well with the idea that Quine is a predominantly negative philosopher, rejecting prominent ism-views, like positivism. It also makes Quine's views hard to orient against the background of the philosophical canon.

In the absence of explicit commitments to general viewpoints, it's notable that Quine doesn't use the term 'naturalism' in his early work. At first glance, this might look like a point in favour of my interpretation, but it's only a small one since Quine doesn't identify explicitly with other views that it seems fair to attribute to him.[59] Once Quine starts using the term

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[56] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.461

[57] See also a letter from Quine to Putnam: "[t]he main fault of ismisms is that it generates straw men whose isms could never have been embraced by flesh and blood". Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.155

[58] Verhaegh links this point about nominalism with *Word and Object*, p.243 f5. However, Quine stresses something stronger there. Quine's point is that he shouldn't be interpreted as a nominalist.

[59] Quine does use 'naturalist' in 1953, but he means natural scientist. 'Mr Strawson and Logical Theory', p.149. And he uses 'naturalistic' in 1946 to describe a style of argument for religion. 'Lectures on David Hume's Philosophy', p.112

'naturalism', and the associated slogans like a rejection of first philosophy, he indulges.[60] Verhaegh notes that "[b]etween March and July 1968 alone…Quine uses these phrases to describe his perspective in no fewer than seven lectures, essays and responses".[61] This appears to have been effective because many philosophers writing in the late-1960s and early-1970s describe Quine's philosophy as naturalistic, whereas before this period, Verhaegh has only found one case of someone doing so. After this period, where Quine is widely identified as a naturalist, the term hardly disappears from his work. It becomes something Quine is more self-consciously reflective about in his later work. Quine not only explains his views as naturalistic, but retrospectively explains the moves he's made earlier as naturalistic.[62] However, as I've explained above, the reflections that Quine provides are not sufficient to clearly establish the idea that Quine considered his early work to be naturalistic. Moreover, as we'll see in §1.4.1, we have good reason to believe that, before 1952, Quine is not felicitously called a naturalist.

Verhaegh suggests that Quine's decision to extensively use the label 'naturalism' from the late 1960s onwards could be because Quine was dissatisfied with the lack of an understanding philosophers had of his overall metaphilosophical view in *Word and Object*, and wanted to find a way of aligning his view with Dewey for his Dewey lectures in 1968.[63] Verhaegh seems right since, as he notes, Quine doesn't originally use the term 'naturalism' in his earlier drafts of the papers for these lectures. Quine adds the term in the 1968 drafts, and the instructions he was provided for preparing the Dewey lectures explicitly state that he should make some aspect of Dewey's philosophy visible within them; naturalism seems to be Quine's way of doing this.

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[60] The most visible early use of 'naturalism' is in 1968's 'Epistemology Naturalized' (published 1969).

[61] Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.155-6

[62] See, for example, 'Naturalism; or, Living within One's Means'. *From Stimulus to Science*, Ch.1-2

[63] See *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, v, p.26. Dewey explicitly identified as a naturalist in the only book of his that it seems Quine studied. Dewey, J. 1925. p.1. See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.2-3, p.158. It's worth stressing though, that not only does Quine's naturalism seem different from Dewey's, Quine also didn't know much about Dewey when he identified this commonality. See Ibid. p.4 f8. p.158 f33, pp.156-9. 'The Pragmatists' Place in Empiricism'. Verhaegh suggests that Ernest Nagel, who was known to defend naturalism and was the John Dewey Professor at Columbia, could also have played a role in Quine's decision to adopt the term.

Indeed, Quine has made it clear that by *Word and Object*, he is naturalistic. Verhaegh has uncovered important evidence for this. In response to the idea that naturalized epistemology is a response to problems in *Word and Object*, Quine claims: "*Word and Object* was already utterly naturalistic."[64] The difference between *Word and Object* and 'Epistemology Naturalized', roughly 9 years later, is merely that the word 'naturalism' is explicitly used in the latter. This is also confirmed when Quine describes *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, i.e. the volume containing 'Epistemology Naturalized', as dealing with an expansion of ideas that were misunderstood in *Word and Object*.[65] This supports the above point that the term 'naturalism' is used by Quine as a response to misunderstandings of his view. Thus we can determine that Quine considers himself to be "utterly naturalistic" by 1960, but beyond Quine's claim that he was becoming "more consciously and explicitly naturalistic" in the build-up to *Word and Object*, Quine doesn't give us much information about the development of his naturalism.

So, exactly how far back Quine's naturalism is meant to extend before 1960 is foggy, but there is a trend to read Quine as having been naturalistic throughout his career. Kemp, Creath, Isaac, and Ebbs all trace it back, at least partly, to as early as 1933, right after Quine finishes his doctorate. Verhaegh claims that naturalism was in some sense an implicit commitment that Quine had in his early work which was bolstered in the mid-1950s. And Quine's own reflections don't shed considerable light on how long-standing a commitment naturalism is in his philosophy before *Word and Object*.

These interpretations have strong consequences for how we understand and evaluate Quine's philosophy. For example, the supposed lack of a substantial change in Quine's methodology has strong pedagogical use for Hylton; it's for this reason that his monograph on Quine is structured in terms of topics rather than chronologically.[66] The general idea is that we can treat the mass of Quine's work as, in some over-simplistic but important way, being unified by a common methodology. In some sense, Quine stands or falls as his naturalism stands or falls, given that this is what constitutes his systematic view on philosophy, and explains a lot of the particular views he holds. More particularly, for Isaac, it means that Quine is validating

[64] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.158 f32
[65] See Ibid. p.158 f32. Strictly, though, he says it's dealing with "*Word and Object* and earlier writings".
[66] Hylton, P. 2007. pp.1-2

empiricism on naturalistic grounds even in his early work (a claim I challenge in Chapter 3), and this then leads Quine to some of his well-known views like holism. Finally, for Ebbs, it highlights how Quine's problems with convention in his early work are with making it naturalistically adequate.

To summarise, thus far, we have seen that there is a general trend in the literature of interpreting Quine's commitment to naturalism to extend into his early work, before 1952. To support this view, I highlighted claims that demonstrate this view in a number of Quine scholars. On some of these interpretations, Quine appears to be viewed plainly as a naturalist. On others, naturalism appears to admit of degrees and so there's no unique point where naturalism enters the picture. However, these interpretations all, at minimum, claim that Quine's early work was to some degree naturalistic. I also explained that Quine's reflections on his naturalism do not illuminate the issue of when Quine becomes naturalistic before *Word and Object*. Moreover, I highlighted some ways in which understanding the nature of Quine's early views is difficult and this consequently makes it difficult to understand the development of Quine's view. Establishing the fact that Quine is often viewed having a commitment to naturalism from close to the beginning of his philosophical career is important because the argument of this chapter challenges this interpretation by arguing that Quine is not a naturalist before, approximately, 1952.

1.3 Quine's Naturalism

In this section, I provide a thorough characterisation of the nature of Quine's naturalism. This is needed in order to show that naturalism is not only a substantial and nuanced view, but that it is also a restrictive view. Appreciating how substantial, nuanced, and restrictive Quine's naturalism is allows us to then appreciate that there is a time that Quine lacks such a view. This is argued for in the last section of this chapter.

In §1.3.1, I examine the ways in which Quine characterises naturalism and explain that these characterisations, by themselves, are of limited value in gaining an understanding of the nature of naturalism. This is because they tend to be too brief or misleading. However, these characterisations do offer hints at what is needed to understand Quine's naturalism. Namely,

they refer to: (i) a rejection of first philosophy, and (ii) the idea that it's immanently within science that we investigate the nature of the world.

In §1.3.2, I clarify these two aspects of Quine's naturalism. I demonstrate that focussing on Quine's rejection of first philosophy and his claim that we investigate the world immanently within our ongoing scientific theory allows us to understand that Quine's naturalism is not only a developed and nuanced form of philosophical inquiry, it's also a restrictive one.

In §1.3.3, I clarify Quine's view of the nature of science that is vital to his naturalism. Naturalism involves always working from within our ongoing scientific theory and rejecting the idea that we can transcend that theory. Naturalism is therefore intimately bound up with science. Understanding Quine's conception of science, then, allows us to better understand the nature of Quine's naturalism.

1.3.1 Quine's Characterisations of Naturalism

In §1.2, I established that it takes time for Quine to start using the term 'naturalism' to describe his work. That being said, it was also shown that Quine *eventually* comes to use the term frequently, both to describe his view and to retrospectively explain some of his earlier views. Once Quine starts using the label 'naturalism', however, he doesn't elucidate in detail what it amounts to. Some of the main places where he does so are either very brief ('Five Milestones of Empiricism') or very misleading ('Epistemology Naturalized').[67] So, Quine is not only unclear about the development of his naturalism but also about the nature of his naturalism. This is a further reason that it's difficult to understand the scope of Quine's naturalism. In this section, I emphasise how unhelpful these characterisations are, by themselves, for understanding the nature of naturalism. I do this by highlighting how brief Quine's characterisations of naturalism often are, as well as explaining how misleading some of his more detailed explanations of naturalism are. However, I propose that these characterisations at least give us the beginnings of an understanding of Quine's naturalism because they point us towards two vital parts of his naturalism.

[67] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.7

Let me begin by considering the following ways in which Quine presents his naturalistic view:

> …naturalism: abandonment of the goal of a first philosophy prior to natural science.[68]

> …the recognition that it is within science itself, and not in some priori philosophy, that reality is to be identified and described…[69]

> Putting matters thus physiologically was of a piece with my naturalism, my rejection of a first philosophy underlying science.[70]

Such claims are familiar to those with the faintest of familiarity with Quine's work, and are engrained in the minds of those of us who have spent considerable time with it. However, these characterisations of naturalism are extremely brief and don't illuminate what this important and substantial approach to philosophy amounts to. It's no wonder that philosophers are so divided about how we understand naturalism. It's common for Quine to characterise naturalism, this central and distinctive approach to philosophy, in a mere sentence.

Moreover, some of Quine's more substantial characterisations of naturalism are misleading. For example, Quine describes naturalism as follows:

> …rational reconstruction of the individual's and/or the race's actual acquisition of a responsible theory of the external world. It would address the question of how we, physical denizens of the physical world, can have projected our scientific theory of that whole world from our meagre contacts with it…[71]

The problem with this as a characterization of naturalism generally is that it's focused specifically on naturalized epistemology, and so misses out other important aspects of Quine's naturalistic view. Many philosophers writing about naturalism have similarly

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[68] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.67
[69] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.21
[70] 'On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma', p.40
[71] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.16

narrowed their focus to Quine's views on epistemology, rather than his naturalism generally.

Or, on a similar note, take this characterization of naturalism:

> …I [Quine as a naturalist] hold that knowledge, mind, and meaning are part of the same world that they have to do with, and that they are to be studied in the same empirical spirit that animates natural science. There is no place for a prior philosophy.[72]

Verhaegh stresses that this is problematic because it conflates several aspects that are often taken to be distinct ways of being a naturalist: it has an ontological claim, a methodological claim, and ends on a metaphilosophical claim.[73] When Quine's characterisations of naturalism are not extremely brief, then, they still aren't particularly helpful for gaining an understanding of his view.

In the Introduction, I explained that a common reason that Quine's philosophy generally is thought to be hard to understand is the difficulty of his prose. Quine's writing is often very brief and poetic. We can see here that a good example of this problem is Quine's characterisations of naturalism. Indeed, I explained that we see good evidence that Quine's prose is difficult to understand in the reviews of *Word and Object*, and this is the monograph where Quine's philosophy is supposed to be "utterly naturalistic".[74] Presley claims that Quine's prose "is sometimes condensed to the point of enigma", and this seems a fitting way to explain the short and enigmatic ways that Quine characterises naturalism.[75]

Quine is aware that characterisations like those above aren't very helpful for providing an understanding of naturalism. Quine writes: "[t]hese characterisations convey the right mood, but they would fare poorly in a debate."[76] The main reason for this is that it's unclear what counts as science, or as being internal to science, and what first philosophy is. Quine's

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[72] 'Ontological Relativity', p.26
[73] Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.159-60
[74] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.158 f32
[75] Presley, C.F. 1961. p.175
[76] 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', p.462

characterisations of naturalism are suggestive, they "convey the right mood", but the actual details of the view they are characterising are left in a very bare state.

That being said, Quine's enigmatic characterisations of naturalism do seem to reveal two parts of his view that are central to naturalism. Indeed, often the nature of Quine's naturalism is explained by emphasising two components. First, naturalism involves an insistence that it's within science "that reality is to be identified and described".[77] Second, naturalism involves a rejection of first philosophy. This provides us with only the beginning of an understanding of Quine's naturalism, but a beginning, nonetheless.

1.3.2 Immanence and First Philosophy

In the last section, I explained that while Quine's characterisations of naturalism are often unhelpful for gaining an understanding of naturalism, they at least strongly suggest that Quine's naturalism is woven from two elusive strands. First, a stress on the idea that it's immanently within science that theorising takes place: "the recognition that it is within science itself…that reality is to be identified and described".[78] Second, naturalism has a negative aspect, i.e. a rejection of first philosophy. In this section, I explain what these two strands of Quine's philosophy amount to in order to provide a detailed understanding of his naturalism. I also relate immanence and first philosophy to the Neurathian metaphor that Quine frequently uses to describe the nature of naturalistic inquiry. The understanding of Quine's naturalism reached in this section allows us to appreciate that it amounts to a developed, nuanced, and restrictive form of philosophical inquiry. This understanding is crucial in order to appreciate the fact that Quine lacks this developed perspective in his early work, which is the argument of the final section of this chapter.

Let me begin by explaining what Quine means when he insists that theorising takes place immanently within science. Quine often stresses the immanent nature of inquiry after he has explicitly claimed to be naturalistic. He writes that "the immanent is that which makes sense

[77] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.21
[78] Ibid.

within naturalism, *in mediis rebus*, and the transcendent is not".[79] These remarks apply to philosophical theorising, as well as theorising we're more likely to think of as scientific. Quine stresses the scientific place of philosophy continuously in his later work, perhaps most famously at the end of *Word and Object*:

> The philosopher's task differs from the others' [within science], then, in detail; but in no such drastic way as those suppose who imagine for the philosopher a vantage point outside the conceptual scheme that he takes in charge. There is no such cosmic exile.[80]

Philosophy stands out as a distinctively abstract and general part of our scientific theorising, but it is not a part of our theorising that is distinct from the rest of science. Quine also thinks that when we look back at earlier work that we regard as philosophical, but where at the time they lacked the contemporary imposition of boundaries between philosophy and science, we pick out the more abstract and general stuff and call it 'philosophy'.[81] Philosophy, for Quine, is science in its more general and abstract moments.

A dominant theme in interpretations of Quine's naturalism is to stress that it's from Quine's naturalism that strict scientific constraints on Quine's methodology come from. Philosophical inquiry occurs immanently within science, and science involves these constraints. As Kemp puts it, summarising Hylton's interpretation:

> [Quine's naturalism] does not require merely that philosophical theories be consistent with natural science or even cohere with it, but that philosophical theories – indeed *the questions themselves* – be justified in the same way as the theories and questions of natural science.[82]

This additional demand makes Quine's methodology more nuanced and stricter than that of many other naturalists.

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[79] 'Responses to Articles by Abel, Bergström, Davidson, Dreben, Gibson, Hookway, and Prawitz', p.230
[80] *Word and Object*, p.275
[81] 'Has Philosophy Lost Contact with People?', p.191
[82] Kemp, G. 2010. p.283. See also 2012. pp.15-6

From the perspective of naturalism, inquiry always takes place immanently within our ongoing scientific theory. This approach then grounds what is true, or what is real, as an internal aspect of the ongoing scientific enterprise. Let me explain both of these points.

This immanent perspective is notable in Quine's approach to truth. Quine does not, for example, view truth as an issue that involves seeing how scientific theories latch onto the world. Truth is not a semantical relation in this sense for Quine.[83] Attributions of truth occur immanently within our ongoing theory of the world in our affirmations about what is the case.[84] Quine's immanent perspective on the notion of truth also makes sense of his emphasis on the truths of science being fallible. This is because science might affirm something as true at one point in time, and then, due to progress within science, stop affirming it as true at a later point. For Quine, this is simply a fact about the internal mechanics of the scientific enterprise and how the truth predicate is used therein. Moreover, this immanent perspective on truth as a fallible feature of science also allows us to make sense of the fact that Quine characterises science as the pursuit of truth:

> Pursuit of truth is implicit, still, in our use of 'true'. We should and do currently accept the firmest scientific conclusions as true, but when one of these is dislodged by further research we do not say that it had been true but became false. We say that to our surprise it was not true after all. Science is seen as pursuit and discovering truth rather than decreeing it. Such is the idiom of realism, and it is integral to the semantics of the predicate 'true'. It fittingly vivifies scientific method…[85]

This passage highlights the close connection between truth and realism for Quine. Claims about what is real for the naturalist also have to be understood as immanent claims within science. Quine's attitude is one of "unregenerate realism", or "robust realism".[86] This is an attitude that typifies the scientist. There's not a further philosophical question that asks whether our scientific output reflects the nature of the *real* world or is true in some sense

[83] See also Kemp, G. 2006. pp.119-20
[84] See *Word and Object*, pp.23-5
[85] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.67. See also 'Propositional Objects', p.141
[86] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.72. 'Relativism and Absolutism', p.321

over and above what science tells us is the case. Again, we see that Quine's naturalism requires the philosopher's claims be an immanent part of our ongoing scientific theory.

The second aspect found in Quine's characterisation of naturalism is his talk about rejecting first philosophy. As is often the case with important aspects of his view, Quine doesn't provide much clarity about what first philosophy is. Yet he continually, sometimes solely, focusses on its denial as crucial to naturalism: "[naturalism is] abandonment of the goal of a first philosophy prior to natural science."[87] This negative feature of naturalism is crucial because it shows Quine's rejection of first philosophy is a constraint on what counts as legitimate theorising. First philosophy is often meant to provide support for science while being independent of science, or to provide a perspective on the nature of the world from outside of science. It belongs to theorising that is extra-scientific, or that is meant to transcend science. Quine's rejection of first philosophy is the claim that such theorising is illegitimate.

One way to appreciate the nature of first philosophy is to consider things that might seem like they should be counted as first philosophical, but which Quine does not consider first philosophical. Phenomena like this are important because, while it might seem like Quine would want to eschew them due to their suspicious scientific credentials by viewing them as outside the apparatus of science, his attitude is not so dismissive. Understanding what further features would be required to make such phenomena first philosophical sheds some light on the nature of first philosophy, and it shows us that Quine's view of what constitutes first philosophy is more subtle than it might seem.

Consider what Quine says about areas of science that we might worry aren't a part of science, but which Quine still counts as scientific, i.e. areas that it might seem like Quine ought to view them as first philosophical. One of the most commonly discussed examples of such a phenomenon is Quine's treatment of higher, non-applied, set theory. The rough idea is that Quine should view higher set theory as external to science since it's not applied in science. However, Quine holds that higher set theory still counts as science because, despite not being applied in science, it's in the interest of the simplicity of our

[87] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.67. See also *From Stimulus to Science*, p.16. 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.22

theory to not exclude it as meaningless. The reason that it's in the interest of the simplicity of our theory to keep it within science is that it contains the same vocabulary, and deals with issues also framed in the same vocabulary, as applied mathematics.[88] Therefore, higher set theory counts as part of science for Quine.

First philosophical notions and posits fail to even meet this criterion. After discussing why higher set theory is meaningful, Quine writes:

> There are further reaches of discourse, however, for which not even these claims to a scientific status can be made. One thinks here of bad metaphysics and benighted forms of religion. Also there is great poetry and fiction. For all their greatness these do not describe reality, for the most part, nor are they true.[89]

This is a significant part of what qualifies something as first philosophical. First philosophical theorising, notions, posits, etc. occur outside of the language game of science (a game that I'll describe in §1.3.3). Quine thinks that making claims about the nature of reality, and stating truths about the nature of the world, is the business of science. First philosophical discourse, unlike higher, unapplied, set theory, doesn't even indirectly figure in theorising that brings us these ends.

We saw above that Quine conceives of science broadly enough for philosophy to fit in. But Quine's naturalism is also restrictive in that philosophy has to be naturalistically legitimate to earn its place within science. There are aspects of traditional philosophy that don't make the cut. Quine claims that "ethics is not included in science, for all its importance."[90] Ethics, in contrast to an area like epistemology, doesn't survive naturalistic reorientation. The language game of science, at the centre of Quine's naturalism, is constraining what philosophy counts as naturalistically respectable. Ethical theorising, at least typically, doesn't abide by the rules of science and so fails to earn its place within science.

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[88] 'Naturalism; Or Living within One's Means', p.468
[89] 'The Way the World Is', p.169
[90] 'Pressing Extensionality', p.174

However, that isn't to say that Quine rejects the idea that there are other language games one could operate within legitimately, e.g. poetry. The important point is that science has the rights to most of the things that we think are very important, e.g. the right to truth about the nature of reality and to providing descriptions of reality.[91] To properly appreciate this point, we need a more thorough understanding of Quine's conception of science. I'll provide this in the following section. For now, however, the important point that this establishes is that the fact that some theorising occurs outside of science isn't sufficient to make it first philosophical, and so illegitimate by naturalistic standards. Such theorising could occur independently of science but not try to impinge on science, and hence be legitimate. In such a case, one is simply playing a different language game from science. First philosophical theorising, however, does more than occupy a perspective independent of science. That is, it also tries to impinge on science, either by trying to support it or by making claims that are the proper business of science. For example, first philosophy could try and provide an independent foundation for science, and so provide support for science, while trying to be independent from science. Alternatively, the first philosopher might try to play the game of science without properly being subject to its rules. For example, the first philosopher might make claims that belong within the proper domain of science, e.g. by being about the nature of reality, but without also intending this theorising to be part of our ongoing scientific theory, e.g. by not making those claims vulnerable to scientific evidence.

Now, despite Quine's reference to "bad metaphysics" above, first philosophy is not merely the matter of weird metaphysical theorising or posits that naturalists tend to dislike. We can appreciate this by looking at Quine's attitude towards dualism. Quine writes that, in principle, he has no objection to dualism; a view which we might take to be paradigmatically anti-naturalistic metaphysics, or paradigmatically first philosophical.[92] Quine claims: "Descartes' dualism between mind and body is called metaphysics, but it could as well be reckoned as science, however false."[93] The reason that it could be viewed simply as false science (and not meaningless or first philosophical) is that dualism could, but doesn't, provide us with a

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[91] *Word and Object*, pp.22-3. 'The Way the World Is', p.169

[92] For the view that dualism is paradigmatically anti-naturalistic see Weir, A. 2005. p.461. Glock, H. 2003. pp.27-9

[93] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.462. This also shows that naturalism isn't merely physicalism. p.467

hypothesis which has predictive utility, i.e. that is scientifically valuable. Dualism is not warranted because positing minds in addition to bodies is redundant – the bodies do fine on their own, if we opt for some form of predicate dualism or anomalous monism.[94] Quine thinks this is the case not only for dualism, but for many of the metaphysical issues that he's known for rejecting. We see this clearly when he writes:

> If I saw indirect explanatory benefit in positing sensibilia, possibilia, spirits, a Creator, I would joyfully accord them scientific status too, on a par with such avowedly scientific posits as quarks and black holes.[95]

Seen in this light, Quine's naturalism differs from many other forms of naturalism. For example, naturalism is often viewed as being a negative view in a different way from a rejection of first philosophy. That is, as a rejection of the supernatural.[96] Naturalism is restrictive in that it wants to exclude supernatural phenomena and explanations from legitimate explanations. Verhaegh suggests that this characterises more traditional forms of naturalism in the history of philosophy.[97] However, Verhaegh doesn't think that this is new. For the past century or so, philosophers have tended to provide natural, as opposed to supernatural, explanations of the world. New or not, Quine's naturalism and its attitude towards first philosophy shows one way that it's more nuanced than many other forms of naturalism. Many supposedly supernatural phenomena aren't strictly disqualified in principle by his naturalism. Both supernatural phenomena and traditional metaphysical phenomena can be viewed in two ways. They can be understood as part of science, in which case they're judged immanently within science for their scientific worth (and likely to be viewed merely as false science). Or, alternatively, they can be presented as extra-scientific posits, and not part of our ongoing scientific theory. It's only in the latter case that they're first philosophical, and illegitimate from the perspective of naturalistic inquiry.

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[94] See 'States of Mind', p.323
[95] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.462
[96] See Stroud, B. 1996. pp.44-5
[97] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.2

Quine's naturalistic picture of inquiry is often presented in his work through the use of the Neurathian metaphor of inquiry being like repairing a boat while out at sea.[98] This metaphor is used continually after Quine starts to focus on the naturalistic picture that emerges most conspicuously in *Word and Object* to both explain the nature of scientific inquiry as well as the place of philosophy within scientific inquiry.[99] Reflecting on this metaphor can help us appreciate what it is like to work immanently within our ongoing scientific theory as well as what a rejection of first philosophy amounts to. Quine claims:

> The naturalistic philosopher begins his reasoning within the inherited world theory as a going concern. He tentatively believes all of it, but believes also that some unidentified portions are wrong. He tries to improve, clarify, and understand the system from within. He is a busy sailor adrift on Neurath's boat.[100]

We can use this metaphor to better explain Quine's view that we start and remain theorising immanently within science. Our adjustments to science, as well as our starting place when we begin to theorise, both involve us being located within that very theory of the world. Our boat may need to be repaired, but we do so while remaining afloat onboard the vessel. Quine employs this metaphorical picture of inquiry to demonstrate an attitude that makes sense of inquiry as an activity that occurs immanently within our ongoing and developing scientific theory.

We can also use the Neurathian metaphor to better explain Quine's rejection of first philosophy. In terms of the metaphor, having a rejection of first philosophy is the idea that we're trying to keep the ship of science afloat while dealing with the realization that there's no hope of jumping ship. The ship of science is being repaired while sailing the never-ending sea.

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[98] Quine doesn't seem to have known much about Neurath when he adopted this metaphor. In a letter to Dirk Koppelberg, who compared Quine and Neurath's views, Quine writes: "my reading of my predecessors has been very sporadic and inadequate. I was aware superficially of my affinity with Neurath…and I am glad now to see the degree to it and the detail…". Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.74 f38

[99] See *Word and Object*, p.3, p.124

[100] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.72. Verhaegh has found a note from 1965 where Quine describes the position of always working within our ongoing theory as "involutionism". Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.61 f17. 'The Sophisticated Irrational', p.189. Quine attributes this view to Neurath and Popper.

We find the Neurathian metaphor in Quine's papers in the interim between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object*. We saw earlier, in §1.2, that this is the period in which Quine claims to have been "[b]ecoming more consciously and explicitly naturalistic" and that he considers *Word and Object* to be naturalistic.[101] The papers in which the Neurathian metaphor is cited have important relations to this monograph, and consequently to the development of naturalism. Quine is rapidly developing his picture of what inquiry looks like and using this metaphor extensively to illustrate his emerging naturalistic perspective. For example, in 'Speaking of Objects', which serves as a prospectus for *Word and Object*, presented in 1957, Quine writes:

> At any rate the ontology of abstract objects is part of the ship which, in Neurath's figure, we are rebuilding at sea. We may revise the scheme, but only in favor of some clearer or simpler and no less adequate overall account of what goes on in the world.[102]

Moreover, in 'Posits and Reality' (1955), an early draft of the opening part of *Word and Object*, Quine writes:

> Epistemology, on this view, is not logically prior somehow to common sense or to the refined common sense which is science; it is part rather of the overall scientific enterprise, an enterprise which Neurath has likened to that of rebuilding a ship while staying afloat in it.[103]

Just before this, we see Quine start to talk about our theory of the world as being something that we inherit, something that we begin in the middle of, and that we acquire "from our forebears".[104] Similarly, in 'Two Dogmas' Quine describes human beings as being "given a scientific heritage".[105]

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[101] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.398
[102] 'Speaking of Objects', p.16
[103] 'Posits and Reality', p.253, p.246
[104] Ibid, p.222
[105] 'Two Dogmas', p.46

To summarise, in this section, I have explained Quine's naturalism by focussing on the idea that naturalism involves approaching theorising from a perspective immanent to our ongoing scientific theory and that it involves a rejection of first philosophy. In doing so, I have explained naturalism as a developed, nuanced, and restrictive form of philosophical inquiry. The naturalist begins immanently within their ongoing scientific theory and, from this immanent perspective, rejects as illegitimate any theorising that tries to transcend science. All of these points show how important the notion of science is to Quine's naturalism. In the next section, then, to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of Quine's naturalism, I explain the esoteric notion of science that is central to his naturalism.

1.3.3 Science

Quine's naturalism is intimately bound up with science. As a clear point of contrast, first philosophy aspires to escape the confines of science, while the naturalist works immanently within science. It's therefore crucial to understand Quine's conception of science in order to properly understand the nature of naturalism. In this section, I'll explain the conception of science at the heart of naturalism in detail. This will reveal it to be very esoteric, but vital for understanding naturalism. To do this, I'll first make sense of the place of prediction within science which will, in turn, help to explain what Quine means in thinking of science as a language game. I will then explain how broad Quine's view of science is, and relate this to his lack of emphasis on subject boundaries. I finally look at the way in which Quine conceives of the relationship between science and common sense and emphasise the importance of this relationship for the status of notions like reality and evidence, which are vital for science, and so for naturalism.

One important aspect of Quine's view of science is the role that prediction plays within it. Quine often emphasizes the predictive function of science. For example, he writes:

> Our talk of external things…is just a conceptual apparatus that helps us to foresee and control the triggering of our sensory receptors in the light of previous triggering of our sensory receptors.[106]

[106] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.1

But Quine also denies that prediction is main *purpose* of science.[107] Prediction doesn't seem to capture the essence or goal of science for Quine. Prediction might sometimes be a goal of science, but it's not the main purpose; things like "understanding", "control and modification of the environment", and "technology and intellectual curiosity" are.[108] Rather, predication sets the limits as to what counts as part of the language game of science; if something isn't ultimately predictive, it's not scientific. Quine makes this point clear in *Pursuit of Truth*:

> But when I cite predictions as the checkpoints of science, I do not see that as normative. I see it as defining a particular language game, in Wittgenstein's phrase: the game of science, in contrast to other good language games such as fiction and poetry. A sentence's claim to scientific status rests on what it contributes to a theory whose checkpoints are in prediction.[109]

This is a very minimal requirement for making something scientific, and it doesn't really tell us anything about what goes on within the parameter of the predictive language game of science.[110] I'll explain the significance of this fairly minimalistic picture of science for Quine's naturalism shortly, but the important point to note here is that Quine thinks of science as a language game in which prediction plays a special role in setting the boundaries of that game.

Regardless as to what the purpose of science is, the function of *prediction* is to test science. For something to be part of science, it needs to figure in the game of prediction; it needs to be part of the body of links of implication which lead one to have a prediction. In

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[107] Although Quine does seem to think that epistemology, as opposed to science generally, is aiming at prediction or truth. He writes: "[t]here is no question here [within naturalized epistemology] of ultimate value…it is a matter of efficacy for an ulterior end, truth or prediction." 'Reply to White', pp.663-65. See also *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19. Foley, R. 1994. pp.243-60. Quine also relates prediction to truth: "normative epistemology…is the technology of truth-seeking, or, in more cautiously epistemic terms, prediction." 'Reply to White', pp.663-65

[108] First two quotes from *Pursuit of Truth*, p.2. Last from 'The Way the World Is', p.169. *The Roots of Reference*, p.130

[109] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.20

[110] See Roth, P. 1999. pp.106-07

this way, some creative spark which helps us develop a scientific hypothesis that comes from, say, reading fiction wouldn't count as scientific because it doesn't figure in the relevant body of theory. Prediction is a negative test; "a test by refutation".[111] And prediction is "[t]he utility of science"; that which the instrument of science is able to achieve, even if its function is something more particular than this.[112]

This picture of the role of prediction within science has to be appreciated in the context of the broad nature of science that is crucial for Quine's naturalism. Some parts of this conception of science do not standardly make use of prediction, at least not directly. We see this when Quine writes:

> Prediction of observable events, then, is the test of science. It is how science keeps contact with its subject matter, namely, the world. What I am calling science, moreover, for want of a better name, includes various pursuits in which prediction is not at all common; it includes economics, history, even mathematics. Ultimately and indirectly, however, prediction is what also keeps these sciences empirically significant, because of systematic connections between these sciences and other domains where prediction does prevail.[113]

It's not, for example, at the level of the sentences of science that prediction is crucial: "a sentence does not even need to be testable in order to qualify as a respectable sentence of science."[114] Lots of sentences that are respectably scientific don't meet this criteria, but are important for science because they "fit in smoothly by analogy, or they symmetrize and simplify the overall design."[115] And, moreover, such sentences can lead to sentences that are themselves testable; lots of statements in history will be like this, and this view seems to make sense of Quine's treatment of non-applied set theory that I explained above. Quine's point is more that when scientific hypotheses can be tested, prediction is the test.[116]

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[111] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means'. p.467
[112] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.258
[113] 'The Way the World Is', pp.167-68
[114] 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', p.467
[115] Ibid
[116] See Ibid, pp.468-69

Through looking at the place of prediction within Quine's view of science, we've found that Quine intends science to be understood broadly. This broad nature is another important part of the science at the centre of Quine's naturalism that makes it distinctive.[117] Quine emphasises the place of softer sciences, like sociology, history, and economics, in his picture of science,[118] and he continually emphasises that mathematics is included within science.[119] One might worry that such a broad picture of science makes Quine's use of the term esoteric, and so calling it 'science' is misleading. In a sense, Quine agrees. He likens his use of science to *Wissenschaft*, but notes that in English, we don't really have an equivalent term.[120]

Related to this broad picture of science is the lack of emphasis that Quine places on subject boundaries. Subjects within science are not separated by sharp boundaries. Quine writes that "[n]ames of disciplines should be seen only as technical aids in the organization of curricula and libraries".[121] In this way, Quine claims they are "useful for deans and librarians".[122] This is too strong a claim. Within Quine's naturalistic picture of science, names of subjects have important pragmatic use in allowing us to get scientific work done effectively, not just for "deans and librarians". For example, they help us effectively sort out problems that are primarily to be dealt with by people identified as belonging to that discipline. Naturalized epistemology, as we'll see in Chapter 3, is a good case of this. Most scientists outside philosophy simply have no need to worry about the main problems in naturalized epistemology, and hence it's effective in dealing out the scientific labour to view these problems as distinctively philosophical, even if they're not detached from science. This is a practical point about the value of subject boundaries for the progress of science. Quine's point, however, is to stress that there isn't a substantial theoretical difference in the natures of the inquiries involved in different fields of science.

Indeed, the main reason Quine puts such emphasis on the irrelevance of subject boundaries is because it distracts us from important points about the nature of science. It's liable to present

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[117] Quine often stresses his broad picture of science in response to criticism. See 'Responses to Essays by Smart, Orenstein, Lewis, Holdcroft and Haack', p.255. 'Response to Gary Ebbs', p.34
[118] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.49
[119] See 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.462
[120] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.462. See also Kemp. G. 2012. p.16
[121] 'On Austin's Method', p.88
[122] 'Necessary Truth', p.76. See also 'Reply to Jules Vuillemin'. p.620

science as too segregated. This detracts appreciation from the holistic picture of inquiry Quine has. This is a vital truth about the nature of how scientific theories, broadly construed, relate to their evidence:

> When we abstract from them, we see all of science—physics, biology, economics, mathematics, logic, and the rest—as a single sprawling system, loosely connected in some portions but disconnected nowhere. Parts of it—logic, arithmetic, game theory, theoretical parts of physics—are farther from the observational or experimental edge than other parts. But the overall system, with all its parts, derives its aggregate empirical content from that edge; and the theoretical parts are good only as they contribute in their varying degrees of indirectness to the systematizing of that content.[123]

This is an important "philosophical error" that the seemingly strict boundaries between subjects leads to.[124] It suggests, for example, that physics is a deeply empirical discipline in contrast to the purely formal subject of mathematics. This perspective is lost if we deal with things "sentence by sentence, or problem by problem, without reference to the nominal demarcation of disciplines."[125]

Quine even distances a concern with subject boundaries from his naturalism:

> The motivation [for the naturalistic project] is still philosophical, as motivation in natural science tends to be, and the inquiry proceeds in disregard of disciplinary boundaries but with respect for the disciplines themselves and appetite for their input.[126]

According to Quine, if one reflects on the nature of the practice of science, we see that sharply separating out distinct fields of inquiry isn't part of scientific practice, and, moreover, crossing those supposed lines is helpful for the progress of science. This is an immanent fact

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[123] 'Necessary Truth', p.76
[124] 'On Austin's Method', p.88
[125] Ibid
[126] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.16

about the nature of scientific inquiry, philosophy included, that is arrived at by reflecting on the practice of science from a perspective internal to science.

Given that naturalism insists that there's no higher authority to appeal to than science itself, the naturalist also claims that, providing that some part of our theory can be tested empirically via the hypothetico-deductive method, (i.e. providing it's scientifically testable), then it's acceptable and included within science. There's no reason beyond that, or in principle restriction, which would prohibit the softer sciences from fitting within Quine's picture of science. As Quite puts it:

> Naturalism need not cast aspersions on irresponsible metaphysics, however deserved, much less on soft sciences or on the speculative reaches of the hard ones, except insofar as a firmer basis is claimed for them than the experimental method itself.[127]

Appreciating the broad nature of science at the heart of naturalism, then, is vital for both understanding what it means to work within science, since one works within science broadly conceived, as well as what first philosophy amounts to. Science is viewed broadly, the language game of science is focussed on prediction, and science is characterised, loosely, as following the hypothetico-deductive method. This means that violating these aspects of theorising and claiming a perspective external to science that makes claims about the nature of the world, or tries to provide support for science, is what can lead to first philosophy. Otherwise, the value of theorising is just a question of how useful it is for prediction, because Quine's minimal standards for science qualify it as scientific in a minimal sense. And this point is especially crucial for philosophy, because this allows philosophical theorising, or at least much of philosophy, to fit within science.

This broad picture of science gives us a whole bundle of what seem to be diverse and separate fields of inquiry. Quine, of course, thinks that there are differences between parts of science, there's just no difference substantial enough to exclude them from the overall game of science. The precise details about how the various gradations between the harder and softer sciences change as Quine's view develops. But the basic idea is that the difference between the harder and softer sciences relates to how sparse the empirical checkpoints within

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[127] 'Naturalism; Or, Living Within One's Means', p.462

a specific science are. Indeed, in places the sparseness of the checkpoints "becomes rather the rule than the exception."[128] For example, in areas like history, if we constrained our theorising by placing a lot of weight on implying testable predictions, the field would deteriorate.

One area of theorising that sits at a considerable distance from respectable science are idioms that are useful, but intensional and unable to be extensionalized, namely propositional attitudes *de re* and modal idioms.[129] Statements involving these locutions are described as "outriders of the scientific enterprise", or "extraneous aids" to science, together with things like indexicals, and occasion sentences generally.[130] In some sense these lie outside of science as Quine describes them as being set "outside the systematic fabric of science as a useful outrider".[131] But Quine isn't claiming that these are first philosophical. Rather, Quine is stressing that they lie outside of regimented science, which is extensional. They are still part of scientific theorising in that they are useful for science; they provide us with "informative leads".[132] By this, I take Quine to mean that they have value in allowing us to eventually make predictions. Quine also stresses that as science develops, the more rigorous and objective it becomes, the less statements with such locutions in them will figure.[133]

Now, while Quine clearly intends science to be understood broadly, he sometimes says things that suggest alignment with the idea that he's interested in science narrowly. For example, Quine claims that "[t]he world is as natural science says it is…".[134] This doesn't just push knowledge into the purview of science but suggests something narrower, i.e. that knowledge only comes from natural science. This idea is also found in other philosopher's presentations of Quine's naturalism. Gibson, for example, emphasises the role of physics, claiming naturalism holds that "it is up to science (and, in particular, to physics) to identify and describe what there is".[135] To understand Quine's view of science properly, then, we need to make sense of what role physics has within it.

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[128] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.49. See also 'On the Very Idea of a Third Dogma', p.41. 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.237
[129] See Roth, P. 1990. pp.97-9
[130] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.98
[131] Ibid
[132] Ibid. pp.97-8
[133] 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.242
[134] 'Structure and Nature', p.405
[135] Gibson, R. 1992. p.17

It would be a mistake to think that while Quine is pushing a broad picture of science, he's holding that it's unified in the sense of all reducing to something like physics. Rather, science is a unified whole for Quine in the sense that it's not discontinuous. Quine makes this clear when he writes: "[s]cience is neither discontinuous nor monolithic. It is variously jointed, and loose in the joints in varying degrees."[136] Quine thinks that part of the reason that science isn't discontinuous is because logic and mathematics tend to be shared amongst all branches of science.[137]

But Quine does place a special role on physics.[138] Quine describes it as "an ultimate parameter".[139] It's difficult to understand exactly what Quine means. He says something similar, but more substantial, elsewhere: "[l]et me begin by stating what I take to be the business of physics. It is the discovery of the ultimate constituents of the world and their regularities."[140] In describing physics as 'ultimate', Quine is claiming that the very task of physics is to understand reality at its most fundamental level.[141] Understanding this point requires that we appreciate Quine's naturalism. As a naturalist, there's no first philosophy, and so there's nothing firmer than science we can appeal to in understanding the world. And since physics is the part of science dealing with reality at its most fundamental, this immanent predicament is especially notable at the level of physics. Quine then explains that while we can't reduce other parts of science and their objects to physics, their behaviour "*is* nevertheless the sum of the behavior of the ultimate physical constituents, however incalculable."[142] In this way, physics isn't just ultimate, it's "basic".[143] Physics is basic in the sense that "nothing that happens in the world…without some redistribution of microphysical states."[144] This general and fundamental claim is a hallmark of the success of physics itself.

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[136] 'On Empirically Equivalent Systems of the World', p.230
[137] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.71
[138] This isn't meant to suggest that we can separate out a chunk of science sharply as being all and only physics. See 'Necessary Truth', pp.75-6. Nor that physics is complete. We just have very strong evidence for thinking physics will continue along the same lines as it develops. See Kemp, G. 2012. p.19.
[139] 'Reply to Chomsky', p.303. See also 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.222-23
[140] 'The Way the World Is', p.166
[141] See also Hylton, P. 2007. pp.313-14. 'Smart's Philosophy and Scientific Realism', p.93
[142] Ibid
[143] Ibid. See also 'Facts of the Matter', pp.279-80
[144] 'Goodman's Ways of Worldmaking', p.98. Note also that this gives Quine a physicalistic view, despite accepting abstract objects. 'Facts of the Matter', p.283

That is, it comes from appreciating not the essential nature of physical science, but the immanent nature of physics as it currently stands within science. We can see this, Quine claims, if we appreciate that were there some phenomena which, according to physics, wasn't accounted for by changes in elementary physical states, physicists would supplement their physics. Physics is the part of science that is maximally general in its scope.[145] This is true especially of the laws of physics in contrast to laws in other areas like psychology.[146] Quine is able, then, to hold that physics has a special role within science while also thinking of science broadly.

A feature of Quine's view of science closely related to its broad nature is the relationship between science and common sense. Quine sees the relationship between science and common sense as not sharply separate. Science simply lies at the more refined end of our theorising. Quine writes: "[s]cience…differs from common sense only in degree of methodological sophistication."[147] He explains that science is more systematic than common sense, and that science makes an extended and refined use of the sort of simplicity that we use in common sense theorising.[148] Common sense language relies heavily on intersubjectivity to be effective, and science stresses this factor even further: "[l]anguage in general is robustly extravert, but science is more so."[149]

In emphasising that science and common sense aren't detached from one another, Quine writes: "[s]cience is not a substitute for common sense, but an extension of it."[150] He then gives a more elaborate explanation of how they differ, writing:

> The scientist is indistinguishable from the common man in his sense of evidence, except that the scientist is more careful. This increased case is not a revision of evidential standards, but only the more patient and systematic collection and use of what anyone would deem evidence.[151]

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[145] "Full coverage in this sense is the very business of physics, and only of physics." Ibid.
[146] 'Smart's Philosophy and Scientific Realism', p.93
[147] 'Natural Kinds', p.129
[148] 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.233-34
[149] Ibid. p.234
[150] Ibid. p.229
[151] Ibid. p.233

This shows that for naturalism, the notion of evidence in science is just a refinement of the same notion we find in common sense. Similar remarks apply to other important notions like reality and truth.

Indeed, examining this relation between science and common sense can help us understand why Quine thinks that science has the rights to many of the things that are important when we theorise. This is vital to appreciate because we saw in the last section that, while Quine thinks there are other language games apart from science that one could take part in, e.g. poetry, science is the language game that legitimately involves pursuing important things like truth and the nature of reality. Quine claims that science is just refined common sense, and some of the aspects of common sense theorising that science refines are important notions like reality and evidence. Science does not deal with distinct scientific variants of these notions, and the naturalistic philosopher, similarly, doesn't deal with distinct philosophical variants of them either. The notions of reality, and so on, that we find at work in science is just what happens with the ordinary notion once it reaches a sufficient level of sophistication. At one end of the scale we have our commonsensical notion of what it's like to understand the nature of the world, and, at the other, we have the sort of understanding we find in physics.

Understanding this point helps us understand naturalism because while Quine thinks there are other language games from science that one could legitimately take part in, those language games will not involve things like pursing truth and making claims about the nature of reality. Attempting to do these things, without conceding that one is doing science, is illegitimate and constitutes first philosophy. Quine claims not to know in any substantive sense what someone means if they use a term like 'exists', 'real', or 'truth' without meaning it in the way it's used in ongoing science, since those terms figure in science merely as more careful and systematic extensions of the ordinary notions. If one means something distinctly philosophical, something that isn't vulnerable to empirical refutation, or something that isn't founded by the experimental method, in making a claim about what is real or true, then one just doesn't seem to be using the same vital notion of truth and reality that science deals in and that we intend when we talk ordinarily of these things.[152] Understanding science as a language game, then, shows us why first philosophy is illegitimate from the perspective of naturalism, and hence why the naturalist is prohibited from theorising in this way.

[152] See 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.229. *Word and* Object, p.3

Of course, Quine thinks that notions that deviate substantially from common sense can still be scientifically respectable. He considers this point in relation to the idea that we might view causation in terms of energy flow, which might seem too refined to explicate our common notion of causation. Quine responds by claiming:

> …that we may reasonably allow concepts, however primordial, to evolve and sharpen with the progress of science. After all, even the scope or subject matter of a science may not be definable until the science has made great strides; so it was with chemistry.[153]

Quine's point is that this sort of evolution can only occur immanently within our ongoing scientific theory, and that theory is already an extension of common sense theorising. This means that the ties between scientific theorising and common sense are never completely detached.

Now, let me clarify that, while I've set out Quine's view that we always work immanently within science and his rejection of first philosophy as two *aspects* of his naturalistic perspective, these theses have a close connection. We're now in a position to better understand how these views relate, and therefore to have a more thorough understanding of the nature of Quine's naturalism.

As Verhaegh stresses, strictly, these two views are logically distinct.[154] If one is always working immanently within science, then this perspective rules out any appeals to first philosophy. That is, by contraposition, if one was doing first philosophy, then they would not be working immanently within science. The view that we are always working from within science implies a rejection of perspectives that transcend science. However, one could think that first philosophical inquiry is illegitimate, and so reject the idea that we can occupy a perspective that transcends science, but at the same time not adopt the view that we have to always work from within science. A sceptic could do this by stressing that while first philosophical inquiry has to be viewed as illegitimate, science does not meet certain

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[153] *Roots of Reference*, p.6. See also 'Natural Kinds', pp.127-29
[154] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.54-5

standards that qualify it as legitimate or warranted inquiry. The sceptic denies that we have any theories that are true, or that meet whatever the relevant standard is, and thinks that we should only work within a theory that we know to be true, or that meets whatever standard is relevant. The sceptic, therefore, could reject first philosophy, but deny that we can rely on the immanent claims of science.[155]

It's true that these two theses are strictly logically distinct, albeit with the implication from one to the other being blocked only in one direction. But, for Quine, they are two sides of the same coin. Quine writes that "the immanent is that which makes sense within naturalism…and the transcendent is not".[156] Naturalism requires, positively, that we always work immanently within science, and, negatively, that we do not occupy a first philosophical perspective.

For these two views to be logically distinct *for Quine*, it would have to be plausible that Quine can be read as a sceptic. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate that Quine's naturalism has little tolerance for traditional scepticism, and so it is not plausible to read Quine as a sceptic. But the points I've established in this section also help us appreciate why Quine maintains that the two theses of his naturalism are intertwined. Quine writes:

> We cannot significantly question the reality of the external world, or deny that there is evidence of external objects in the testimony of our senses; for, to do so is simply to dissociate the terms 'reality' and 'evidence' from the very applications which originally did most to invest those terms with whatever intelligibility they may have for us.[157]

This is intimately connected with the idea that science itself aims to tell us what reality is like, and hence what is real is part of the game of science. And it's also closely connected to the idea that science is just refined common sense, since the notions of reality and evidence in science are just sophisticated refinements of the notions that we use every day. For Quine, if

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[155] A relativist, plausibly, could hold a similar position. It should be clear from my characterisation of Quine's naturalistic outlook, however, that naturalism is not a form of relativism.

[156] 'Responses to Articles by Abel, Bergström, Davidson, Dreben, Gibson, Hookway, and Prawitz', p.230

[157] 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.229. See also *Word and* Object, p.3

we reject the coherence of first philosophy, we simply have to take the immanent claims of science as seriously as possible, for we can hope for nothing better or worse.

Throughout, we've seen that Quine's view of science emerges from reflecting on the practice of science as an evolving discipline. Facts about the nature of science are scientific facts that are discovered immanently within ongoing scientific inquiry. This is what we should expect from Quine, given his naturalism. Such a strategy leaves open the possibility that many of the aspects of science that Quine stresses as being important might no longer be important were science to develop in a different direction. We see this when Quine writes:

> We have reached the present stage in our characterization of the scientific framework not by reasoning a priori from the nature of science qua science, but rather by seizing upon traits of the science of our day…One or another of these traits might well change as science advances.[158]

The immanent claims of science are fallible, and the picture we have of what science itself is comes from reflecting on the practice of science, and so inherits this fallibility.

This also shows that Quine is not attempting to specify the nature of science in some way that picks out the essence of scientific inquiry.[159] This is important because specifying the precise and essential nature of scientific inquiry is often taken to be a vital philosophical task. One might think that we gain an understanding of the nature of science by reflecting on science *a priori*, by working out what kind of thing science, in essence, is. In particular, we might, discover on reflection that the essence of science involves some special feature, in the way that some philosophers think we do when finding out the nature of something like water. But Quine doesn't do this. He looks into science as an ongoing and evolving theory, examining what science currently tells us, but being sensitive to the idea that science might develop, such that features that seem to be constitutive of it change.

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[158] 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.244-45

[159] See Ibid: "[i]t would be unwarranted rationalism to suppose that we can stake out the business of science in advance of pursuing science and arriving at a certain body of theory…" pp.234-34

The picture of science that Quine provides us with is also fairly minimalistic. Quine doesn't attempt to provide a definitive and exhaustive characterisation of the method of science. Providing such a characterisation is often taken to be an important task in the philosophy of science, and so this is another way in which Quine's approach, in lacking this aim, is distinctive. What is important for Quine's picture of science is that the scientific method is characterised in a way where scientific theories are connected to experience such that that the only process involved in going from experience to that theory is the scientific method itself; there are no "ulterior controls" supporting science.[160] In other words, Quine's picture of science only involves science and nothing first philosophical.

Moreover, with science being thought of in terms of a language game, we can appreciate part of the reason why Quine denies that he's aiming to provide an answer to the demarcation problem.[161] Just like the related questions of the essence of science and the method of science, the demarcation problem is often taken to be a central question in philosophy, and so it's important to understand Quine's esoteric view of science in order to see why he doesn't spend time dealing with this issue either. There are other language games from science, as we've seen, but these don't constitute non-science in the sort of way that someone looking for a strict demarcation between science and non-science is looking for. The important distinction is between science and first philosophy; between something immanent to science and something that illegitimately tries to transcend it. The question of where we draw the line between different subjects, or even between what we ought to exclude as non-scientific, isn't all that important. What is important is that we have a picture of what it is for something to be scientific and then ask of a hypothesis whether it meets that standard.

To summarise, in this section, I explained the picture of science at the heart of Quine's naturalism. I argued that Quine's view of science is esoteric and crucial for understanding naturalism. I made sense of the place of prediction within this picture, which allowed us to understand Quine's view of science as a language game, where prediction functions to test

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[160] *Word and Object*, p.23

[161] Quine claims that "[d]emarcation is not my purpose". 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', p.462. And also: "I don't censor à la Carnap nor demarcate à la Popper". 1993 letter to Putnam, sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.51 f33

science. I also established that Quine intends science to be understood broadly and this fits with the lack of emphasis he places on subject boundaries. Moreover, I also demonstrated that Quine doesn't view science and common sense as sharply separate and that this is important because it shows that science doesn't engage with notions of reality or truth that are substantially different from those employed within common sense. All of these claims about science are taken by Quine to be immanent truths about science made from within our ongoing scientific theory. This makes such claims fallible, but as a naturalist, Quine can't expect anything more. These points shed considerable light on what it means to work immanently within science, as well as why one can't appeal to first philosophy, i.e. what it means for Quine to be a naturalist.

1.4 First Philosophy in the Early Quine

Thus far, we've seen that there is a tendency to see Quine's naturalism as extending back, in some form at least, into his early work, i.e. substantively before he is explicitly naturalistic. We've also seen that understanding Quine's naturalistic perspective involves appreciating that it's not only a developed and nuanced view of inquiry, but also a restrictive one. For Quine's naturalism, inquiry begins and remains within our ongoing scientific theory, and it rejects, in principle, any theorising that tries to transcend science while trying to support or impinge on it, i.e. it rejects *first philosophical* theorising.

In this section, I argue that Quine was not always a naturalist. This is because, until approximately 1952, Quine is open to a form of theorising that would qualify as first philosophical, namely, a form of phenomenalist theorising. Because Quine is tolerant of such first philosophical theorising, and because first philosophical theorising is prohibited by naturalism, we see that Quine's early work cannot be plausibly interpreted as naturalistic.[162]

The structure of this section is as follows. In §1.4.1, I establish that Quine was not always a naturalist. I do so by, first, presenting some suggestive support for this idea based on Quine's

[162] My argument in this section has benefitted substantially from the recent publication of Verhaegh, S. 2018. This has allowed me to sharpen the argument in ways not possible before his publication, in large part due to his drawing skilfully on unpublished work of Quine's. I have, therefore, tried to present my own view in ways that also differ subtly from his own.

remarks in 1946. Following from this, I then strengthen my case by examining Quine's early attitude towards phenomenalism. I establish that, in this era, Quine is tolerant of phenomenalism, though, ultimately, he does not commit to endorsing phenomenalism, nor does he commit to endorsing alternatives, such as physicalism. While Quine does have worries about the prospects of phenomenalism, I establish that these worries are not sufficient for him to discount it as a legitimate view. Crucially, I then show that this particular form of phenomenalist theorising is *first philosophical*. Quine's early tolerance to this form of first philosophical theorising, I contend, demonstrates that Quine was not always a naturalist.

In §1.4.2, I then show that, around 1952, Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism changes in a way vital for understanding the emergence of his naturalism. Namely, I show that Quine shifts from being tolerant of phenomenalism to viewing it as involving a perspective that is illegitimate. This shift, I argue, is indicative of his development into a view that *is* naturalistic.

1.4.1 Quine Before Naturalism

Here, I argue that Quine was not always a naturalist. I begin by presenting some preliminary support for this idea by examining suggestive claims that Quine makes in response to first philosophical epistemology in 1946. Having done so, I then provide more substantive evidence for the absence of naturalism in Quine's early work. To this end, I examine Quine's early attitude to phenomenalism. I argue that, while Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism doesn't seem quite so positive as some philosophers have claimed, he is still open to phenomenalism as a legitimate theory. In order to establish this, I consider worries that Quine has in his early work about phenomenalism and argue that, while Quine has genuine concerns about the prospects of phenomenalism, these worries aren't sufficient for him to rule it out as an option. I also explain that part of the appeal of phenomenalism for Quine is that the view involves the notion of epistemological priority. Having done so, I then argue that this form of phenomenalism is, in fact, a form of first philosophical theorising. In this way, Quine's early tolerance of phenomenalism amounts to an early tolerance of first philosophy. This, I take it, establishes that Quine was not always a naturalist.

First, then, let me motivate the idea that Quine lacks a naturalistic outlook in his earlier work by identifying some preliminary evidence suggestive of this fact. In 1946, Quine comes close to characterising traditional epistemological views as first philosophical in his lectures on Hume. Quine stresses that at the heart of the theory of knowledge is a drive for certainty to subdue doubts one has about the lack of certainty we find in science. Quine explains these attempts in ways that make them first philosophical (though he doesn't use the term). He speaks of the "philosophical urge to find a bed-rock of certainty somewhere beneath the probabilities of natural science."[163] And he characterises Plato's epistemology as follows: "he was in search of basic principles, to which certainty might attach, *behind* the science of nature."[164]

Crucially, though, Quine doesn't respond to these approaches with his naturalistic alternative to first philosophical epistemology, nor does he stress that the perspective that they are looking for is illegitimate, as he does in his later work. Quine raises a response to the idea that appealing to probability isn't stable enough to secure science because it leads to an infinite regress of higher-order probabilities. Moreover, at the end of the lectures, where Quine explains how Hume's influence remains in contemporary empiricism, he outlines two main projects that are Humean in spirit. Neither of them is naturalistic. One is reductionism ("constructive empiricism") and the other is pragmaticism.[165] If Quine had his naturalistic view at this time, it seems plausible to expect that it would materialize in some way.

Of course, this evidence is suggestive. Let me now bolster this by providing a more rigorous case in favour of the idea that Quine lacks a naturalistic perspective in his early work. In order to do this, let us now turn to Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism. Some philosophers have taken a strong reading of Quine's early view on phenomenalism according to which Quine *accepts* phenomenalism. For example, Murphey has attributed this view to Quine.[166] Putnam also reads Quine, before the 1950s, as a phenomenalist, at least about observation sentences.[167] Quine himself also seems to endorse phenomenalism at the Harvard Logic Group meetings in 1940-41. In contrast to Carnap and, probably, Tarski, Quine

[163] 'Lectures on David Hume's Philosophy', p.51
[164] Ibid. p.52
[165] Ibid. p.135
[166] Murphey, M. 2012. pp.54-5
[167] Putnam, H. 1982. p.156. See also Yolton, J. 1967. p.156. He reads *Word and Object* as involving a meta-philosophy which leads to phenomenalism.

advocated on behalf of the view that the language they developed for nominalism starts with predicates for sense-data over predicates for things.[168] Similarly, Lugg sees the following claim in 'Truth by Convention' as Quine's expression of hope about Carnap's reductionism:

> In *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt* Carnap has pursued this program [reductionism] with such amazing success as to provide grounds for expecting all the expressions to be definable ultimately in terms of logic and mathematics plus just one "empirical" primitive…[169]

This early apparent hopefulness is different from most of Quine's other discussions of Carnap's project in the *Aufbau* where, while Quine praises the ingenuity in Carnap's constructions, he raises numerous problems for it.[170]

Let me address Lugg's claim first. This evidence is from 1935, after Quine has witnessed and discussed parts of the *Logical Syntax* with Carnap. It is therefore unclear why Quine would place any weight on the strict reductive aspirations of the *Aufbau* being true, as Quine was certainly aware Carnap's view had, by that point, moved on. Hylton has warned against reading Quine as having a developed view of epistemology this early in his work, and uses the same quote as evidence for this claim.[171] According to Hylton, the fact that Quine is still expressing optimism for the *Aufbau* project after Carnap has given up on it shows a naivety and a lack of depth in Quine's understanding of epistemological issues at this time. Hylton seems right that Quine's epistemological views at this time are fairly naïve. In Chapter 2, I'll explain in detail just how in flux they are, such that it's not plausible to attribute to Quine a substantive and developed epistemological outlook this early. This undermines Lugg's claim

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[168] See Mancosu, P. 2010. p.397. On these meetings, Carnap writes: "[w]e have not agreed among ourselves whether it is better to begin with thing-predicates or sense-data-predicates. For the first: I and Tarski…For the second: Goodman and Quine". Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.95. And in a letter from Goodman to Quine, Goodman writes: "Carnap's resistance may have softened a little as a result of being shown that his argument that phenomenal sentences are incomplete presupposes the physicalistic basis he uses it to defend. I hope you are as successful at the department meeting […] as you were in getting phenomenalism another hearing in the group." Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.95 f40

[169] 'Truth by Convention', p.100 f20. Lugg, A. 2012. p.236

[170] See, for example, 'Two Dogmas', p.40

[171] Hylton, P. 2001. p.269 f26

that Quine's early view should be seen as aspiring for the phenomenalistic project involved in the *Aufbau* to be shown successful.

Indeed, I think there might be something further going on here that's plausible to attribute to Quine, and that explains why he includes this link to Carnap in 'Truth by Convention'. This nod to Carnap (and a minor nod too, given the above quote is given in a footnote) is similar to Quine's nod to Duhem in 'Two Dogmas'.[172] Quine is often taken to be stressing his commonality to Duhem's holism in that paper, just as Lugg takes the above as evidence of Quine stressing a commonality to Carnap. However, when Quine wrote 'Two Dogmas', he wasn't aware of Duhem's view, and so the mention of Duhem was added at the suggestion of Carl Hempel and Phillip Frank to locate Quine's view within the broader landscape.[173] It's plausible that, while Carnap's view is far from unknown by Quine at this time, given 'Truth by Convention' occurs so close to the Carnap lectures, this emphasis of the *Aufbau* is given with a similar purpose. Quine is not *really* in tune with deep issues in epistemology at this time, but he wants to highlight that such work does exist, especially work that he's fond of. This is further suggested by the last sentence of the footnote: "[b]ut for the present cursory considerations no such spectacular reducibility need be presupposed."[174] Lugg's interpretation of the hopeful nature of this early link Quine makes to Carnap's view seems too optimistic to establish that Quine outright accepts phenomenalism in his early work.

Now, let me address the more general idea that Quine's early work involves a commitment to phenomenalism. A further way in which Quine seems to accept phenomenalism in his very early work is that Quine accepted Lewis' distinction between sense-data as 'the given' and the 'pragmatic a priori' in a graduate paper from 1931.[175] This would give us extremely early

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[172] 'Two Dogmas', p.41 f17

[173] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.394. In a slightly later paper, Quine explains Duhem's view explicitly, likening his own view to it. 'On Mental Entities', p.222. Moreover, in a posthumously published paper given five days after 'Two Dogmas', Quine also includes a mention of Duhem, hence Quine must have had this realization very quickly. Verhaegh includes in the published version of this paper the note from Hempel which alerted Quine to Duhem's holism. 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.182. Quine is more constructive, though brief, in *Pursuit of Truth*: "[t]his is the important insight called *holism*. Pierre Duhem made much of it early in this century, but not too much." p.14. Quine must be more acquainted with Duhem's view at this later time, given he thinks it's insufficient.

[174] 'Truth by Convention', p.100 f20.

[175] Isaac, J. 2005. p.220. Quine relates notions like the given to sense-data in 'The Sensory Support of Science'. p.327

evidence of Quine siding with phenomenalism. However, as Isaac notes, Quine seems worried about there being a strict distinction between the given and the pragmatic a priori even in this very early paper. It's not clear, therefore, that we can even attribute a stable form of phenomenalism to Quine's very early work. So, despite Quine's appearance of receptivity to phenomenalism in this early work, I take it that we have good reason to be cautious of attributing to him an overtly positive attitude towards the view.

A further reason for exercising caution is that, while Quine appears to be open to phenomenalism in his early work, he also raises some worries for the view. Now, these worries aren't substantial enough that they move Quine to *reject* phenomenalism as a plausible position, but the fact that he has such worries might explain why his attitude towards phenomenalism lacks proper positive commitment. For example, Quine starts to have serious worries about the relevance and value of phenomenalism in the mid-1940s. We see this in some of the problems that Quine raises for the view in his notes.[176] Here, Quine worries that epistemological, and particularly, phenomenalistic (which he seems to consider as the sole approach to epistemology at this point) issues are irrelevant to his ontological ideas at the time. Indeed, Quine's reflections on his earlier work show that he was interested more in ontological questions than epistemological ones.[177] His focus then switches in his later work to epistemology. It's plausible that part of the reason Quine doesn't have a more definitive and developed epistemology in his early work, and so doesn't take sides between views like phenomenalism and physicalism, is that he's more concerned about developing his ontological views during much of this period. Quine also seems to appreciate an important part of his later main worry about phenomenalism when he considers the idea that perception itself should be understood as a physical aspect of a physical organism.[178] This further reinforces the idea that while Quine is open to accepting phenomenalism, he's also considering other, rival, epistemologies, in this case, a physicalistic one.

We also see early worries for phenomenalism in Quine's views on confirmation before 'Two Dogmas'. Quine is wary about adhering to the notion of confirmation compared to many

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[176] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.95 f37

[177] For example, he writes: "[i]n my youth I thought of the question of existence, or what there is, as perhaps the most basic question of philosophy and science. In the fullness of time the scales fell from my eyes." 'The Growth of Mind and Language'. p.189

[178] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.95

other empiricists at that time. But Quine also highlights what role he would take logic to play in order to make the notion of confirmation respectable. Quine makes this point in relation to the idea that, because outright reductionism doesn't seem like it will work when it comes to reducing our theory of the world to experience, something less rigid that people hope for instead is that statements will be confirmed, to some degree, by experience, or by statements in phenomenalistic language. This then raises the issue of making sense of degrees of confirmation. However, Quine claims that, if one is still going to pursue something like the reductive programme, i.e. something like phenomenalism, then one is stuck with this problem:

> This is a vast problem, but, according to the considerations I have just sketched, it would seem to be an *essential* problem for empiricism; for, degree of confirmation seems to be the one surviving connection between sciences, or common sense, and the direct experience which is the empiricist's bedrock.[179]

Quine then mentions some people who are engaged in this problem, noting that he is "far from content with the results to date".[180] So, Quine is far from optimistic about reductionism via confirmation at this time, yet he doesn't give up on the view. The significance of confirmation that Quine highlights is the essential role that developments in modern logic are playing in attempting to make empiricism work. Either the problem of confirmation will be solved, using modern logic, or it will be found unsolvable, but "any *conclusive* arguments to this negative effect will probably have to exploit the resources of modern logic in subtle ways that none of us have yet envisaged."[181]

So, in light of the fact that Quine raises worries for phenomenalism, but doesn't dismiss the view in light of these worries, it seems fair to characterise Quine's early attitude as tolerant towards phenomenalism. In his early work, Quine remains open to accepting phenomenalism, but he doesn't take sides on whether to accept it or a physicalistic alternative.[182] Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism, then, is tolerant, if not overly positive. We see this most famously in 'On What There Is' where Quine outlines the relative benefits of two conceptual

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[179] 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy', p.142
[180] Ibid
[181] Ibid
[182] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.102

schemes in terms of their simplicity; the phenomenalistic one being ontologically simpler, and the physicalistic one being conceptually simpler.[183] While Quine isn't settling for a choice of conceptual scheme here — "the question what ontology actually to adopt still stands open, and the obvious counsel is tolerance and an experimental spirit" — he isn't presenting phenomenalism as a poor choice, nor does he exclude it as something that doesn't make sense.[184] Quine even has traces of this tolerant view as late as 1951.[185] This attitude contrasts sharply with the attitude Quine displays in 1952, as I'll argue in the next section.

Now, to clarify, by characterising Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism as tolerant, I do not mean to suggest that Quine is viewing phenomenalism as one amongst many possible conceptual schemes that are all equally correct. Quine's tolerance is not so liberal that he intends us to tolerate rival conceptual schemes without hope of ever crowning one the victor. Rather, Quine's view is tolerant towards phenomenalism in the sense that phenomenalism is a plausible and motivated view that may turn out to be the one he adopts. We see this in 'On What There Is'. Here, as I have just explained, Quine stresses that the "obvious counsel is tolerance" and that each conceptual scheme "deserves to be developed".[186] At the same time, however, Quine also counsels "an experimental spirit" and is asking the question of "what ontology actually to adopt" or "[w]hich [conceptual scheme] should prevail?".[187]

In addition to Quine's tolerance of phenomenalism, the phenomenalistic conceptual scheme is singled out as claiming "epistemological priority."[188] Indeed, one of the main reasons for Quine's tolerance of phenomenalism at this time is that Quine retains epistemological value for epistemological priority, and he thinks that epistemological priority plays an important role in phenomenalism. Namely, that phenomenalism is tied to epistemological priority in that the reduction it's trying to accomplish is a reduction of

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[183] 'On What There Is', pp.17-8. The phenomenalistic conceptual scheme is ontologically simpler because it only posits sense-data.
[184] Ibid
[185] See, for example, Quine's letter to James B. Conant: "[t]he philosopher who epistemologizes backward to sense data […] is fashioning a conceptual scheme just as the physicist does; but a different one, for a different subject. […] He agrees that there are electrons and tables and chairs and other people, and that the electrons and other elementary particles are 'fundamental' in the physical sense. […] But sense data are 'fundamental' in the epistemological sense." Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.27
[186] 'On What There Is', pp.17-9
[187] Ibid
[188] Ibid, p.19

knowledge to something that is epistemically prior to that knowledge, e.g. scientific knowledge to sense-data.

In fact, Quine thinks that epistemological priority is one of the main problems in philosophy in the mid-1940s. In a letter suggesting the most urgent issues in philosophy for a Rockefeller conference, for example, Quine claims that not only is epistemological priority one of the two most urgent issues (the other being clarification of cognitive synonymy), but that epistemological priority is crucial for getting clear on the task of epistemology itself:

> Clarification of the notion of epistemological priority is needed to know what the task of epistemology (as distinct e.g. of psychology) is; for, epistemological priority is the direction in which epistemological reduction of knowledge to more fundamental or immediate knowledge seeks to progress.[189]

This is a strong claim. Quine thinks that we need to clarify the notion of epistemological priority in order to clarify the very task of epistemology. This helps to explain why Quine seems to consider reductionism as the only real candidate in epistemology at times, since the very task of epistemology is characterised here in terms of epistemological priority, and epistemological priority is a crucial part of reductionism. More generally, that which is epistemologically prior to science is traditionally used to justify science from a perspective independent of science, or it is used to reduce science to such a perspective. The independence of science is required in the first case because if that which was meant to support science wasn't independent of science, the justification would be circular. And in the second case, the independence is required because otherwise the reduction wouldn't work, that is, it would not reduce scientific knowledge to "more fundamental or immediate knowledge". While my focus is on phenomenalism, since this is the view Quine is open to, Quine also emphasises the function of epistemological priority in rationalist views, e.g. in Plato or Descartes.[190]

So, thus far, we've seen that Quine, while lacking an overtly positive attitude towards

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[189] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.96
[190] See, for example, 'Lectures on David Hume's Philosophy', p.51

phenomenalism, maintains a tolerance of the view, and this tolerance is at least partially explained by his retaining value in the notion of epistemological priority. Now, what I will show is that this early tolerance to phenomenalism is the key to understanding the fact that Quine cannot have been a naturalist in this early work. This is because the phenomenalist perspective that he is tolerant to is, in fact, first philosophical. Let me explain.

In order for Quine's view of phenomenalism to be characterised as first philosophical it needs to be the case that sense-data, experience, or whatever it is that is meant to be epistemologically prior to science, is viewed as real in some special sense when compared with ordinary objects, or, more generally, when compared with everything else that we accept as real in our overall scientific theory. First philosophical items must be epistemologically *prior*, relatively *fundamental*, or even *absolutely* fundamental, with respect to (merely) ordinary objects or the empirical entities found out by science. Sense data, or similar notions, are not supposed to be part of our ongoing scientific theory so that they can provide support for science, or so that they can provide a perspective on the nature of reality that transcends science (which science can then be reduced to). Such philosophising takes place outside of the experimental method that governs our ongoing scientific theory. In such a way, sense-data cannot merely be posits, i.e. they must be real in some more substantive sense than everything else that we accept as real.

What makes appreciating Quine's openness to phenomenalism as a first philosophical view difficult to grasp is that Quine often uses terms like 'myth' and 'posit' in different ways. In his naturalistic work, Quine uses them interchangeably, and such terms are not meant to suggest that what they're talking about are not real in the fullest sense that science can accommodate. As Quine stresses in *Word and Object*: "[t]o call a posit a posit is not to patronize it".[191]

While Quine has a robustly realist view of myths and posits by 1960, this view doesn't extend smoothly throughout his work. In his earlier work, we find some differences in how he views the status of myths. Quine's use of myths is perhaps most well-known in 'On What There Is', even if, here, he doesn't seem to offer as robust a view in terms of realism as he does in his later naturalistic view. Quine claims that we can choose between different

[191] *Word and Object*, p.22

conceptual schemes, and, on some schemes, some posits will figure *merely* as myths, the latter being ultimately eliminable and are included merely to help streamline our theory. Myths contrast with what our conceptual scheme has to quantify over in order to be true; myths in this sense are not values of our variables, and so not proper ontological commitments. This is clear, for example, when Quine likens the myth of physical objects on a phenomenalistic conceptual scheme to the nominalistic approach of formalism about mathematics. Quine writes: "…an attitude of formalism may with equal justice be adopted toward the physical conceptual scheme, in turn, by the pure aesthete or phenomenalist."[192] This doesn't make Quine's use of mythmaking notably negative, but it does show a contrast between the phenomenalist's fundamental posits, and ordinary scientific objects. In 1948, then, Quine is suggesting that physical objects are less real than sense-data on a phenomenalistic scheme, and, as argued above, Quine open to such a scheme.[193]

Importantly, we can also see evidence for this view slightly later on. In the later version of 'Two Dogmas', published in *From a Logical Point of View*, Quine seems to use 'positing' and 'myth-making' interchangeably. Quine stresses that while the myth of physical objects, epistemologically, has "proved more efficacious than other myths as a device for working manageable structure into the flux of experience", this doesn't mean that it's epistemologically a substantially different type of thing than, say, the myth of the Greek gods, which we tend to think of as paradigmatically unreal objects. Quine no longer seems to have the earlier view where 'myth' means ultimately eliminable.[194] He says of the *myth* of physical objects that "[*p*]*ositing* does not stop with macroscopic physical objects" and

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[192] 'On What There Is', p.18

[193] See also a letter from Quine to James B. Conant, where Quine emphasises, just like he does in 'On What There Is', that from the perspective of epistemology, sense data have fundamental nature compared to the posits involved in science: "The philosopher who epistemologizes backward to sense data […] is fashioning a conceptual scheme just as the physicist does; but a different one, for a different subject. […] He agrees that there are electrons and tables and chairs and other people, and that the electrons and other elementary particles are 'fundamental' in the physical sense. […] But sense data are 'fundamental' in the epistemological sense." Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.27. Quine also claims, elsewhere, that his aim is to "give to the conceptual scheme everything *except* the raw confirmatory experiences, & to find the external purpose of the conceptual scheme in those experiences". Sourced in and emphasis from Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.99. And, in 'On What There Is', Quine describes the construction of a conceptual scheme as aimed at providing a "set of concepts adequate to the play-by-play reporting of immediate experience." pp.17-19

[194] 'Two Dogmas', p.44

[p]hysical objects, small and large, are not the only *posits*".[195] The focus on myth here, rather than merely talking about posits, seems to be a product of the fact that Quine appreciates that scientific theorising is expressed in language, and language doesn't aim to do anything like correspond to some underlying reality. Hence, all of our posits are weaved into our human-made tapestry of science.[196] Quine appears to view posits and myths as all on the same footing, it's just that some have "proved more efficacious than other myths as a device for working a manageable structure into the flux of experience". By "manageable structure", Quine means a structure that allows us to "expedite our dealings with sense experience."[197]

These claims are also present in the original version of 'Two Dogmas'.[198] However, there is an important difference in this earlier version of the paper. While discussing the same points, Quine introduces an analogy that is missing from the later version. Quine supposes that we develop an algebraic theory to reason about the rational numbers, but, due to it being complex to handle practically, we find that we can simplify the algebraic theory "by conceptually augmenting our ontology with some mythical entities, to be called irrational numbers".[199] Quine clearly doesn't think that the myth of the irrational numbers are real in the same way as the rational numbers because, he stresses, our interests are still only about the rational numbers and, crucially, while practically we're able to get by much easier, we do this "simply by *pretending* that the irrational numbers are there too."[200] In this way, Quine claims that the irrational numbers are not real in the same way as the rational numbers. Quine then extends this reasoning to the difference between physical objects and experience: "[n]ow I suggest that experience is analogous to the rational numbers and that the physical objects, in analogy to the irrational numbers, are posits which serve merely to simplify our treatment of experience."[201] This shows clearly that Quine thinks there's a substantial difference in the

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[195] 'Two Dogmas', p.45. My emphasis.
[196] See, for example, Quine's claim in 1952, in relation to the idea for *Word and Object*, that he wants to present science as "a gradual warping and adjusting of the pattern of language, or myth, in such ways as seem increasingly to serve the pragmatic purpose of anticipating experience". Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.142
[197] 'Two Dogmas', p.45
[198] 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism'. 1951. *The Philosophical Review*. Jan., Vol. 60, No. 1. pp.20-43. All quotes in this paragraph are from this version of the paper.
[199] p.41
[200] Ibid. Emphasis added.
[201] Ibid. p.42. Quine draws a similar analogy in 'On What There Is': "Physical objects are postulated entities which round out and simplify our account of experience, just as the introduction of irrational numbers simplifies laws of arithmetic. From the point of view of the

sense in which experience is real and the sense in which everyday objects are real, if we can even say something so strong about the latter. Moreover, and in a similar vein, in 1951, on the cusp of 'Two Dogmas' being published, Quine writes the following in a note: "everything is a posit *except* the flux of raw experience".[202]

To return to the main thread of my argument, these claims show that inquiry is less constrained in Quine's early work than in his naturalistic work. This is because, in his early work, Quine lacks the constraint of always working from within science and the rejection of first philosophy. As I explained in §1.3, first philosophical theorizing can involve making claims about the nature of reality that are supposed to be understood in some special way when compared with the claims about the nature of reality that are made within science. As I've demonstrated above, it is precisely this type of theorising that Quine is open to in his early work. This is important when one considers the reason concerning why physics is 'ultimate' for Quine as a naturalist (as discussed in §1.3.3). Physics is viewed as understanding the world at its most fundamental level. This is because we're working from within science and there's no first philosophy, i.e. there's nothing firmer than or beyond science that we can appeal to. The immanence of naturalistic inquiry is felt strongly at the level of physics. But Quine lacks this constraint in his early work. There are avenues that are open to him that would provide him with something that is fundamental and outside of physics, as well as the rest of science, e.g. sense-data. Sense data, or their equivalents, are viewed as real in some special sense when compared with the things that we accept in science and they are also viewed as separate from our ongoing scientific theory. The philosopher, on this view, is presented as occupying a position external to science but that bears on science. The philosopher, in other words, is conducting first philosophy. Such a philosopher cannot be felicitously described as a naturalist. Therefore, Quine, with his openness to such phenomenalist theorising, was not a naturalist.

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conceptual scheme of the elementary arithmetic of rational numbers alone, the broader arithmetic of rational and irrational numbers would have the status of a convenient myth, simpler than the literal truth (namely, the arithmetic of rationals) and yet containing that literal truth as a scattered part. Similarly, from a phenomenalistic point of view, the conceptual scheme of physical objects is a convenient myth, simpler than the literal truth and yet containing that literal truth as a scattered part." p.18

[202] Letter to Paul Weiss. Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.99 f47. Emphasis added.

Here's the upshot of this discussion. Recall that, in §1.2, I argued that philosophers often view Quine as having been a naturalist for much longer than he explicitly describes himself as being one. Quine is interpreted as being *implicitly* a naturalist for a considerable amount of time before 1960. On some of the interpretations I examined, Quine is interpreted as moving towards being fully naturalistic, with the seeds of naturalism having been sown very early in his work, perhaps even as far back as his graduate work. On others, Quine is more directly interpreted as being a naturalist in his early work. However, importantly, the characterisation of Quine's naturalism I've provided in §1.3 shows that it does not admit of degrees. Either one works immanently within our ongoing scientific theory, rejecting theorising that is first philosophical, or they don't. Quine either is a naturalist, or he's not. Naturalism can't allow for the possibility that one works from within science most of the time, but occasionally carries out first philosophy. Quine insists that "[t]here is no such cosmic exile."[203]

Indeed, it is through appreciating this fact that we are able to see that Quine is not a naturalist until *much* further into his development than is often thought. Naturalism involves an in-principle rejection of the legitimacy of first philosophical perspectives, otherwise one is not always working within ongoing science. Quine lacks this perspective as late as 1951, as I've argued above. Both of these ways of interpreting Quine's commitment to naturalism as implicit in his early work — where Quine is either a naturalist from very early on or is naturalistic in some sense and becomes more fully naturalistic — are undermined by the argument of this chapter. The generality of Quine's naturalism has been greatly exaggerated and, consequently, Quine's development has to be understood in a different, more complex, way.

1.4.2 From Phenomenalism to Naturalism

Now that we've recognised that the extent of Quine's naturalism has been exaggerated, given that Quine was not a naturalist in his early work, let me conclude this chapter by proposing a way in which we can recognise Quine's consequent shift to naturalism. Namely, in this section, I establish that Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism *changes* in a way that is vitally important for understanding the development of his naturalism. Recall that what

[203] *Word and Object*, p.275

established that Quine was not a naturalist was his openness to a particular form of phenomenalism. What I will show here is that Quine *later* rejects phenomenalism on grounds which are plainly naturalistic. It is this change in attitude, then, that illuminates the emergence of Quine's naturalism.

I'll begin by explaining the main argument that Quine uses in his later work against phenomenalism. This argument, I contend, demonstrates that Quine's perspective on phenomenalism is multifaceted. More specifically, Quine entertains two possibilities for phenomenalism. On the one hand, epistemological priority and related notions like sense-data could be understood as internal to science, in which case Quine thinks that such an approach is at best moot, and at worst it gets in the way of theorising. On the other hand, such notions could purport to be external to science, in which case Quine rejects this theorising as illegitimate. Crucially, both of these ways of viewing phenomenalism display an attitude indicative of naturalism. Either phenomenalism is made sense of immanently within science, or it is rejected as first philosophical.

First, let us consider Quine's argument against phenomenalism as it is typically presented. The argument is that sense-data, or that which is supposed to be epistemologically prior to science, can't provide us with a science-independent foundation for science. The phenomenalist wants this foundation so that they can either justify science on the basis of it or reduce science to that foundation. Against this picture, Quine stresses that sense-data, or similar notions, belong to our scientific theory. As Quine puts it: "it is a mistake to seek an immediately evident reality, somehow more immediately evident than the realm of external objects."[204] Both the physical objects that we're trying to account for (as well as the rest of science) *and* the means by which we try and account for them, using sense-data or something similar, are theoretical posits in our overall scientific theory; there is nothing higher than our ongoing theory we can appeal to. Attempts to reduce our theory of the world to something epistemologically prior to that theory, therefore, won't work, since the perspective needed for that reduction is unintelligible. This is an argument that Quine often gives in his later work against phenomenalism and it's an argument that, once it's been originally presented, starts to

[204] 'On Mental Entities', p.225. See also 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.238

proliferate into Quine's work both as a general worry for phenomenalism, as well as particular worries for specific phenomenalists.[205]

Now, within this argument, Quine is considering two possibilities for phenomenalism. The first of which is that notions such as sense-data and epistemological priority are internal to science, in which case these notions are not rejected as illegitimate but end up being moot and unmotivated. The second of which is that notions such as sense-data and epistemological priority aim to be external from science, and so are rejected as illegitimate. In what follows, I will present each of these in turn, and explain that both of these arguments are indicative of a naturalistic perspective.

Let's begin with the first option. Quine often writes as if the phenomenalist is simply wrong in thinking that they're appealing to anything outside of science. Accordingly, what sense Quine can make of the phenomenalist position, which includes notions like sense-data or epistemological priority, is reinterpreted into scientific terms. For example, Quine writes: "[t]he old epistemologists may have thought that their atomistic attitude toward sense data was grounded in introspection, *but it was not*. It was grounded in their knowledge of the physical world."[206] Phenomenalists thought that they were relying on introspection to make claims about sense-data, but they were *actually* making scientific claims. More generally, phenomenalists were wrong to think that they were appealing to anything other than plain old science.

With this perspective, Quine emphasises that, in being treated as scientific posits, sense-data can therefore be seen to be real: "[s]ense data are posits too. They are posits of psychological theory, but not, on that account unreal."[207]Appreciating that sense-data are posits demonstrates that they are the sorts of things that could be real, and allows us to ask questions about what, exactly, sense-data are within the context of our developing scientific theory.

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[205] For Quine's argument directed against Berkeley see 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.258. And against the *Aufbau* see *Word and Object*, p.2. To see this problem related to the phenomenalist's appeal to memory, see 'On Mental Entities', p.224. *From Stimulus to Science*, p.15. See also 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', p.462. 'Posits and Reality', p.251

[206] *The Roots of Reference*, p.2. Emphasis added.

[207] 'Posits and Reality', p.252

With the phenomenalist's posits understood in scientific terms, Quine often explains how they relate to other scientific posits. In particular, Quine stresses that not only are sense-data impure, in being part of ongoing science, but, actually, they are more theoretical and conjectural than the ordinary objects that they are meant to support or account for. He writes that "the notion of pure sense datum is a pretty tenuous abstraction, a good deal more conjectural than the notion of an external object".[208] Sense data, as Quine puts it in *Word and Object*, are a "*derivative idiom*"; an idiom that depends "upon sidelong glances into natural science", not unlike physical objects.[209]

This relates closely to Quine's stress on the fact that physical objects are the paradigmatically real theoretical objects.[210] Ordinary objects not only anchor our sense of what an object is, but they are also our conceptual entry-point into what an object is.[211] We start with these objects and then, by analogy, expand and develop our science to include more exciting things. Quine's claim is that sense-data are more theoretical than ordinary objects. We see this when Quine writes:

> …it is by reference to them [ordinary objects] that the very notions of reality and evidence are acquired, and that the concepts which have to do with physical particles or even with sense data tend to be framed and phrased.[212]

In order for Quine to do this, he has to stress that there's a similarity between the way in which we posit theoretical objects and the way in which we posit ordinary objects. Namely, neither theoretical nor ordinary objects are found directly in experience.[213] Quine embraces this fact and uses it to explain how, via science, we eventually arrive at posits like sense-data. But phenomenalists, on the other hand, often react to this by looking for something more epistemologically primitive than ordinary objects, and so appeal to things like sense-data as

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[208] 'On Mental Entities'. p.225. See also *Word and Object*, p.3
[209] *Word and Object*, pp.1-2
[210] In more rigorous science, of course, one isn't going to count ordinary objects as the values of their variables, but it is practically necessary to posit them earlier. See 'The Growth of Mind and Language', p.188
[211] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.24, p.35. 'Facts of the Matter', pp.275-76. 'Identify, Ostension, and Hypostasis', p.77.
[212] 'Posits and Reality', p.252. See also 'On Mental Entities', p.225. *Word and Object*, p.3
[213] See 'On Mental Entities', p.223

an epistemological foundation for those ordinary objects, or as a basis that science is to be reduced to. Quine's point is that such a search is always going to fail. Any sense that we can make of such appeals will give us claims that take place within our ongoing scientific theory.

Remarkably, Quine appears to have appreciated that sense-data are highly abstract as early as his graduate studies. We can see this in the perspective that Quine has on experience in a graduate paper. Quine writes:

> My experient career is not a simple matter of consciously taking odds and ends and amorphous bits of unidentified data and fitting them into a system; what I see before me is a chair, not an array of varicolored quadrilaterals which I consciously assemble and classify as a chair. My immediate experience, rather than consisting of raw material to be interpreted, is already seething with interpretation; in peeling off the interpretation I am peeling off a goodly portion of the immediate datum . . . In a word, my thesis is that no analysis of a given experience can yield any other experience which is, in any full sense, the "bare datum" of the form of experience; any such analysis is, rather, merely a further interpretation.[214]

As Isaac notes, on this picture, there's "no kernel of preconceptual or uninterpreted experience to which we might appeal in constructing our theory of the world."[215] A phenomenalistic foundation, prior to science, is undermined by Quine in this early paper. Both here and in his *much* later work, Quine emphasises that experience is, as he puts it above, "seething with interpretation", and so not pure and pre-conceptual. However, what's missing in this very early argument is an emphasis that sense-data, in not being preconceptual, are part of our scientific theory itself and so can't be prior to it. This is a further subtle step from the remarks above. Quine seems to have missed the force of this argument, and his tolerance for phenomenalism amongst alternatives takes precedence until Quine eventually rejects the view. He comes close, though. The sentence before the section quoted above shows that Quine appreciated how abstract sense-data are: "[w]hat are those "bare data"[…]? Certainly they are themselves a high refinement of abstraction."[216] What we can appreciate is that Quine's later view is distinctive and more sophisticated in that it

[214] Sourced in Isaac, J. 2005. p.221
[215] Isaac, J. 2005. p.221
[216] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.26

stresses that sense-data are highly refined abstractions *and* they are internal parts of our ongoing scientific theory.

Phenomenalism, then, is still viewed as making sense in Quine's later work, providing that it's understood as part of science. We've seen that Quine makes sense of the idea that we could posit sense-data scientifically. However, Quine stresses that this is something he won't do:

> I shall not guess how useful the positing of sense data may be for psychological theory, or more specifically for a psychologically grounded theory of evidence, nor what detailed traits may profitably be postulated concerning them.[217]

The reason for this is that, from Quine's perspective, such posits won't fare well. They will at best be "moot" and at worst impede theorising:

> …it is moot indeed whether the positing of additional objects of a mental kind is a help or a hindrance to science. Or perhaps not so moot. At any rate it is moot or else it is clear that they are a hindrance.[218]

By "moot", I take Quine to mean that they simply won't play any theoretical role in epistemology. Viewing sense-data as either moot posits, or posits that impede epistemology, isn't positive, but it's not as problematic as viewing them as incoherent posits. Quine makes it clear that this claim is meant to be understood as one that is part of science when he explains that the idea that we don't need to posit such entities in addition to physical ones is being "put forward in the spirit of a hypothesis of natural science".[219]

Quine also attempts to make sense of epistemological priority by construing it as an immanent notion of science in his later work. For example, we see this in 'Epistemology Naturalized', where Quine *explicitly* drops the requirement of epistemological priority. [220] In this paper, Quine stresses that, from his perspective, we simply no longer need to abide by

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[217] 'Posits and Reality', p.252
[218] 'On Mental Entities', pp.226-27
[219] Ibid. p.227
[220] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.84

epistemological priority, i.e. it is a requirement that isn't motivated. The reason that it's not motivated is that epistemological priority is often posited to try and *justify* our knowledge of the external world by providing a way to support science. Someone who places value in epistemological priority, understood within science, will often be looking for what is epistemologically prior in terms of our awareness of experience. Quine writes:

> In the old epistemological context the conscious form had priority, for we were out to justify our knowledge of the external word by rational reconstruction, and that demands awareness. Awareness ceased to be demanded when we gave up trying to justify our knowledge of the external world.…What to count as observation now can be settled in terms of the stimulation of sensory receptors, let consciousness fall where it may.[221]

The phenomenalist may be trying to justify science, using that which is epistemologically prior to science. But Quine is stressing that, if phenomenalism is understood as a theory within science, such motivation is lost. Attempting to use science to provide support for science would be circular. This means that our theorising is no longer constrained by the requirement of awareness, and hence, epistemological priority is not a motivated notion. Additionally, Quine's response to the phenomenalist who is not trying to justify science but who still retains value in epistemological priority is, as I've explained above, to insist that at the conceptual level, there is nothing that is epistemologically more primitive than ordinary physical objects, i.e. posits that are part of our overall scientific worldview. It might be the case that our experience is more fundamental at an evidential level, but, given its conceptual shortcomings, it is unable to play a robust epistemological role in our theorising.

In addition to the lack of motivation for epistemological priority when it comes to making sense of observation, Quine also stresses that the relative obscurity of epistemological priority compared to scientific phenomena, like the triggering of our sensory nerves, is further reason that we should be glad that we don't need it.[222] Epistemological priority, while not illegitimate, is either theoretically redundant, or obscure enough that it leads to unclarity in our theory of the world.

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[221] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.84
[222] See 'The Sensory Support of Science'. p.328. *The Roots of Reference*, p.3

In summary, then, Quine's later perspective on phenomenalism sometimes interprets it as a theory that takes place immanently within our ongoing science. Accordingly, notions like sense-data and epistemological priority are seen to be an internal part of our scientific theory. While Quine doesn't view this way of theorising as illegitimate, he does stress that the prospects for phenomenalism are bleak. Understood as internal to science, these notions are at best moot, and, at worst, get in the way of theorising.

Having considered the first way that Quine interprets phenomenalism, let's now look at the second. In his later work, Quine *also* views phenomenalism as a position that is illegitimate. Quine often writes that if sense-data, or their equivalents, are to play the role of a posit which has epistemological priority to science, then this is inherently mistaken. The reason that sense-data and epistemological priority, understood this way, are viewed as incoherent is Quine doesn't think that we can't make sense of theorising external or prior to science.

More generally, Quine's claim is that the project phenomenalism undertakes is itself inherently confused. That is, Quine has an objection *in principle* to the coherence of this view.[223] To put this another way, traditional epistemologists distinguish between our sense-data or experience on the one hand, and our scientific lore on the other. They then try and relate the former to the latter in an epistemologically robust way that requires the former to be distinct from science.[224] Quine's problem with this picture is that the way in which this relationship is conceived of by phenomenalists is completely mistaken. That is, the idea of an independent and autonomous way of thinking about experience is not coherent. This general claim about the incoherence of epistemological priority points to a fundamental flaw in traditional approaches to epistemology for Quine.[225] This explains why Quine's appreciation of this incoherence motivated a radical shift in his perspective on epistemology.

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[223] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.15-35

[224] Note that this attempt to 'relate' experience to scientific lore admits of multiple interpretations according to which variant of phenomenalistic theorising one is considering. It may be an attempt to *justify* science on the basis of experience, or to merely *reduce* science to experience. For the purposes of elucidating Quine's argument here, I set aside this complexity. I will touch on this at the end of this section, however.

[225] For the idea that Quine's rejection of phenomenalism is not principled, see, for example, Maddy, P. 2007. p.85. Gibson, R. 1992. p.17. Hacker, P.M.S. 2006. pp.236-40. Roth, P. 1990. §2. Fogelin, R.J. 2004. pp.19-27. Siegel, H. 1995. p.54. For a rejection of this idea, see also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.15-35

To appreciate the strength of Quine's rejection of phenomenalism understood in this way, consider how bleak the following claims are. Quine writes that "[t]here happens actually to be no hope for phenomenalism."[226] Quine describes the poor prospects of the project of phenomenalistic reductionism in the strongest of terms: "[e]pistemology, so conceived, continues to probe the sensory evidence for discourse about the world; but it no longer seeks to relate such discourse somehow to an imaginary *and impossible* sense-datum language."[227]

To clarify, Quine does not always present his problem with phenomenalism in this principled way. This can give a misleading picture of his later perspective on the view. For example, in 'Epistemology Naturalized', Quine identifies the *Aufbau* project as aiming at a phenomenalistic reduction of science into experience, logic, and set theory. Quine then claims that this project failed to provide a true translation, and so a proper reduction, of science. Crucially, however, Quine also claims that Carnap's views after the *Aufbau* (e.g. his use of reduction forms), where something weaker than definition is appealed to, should be dismissed because they are not sufficient to provide an elimination of science via reduction. Reduction forms do not, Quine stresses, provide equivalences between the sentences of science and the sentences of the phenomenalistic language. In this way, Carnap's projects after the *Aufbau* are viewed as only able to accomplish something much weaker than a proper phenomenalistic reduction. We see this clearly in the following passage:

> The fact is rather that the former and sterner kind of rational reconstruction [i.e. that involved in the *Aufbau*], where definition reigned…was nothing more nor less than a set of directions—or would have been, if successful—for accomplishing everything in terms of phenomena and set theory that we now accomplish in terms of bodies. It would have been a true reduction by translation, a legitimation by elimination. …Rational reconstruction by Carnap's later and looser reduction forms does none of this.[228]

Quine then claims that, in accepting a form of reductionism that doesn't aim to define, and so that doesn't aim to eliminate either, "it would seem more sensible to settle for

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[226] 'Vagaries of Definition', pp.52-3
[227] 'Posits and Reality', p.253. Emphasis added
[228] 'Epistemology Naturalized', pp.77-8

psychology."[229] That is, it would be better to focus on a project that reconstructs how science relates to its evidence that does not aim at an epistemological reduction. Now, this is a much weaker motivation for rejecting phenomenalistic reductionism than the claim that an autonomous phenomenalistic perspective is incoherent. Quine more often gives the stronger principled argument against the coherence of phenomenalism generally.[230]

To summarise, then, on the interpretation that has been concerning us here, Quine rejects phenomenalism because it aims to achieve a perspective that is external to science and that bears on science. Quine does this because the idea of finding a science-transcendent perspective on science doesn't make sense. In contrast to his earlier perspective that I presented in §1.4.1, Quine comes to realise that theorising from a perspective external to science, but that bears on science, is illegitimate. Putting all of this together, then, Quine's later perspective on phenomenalism either interprets it, or at least the phenomenalistic apparatus, as making or involving claims internal to science, in which case the view is either moot or unmotivated, or interprets it as making claims outside of science in order to either support science or provide a basis for science to be reduced to, in which case the view is illegitimate. It should be obvious that *both* of these grounds for rejecting phenomenalism are indicative of an attitude that is naturalistic. The fact that Quine rejects the intelligibility of phenomenalist theorising outside of science, and, indeed, can only make sense of phenomenalism as making claims internal to science is precisely what we should expect from Quine's naturalism.

Finally, having presented and explained Quine's later argument against phenomenalism, let me highlight some interesting complexities regarding Quine's position with respect to the view. As we've seen, phenomenalistic theorising has different variants. In pursuit of such theorising, one can attempt to justify science on an experiential basis, or one can merely attempt to reduce scientific lore to a phenomenalistic basis. Moreover, recall that we've been interested in analysing Quine's developing attitude towards phenomenalistic theorising around about the time of 1951, i.e. around about the time of the publication of 'Two Dogmas'. What's worth noting is that Quine's position on phenomenalism in 'Two Dogmas'

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[229] Ibid. p.78

[230] Indeed, later in 'Epistemology Naturalized', Quine presents a stronger argument against the coherence of phenomenalistic reductionism. See p.82. See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.15-35

appears to be fairly idiosyncratic. In Quine's work before 'Two Dogmas', as I've explained, he is open to a form of phenomenalistic reductionism. In (the original version of) 'Two Dogmas', Quine appears to be insisting that experience is real in a special way when compared to the objects that science posits. However, Quine is also arguing against the tenability of reductionism and putting forward a holistic picture of how science relates to its evidence. Therefore, the variant of phenomenalism that Quine entertains at this time does not seem capable of being reductive. This might appear to be a strange view for Quine to consider, but, as I explained above, Quine soon gives up on phenomenalism. Quine, then, appears to undergo a transition from an openness to reductive phenomenalism, to an openness to something like holistic phenomenalism, to finally jettisoning phenomenalism completely. It looks like 1951 marks a substantive step towards a naturalistic perspective insofar as it involves a decisive step away from reductive phenomenalism. Chapter 2 will provide a more thorough analysis of Quine's general philosophical development leading up to this time (and highlight the ways in which these development bear on the emergence of naturalism), but, for now, it's sufficient to note that while Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism becomes more complicated in 1951, his door to phenomenalism isn't closed until slightly later.

So, from the arguments contained in this section, we can see that Quine shifts from a perspective that cannot be felicitously described as naturalistic to one that seems to be naturalistic. Of course, the fact that we eventually find Quine to be a naturalist should not be surprising. Rather, what *is* surprising is how late in Quine's development he is naturalistic. As I explained earlier, Quine describes his position in *Word and Object* as being "utterly naturalistic" and I have established that Quine was not a naturalist as late as 1951.[231] It is in this gap, between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object*, that Quine claims to have become "more consciously and explicitly naturalistic".[232] I have established that the change in Quine's attitude towards phenomenalism is indicative of a change to an outlook that is naturalistic. It is significant that it is in this gap between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object* that we see Quine's attitude change. As Verhaegh points out, Quine seems to have acquired his naturalistic perspective on phenomenalism in 1952.[233] In 'The Place of a Theory of

[231] Quine, sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.158 f32
[232] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.398
[233] Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.100-01

Evidence', a lecture at Yale, Quine's view displays the attitude I've characterised above. Quine writes:

> …it is not an instructive over-simplification but a basic falsification, to represent cognition as a discernment of regularities in an unadulterated stream of experience. Better to conceive of the stream itself as polluted, at each succeeding point of its course, by every prior cognition […] We would do well to recognize that in seeking to isolate sense data we are not plumbing the depths of reality…[234]

Quine makes the same point, almost verbatim in print, the same year in 'On Mental Entities'. Moreover, on the run up to *Word and Object*, Quine's discussion of his rejection of phenomenalism proliferates.[235] The evidence that this is the crucial period where naturalism emerges, then, is very strong.

So, to conclude this chapter, let me briefly summarise the key points that have been established. §1.2 began by motivating the idea that philosophers often consider Quine's naturalism to extend far into his early work. In §1.3, I provided a detailed characterisation of naturalism as a nuanced and restrictive approach to philosophy, i.e. as the idea that we always and only work within science. §1.4 then established that, in opposition to the interpretations considered in §1.2, Quine's early work was, in fact, not naturalistic. This was established by demonstrating that, until at least 1951, Quine was open to a form of first philosophical theorising prohibited by naturalism. Finally, by analysing Quine's *later* argument against phenomenalism, I provided reasons for believing that the emergence of Quine's naturalism takes place between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object*.

[234] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.100
[235] 'On Mental Entities', see especially pp.224-26. See also 'Posits and Reality'

Chapter 2
Unpacking Quine's Evolving Attitude Towards Analyticity

2.1 Chapter Introduction

So far, it has been established that, before 1951, Quine cannot be felicitously described as a naturalist, and that, just after 1951, we can see Quine's naturalistic perspective operating in his rejection of phenomenalism. This is informative and interesting by itself, but, as of yet, we have not fully considered the relationship that these claims have with respect to Quine's 'Two Dogmas'. This is important because it is often stressed that 'Two Dogmas' is a vital paper on Quine's road to naturalism. In particular, the reason that it's significant for his development is that, here, Quine decisively rejects the analytic/synthetic distinction. Importantly for our purposes, Quine's rejection of this distinction and the emergence of his naturalism are commonly viewed as having a close relationship with one another, i.e. the former is commonly viewed as constituting a decisive step in the direction of naturalism. This idea makes chronological sense with what I've argued for so far.

Now, for it to be true that 'Two Dogmas' constitutes a significant step forward in Quine's move to naturalism, it must be the case that Quine's position undergoes some substantial change at this time. That is, before 1951, there must be some obstacle standing in the way of the emergence of Quine's naturalism which is then cleared away in the paper. However, what undermines this picture of Quine's development is a further idea particularly prevalent in the literature, namely, that Quine's doubts about analyticity *aren't new*. On this reading, Quine has been wary of the analytic/synthetic distinction for a long time, and he merely expresses this doubt with strong conviction in 1951. Indeed, as we'll see, Quine's own attitude towards the paper suggests that it lacks significance, as well. These points, therefore, seem to weaken the plausibility of attributing to 'Two Dogmas' a substantial change in attitude which leads Quine to a naturalistic outlook.

In light of these considerations, then, there are two related areas in which further clarity is required for a clearer and more nuanced understanding of Quine. First, there seems to be a tension between the idea that 'Two Dogmas' constitutes a substantial landmark on Quine's path to naturalism and the idea that Quine's dissatisfaction with the notion of analyticity

extends much further back into his earlier work. That is, it would be strange to identify 'Two Dogmas' as being so significant if the content of the paper wasn't, in fact, novel. Second, to link this to the arguments made in Chapter 1, if Quine's 'Two Dogmas' *doesn't* constitute a significant step towards naturalism, then it looks like this is at odds with the idea that Quine's naturalism emerges around the time of 1952. That is, if there's no substantive sense in which 'Two Dogmas' involves a change in Quine's attitude, then whatever was meant to be significant in the paper for the emergence of naturalism was already available in Quine's earlier work. Thus, the chronological picture of the development of Quine's naturalism becomes tangled and opaque.

These considerations, then, make it urgent to carefully understand the development of Quine's attitude towards analyticity. This includes working out precisely what, if anything, is distinctive about his view in 'Two Dogmas' with respect to the development of his naturalism. Not only would such an investigation shed light on Quine's developing attitude towards analyticity, but it would also illuminate how this development relates to the emergence of Quine's naturalism, thereby clarifying both of the issues above. The purpose of this chapter is to carry out such an investigation.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. In §2.2.1, I motivate the search into Quine's evolving attitude towards analyticity. I begin by explaining why Quine's problems with analyticity seem to be vital for the development of naturalism, and, therefore, why 'Two Dogmas' seems to be a crucial paper in Quine's development. I then present and explain two reasons for doubting that 'Two Dogmas' constitutes such a significant milestone in Quine's development, i.e. doubts concerning the novelty of Quine's arguments against analyticity, and Quine's own negativity towards the significance of the paper. The tension, then, between the initial considerations which point *towards* 'Two Dogmas' being significant, and these two reasons which speak *against* its significance, I take it, motivates the forthcoming discussion. In §2.2.2, I then provide a framework to orient this discussion by identifying four important and distinctive features of Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas'. I contend that these are the features that we ought to look for in Quine's earlier work.

§2.3 then provides the detailed examination of Quine's attitude towards analyticity. I demonstrate that there is a gradual evolution in Quine's view from the beginning of his career to the position that he reaches in 'Two Dogmas'. I establish that Quine's views towards

analyticity are not always as negative as they're often thought to be, and that they develop subtly but continuously in a critical direction. Accordingly, I argue that one can only view Quine's doubts about analyticity in 1951 as having been present for a long time in a cautiously qualified sense. Moreover, I argue that Quine lacks a vital part of in his perspective in 'Two Dogmas', i.e. holism, until right before the paper emerges. Having explained the development of Quine's attitude towards analyticity and the significance of his view by the time of 'Two Dogmas', I end this chapter in §2.4 by relating this development to naturalism.

2.2.1 Motivating the Investigation

Exactly how 'Two Dogmas' fits into the labyrinth of Quine's evolving philosophy is, to put it mildly, controversial. However, the idea that it plays a crucial role in Quine's development, especially in the emergence of naturalism, is common; it's over specifics where disagreement arises. In 'Two Dogmas', Quine comes to reject the tenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction and moves away from Carnap decisively. As Richardson emphasises, the debate between Quine and Carnap on the analytic/synthetic distinction: "…has received attention as the principal argumentative motor for Quine's move to naturalism and, thus, as a place where contemporary naturalists find a framework to motivate their own projects."[236] Philosophers often think that Quine's problems with the analytic/synthetic distinction are vital for the development of naturalism, and we see these problems emerge famously and resolutely in 'Two Dogmas'. For anyone looking to understand Quine's development towards naturalism, or his overall philosophy more generally, 'Two Dogmas' appears to be a vital paper.

If this is the case, then it seems plausible that the views contained in 'Two Dogmas' represent a substantial development in Quine's attitude. Or, to think about this another way, if this is the case, then it seems plausible that something in Quine's earlier outlook is blocking the route to naturalism until approximately 1951, when 'Two Dogmas' is published. However, there is another prevalent view in the literature which undermines this idea. Namely, that

[236] Richardson, A. 1997. p.145. Richardson gives a number of examples of philosophers who have such a reading. See p.145 f2. See also Kemp's view discussed in Chapter 1. Kemp, G. 2010. p.284. And Morris, S. 2018a. p.403

Quine's worries about analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' are not new after all.[237] The idea, roughly, is that Quine has worries about analyticity much earlier, and he merely becomes more confident and troubled by them by 1951. In numerous places, Quine presents us with a similar picture. For example, in reflecting on the paper in his autobiography, Quine stresses that his worries about analyticity had been building for a while.[238] Additionally, as we'll see in §2.3, Quine's retrospective remarks on his view in 'Two Dogmas' often take him back far earlier than 1951. The fact that Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' does not appear to be a novel development raises the question of what significance, if any, there is in Quine's most famous paper. Moreover, if this is true, i.e. if 'Two Dogmas' is not significant with respect to the development of Quine's naturalism, then what made 'Two Dogmas' significant in this respect was already present in Quine's earlier work. This is difficult to make sense of given Chapter 1's argument that Quine was not a naturalist before 1951.

Indeed, Quine's own view of 'Two Dogmas' suggests that it is not significant for his development. Quine did not have a positive view of the paper. This is especially strange because 'Two Dogmas' is both his most famous work, and one that received almost immediate attention.[239] To help understand why Quine was so negative about something that seems to clearly have been a success, Verhaegh has highlighted notes of Quine's that show that he didn't think that it added "a new idea to philosophy" and got "disproportionate attention".[240] The main reason for Quine's dissatisfaction seems to be that it is almost a wholly negative paper. Quine's positive suggestions for an alternative epistemology to reductionism in it are very brief and metaphorical. Quine even goes so far as to assert that his positive view in 'Two Dogmas' should not be debated about because of how thinly sketched it is.[241] Indeed, Quine only gives a few lines of his autobiography to 'Two Dogmas', strongly suggesting that he didn't think that it was very important. What he says there is brief and descriptive; there's nothing in his retrospective remarks that suggests Quine saw the paper as a great achievement.[242] When Quine reflects on the paper much later, he makes a similar claim: "I had not thought to look on my strictures over analyticity as the stuff of revolution. It

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[237] See, for example, Kemp, G. 2010. p.284, Isaac, J. 2005. Lugg, A. 2012. I consider many specific examples of this particular idea in §2.3.
[238] *Time of My Life*, p.226, p.150
[239] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.96-7 for more detail on the response to 'Two Dogmas'.
[240] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.180. Verhaegh, S. 2018, p.6 f14
[241] Letter to Schwartzmann sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.98 f44
[242] *Time of My Life*, p.226, p.150. This point and the next come from Lugg, A. 2012. p.231

was mere criticism, a negative point with no suggestion of a bright replacement."[243] And that because of this negativity, it "was nothing I [Quine] felt impelled to write about".[244]

We can fit these somber reflections into a more general trend in Quine's attitude towards what he takes to be philosophically valuable work. That is, Quine prefers to present constructive views rather than merely critical ones, and so 'Two Dogmas' just doesn't align with the sort of work that Quine sees as valuable and urgent, hence his negativity and reluctance to publish earlier. This can be seen in a letter to Joseph T. Clark. Quine writes:

> I […] feel much less content at criticism than at construction. This is why the ideas of 'Two dogmas,' reiterated for years in my course on Philosophy of Language and in private disputation, were so slow in getting into print.[245]

So, while 'Two Dogmas' seems like it should be vital to Quine's development, since it contains his rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction which is commonly thought to be vital for the development of naturalism, the idea that Quine undergoes a significant and substantial change in attitude at this time is undermined by two factors. First, it is undermined by the fact that it's often accepted, and even claimed by Quine, that his doubts about analyticity aren't new by the time of 'Two Dogmas', and, second, by Quine's unfavourable attitude towards the paper. These points support the idea that Quine's most famous paper lacks significance, and, therefore, that the views contained within it are unlikely to play any substantial role in the development of his thought. More positively, however, these points make it urgent to patiently clarify the development of Quine's views on analyticity and their significance for naturalism.

2.2.2 Quine's Position in 'Two Dogmas'

[243] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.393.
[244] 'Autobiography of W.V. Quine', p.19
[245] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.97 f43

Before investigating the development of Quine's views on analyticity in §2.3, it is vital to understand what position Quine is in when he writes 'Two Dogmas'. This will allow us to appreciate ways in which his early attitude relates to his perspective in 1951. In what follows, I will not attempt to delve into the fine-grained detail of Quine's argument in the paper. This has been done extensively in the literature, and, more importantly, such a level of depth isn't required for the purpose of my argument. My aim is to isolate what is crucial to Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas', i.e. what the nature of his problem with analyticity is and who the targets of his worries are, in order to isolate, what, exactly, it is that we're looking for in our investigation into Quine's earlier work and attitude.

Let me start by providing a very general characterisation of Quine's argument in the paper. In 'Two Dogmas', Quine provides the argument that he is best known for by rejecting the tenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction. To do this, Quine considers ways of explicating analyticity either directly or by focussing on notions that analyticity can be defined or understood in terms of, e.g. synonymy, meaning, and definition. In each case, Quine claims, the empiricist fails to satisfactorily shed light on analyticity and, so, we find that such notions are "in exactly the same need of clarification as…the notion of analyticity itself".[246] Analyticity is, in this way, a dogma of empiricism. Quine then presents a challenge to reductionism, and in turn, to the consequent forms of empiricism which place value on analyticity, by claiming that reductionism is wrong about the way in which theory relates to evidence. According to Quine, it is holism, not reductionism, that provides the correct way to conceive of this important relationship. In establishing this, Quine thereby challenges the second dogma of empiricism.

There are four important things to note about Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas'. First, it's important to stress that Quine's claim that analyticity and related notions are unclear or lacking criteria is a challenge to their empirical and scientific respectability. We see evidence of this when Quine reflects on his argument in 'Two Dogmas' and claims that "the point" of his challenge to the analytic/synthetic distinction "is insistence on empirical criteria for semantic concepts".[247] This also makes sense of Quine's conclusion in 'Two Dogmas', where he stresses that the analytic/synthetic distinction is "a metaphysical article of faith".[248] As

[246] 'Two Dogmas', p.20
[247] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.397. See also *The Roots of Reference*, p.78
[248] 'Two Dogmas', p.37

Lugg notes, it seems like Quine means something like "empirically unjustified" by "metaphysical".[249] This seems right, for Quine claims that it's an "unempirical dogma" in the very same sentence. In other words, Quine argues that semantic notions like analyticity, or those notions that are inter-defined with analyticity, are not in satisfactory empirical standing.

To establish this, Quine appeals to empirical scientists to justify his view. For example, Quine appeals to scientific practice to warn against the postulation of meanings as entities, which could then be used to explicate analyticity. Quine argues that clarifying the actual tasks involved in scientific practice warns against the reification of meanings. As he puts it, scientific practice tells us that "meanings themselves, as obscure intermediary entities, may well be abandoned."[250] Slightly later in the paper, Quine appeals to the lexicographer's use of definitions in the same general way to argue that we ought not to see the use of definitions as a way of explicating synonymy (and so analyticity in turn).[251]

The scientific nature of Quine's challenge to the dogma of analyticity hasn't gone unnoticed in the literature. For example, Kemp likens Quine's general argument in 'Two Dogmas' to an argument used in natural science.[252] This is because the nature of Quine's argument is similar to hypothesising in science that a particular force doesn't exist because we can't explain its existence in non-circular terms. Similarly, Lugg compares Quine's criticism of analyticity with Einstein's criticism of simultaneity. Lugg explains that, in both cases, the worry is about the consistency of an important notion with the position that that notion is advanced in (i.e. empiricism in the case of analyticity, and physics in the case of simultaneity). An important part of scientific theorising is to hold that notions or posits which are not definitively shown to not exist, or not shown to be completely senseless, like the ether, can nevertheless be discounted as scientific. In this way, both Einstein and Quine are reacting to "the uncritical acceptance" of the respective notions, and their failure to meet scientific standards.[253]

This brings us to the second important thing to note about Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas'. While it's true that Quine's claims in 'Two Dogmas' don't definitively show that

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[249] Lugg, A. 2012. p.235
[250] 'Two Dogmas', p.22
[251] Quine describes lexicographers as empirical scientists. Ibid. pp.24-5
[252] Kemp, G. 2006. pp.19-20
[253] Lugg, A. 2012. pp.238-39

analyticity can *never* be rendered acceptable, at the same time, his claims are not merely expressions of doubt about the possibility of explicating analyticity clearly. Rather, they come from the perspective of someone who has both a strong grasp on the ramified nature of analyticity within empiricism, and conviction that progress on this avenue is not to be expected. Quine considers many possible ways of explicating analyticity, each of which is rejected as unsatisfactory. In 'Two Dogmas', Quine is not at all hopeful for the prospects of analyticity, nor is he issuing a call to empiricists to keep working on explicating the notion. This brings out the force in his summary of what he's shown by considering multiple ways of understanding analyticity when he writes "[t]hat there is such a distinction to be drawn at all [between the analytic and the synthetic] is an unempirical dogma of empiricists, a metaphysical article of faith."[254]

This style of argument in 'Two Dogmas' appears to give Quine a target that is very general in its scope in the sense that Quine seems to be targeting a broad range of views. This brings us to the third aspect of the paper that I want to highlight. Namely, I contend that to properly understand Quine's position in the paper, one needs to appreciate that his argument is not narrowly or primarily focussed on Carnap's use of the distinction, as it is often interpreted to be. Rather, Quine's views come from the perspective of someone that understands how widespread a commitment the analytic/synthetic distinction is in empiricism, and who is attempting to challenge the tenability of this view to a wide range of empiricist philosophers. In this way, if one wants to understand what motivates Quine to provide his argument in 'Two Dogmas', then it is misleading to focus on 'Two Dogmas' as being significant in the sense that it marks Quine's decisive break from Carnap over analyticity.

Reading Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' as primarily targeted at Carnap (and, in particular, as marking the point in which Quine's growing discontent with Carnap's use of the analytic/synthetic distinction reaches its limit) is common in the literature.[255] Indeed, Quine's own remarks lend support to this idea. Quine often stresses that while Carnap is a significant influence on him, the nature of this changes in his later work. For example, he writes:

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[254] 'Two Dogmas', p.37

[255] See, for example, Creath, R. 1990b. p.35. Against this narrow reading, see Hylton, P. 2007. p.51. Hylton stresses the importance of C.I. Lewis as well. See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.312

> In later years his [Carnap's] views went on evolving and so did mine, in divergent ways. But even where we disagreed he was still setting the theme; the line of my thought was largely determined by problems that I felt his position presented.[256]

Quine identifies the place of analyticity within this divergence in a paper from the same year as 'Two Dogmas', writing: "[t]hough no one has influenced my philosophical thought more than Carnap, an issue has persisted between us for years over questions of ontology and analyticity."[257] Nowhere is this contrast clearer, so it seems, than in their divergence over analyticity, and 'Two Dogmas' marks the key occasion of this divergence.

Now, I don't want to argue that this picture is completely false, for there is good reason to take Carnap as an intended recipient of much of what is said in 'Two Dogmas', as well as this point marking a significant parting of ways between Quine and Carnap. What I want to suggest, however, is that this way of viewing the paper misses an important and more general development in Quine's view that motivates the position he puts forward in 'Two Dogmas'. My point is one of *emphasis*; we should avoid viewing 'Two Dogmas' as primarily involving an internal debate between Quine and Carnap, and instead view it as involving Quine both coming to terms with analyticity's role in empiricism more generally and presenting his discontent with analyticity to a broad group of philosophers. In other words, we have to take very seriously the fact that the object of Quine's lament in the paper are those holding dogmas *of empiricism*.

In order to show why we should minimise the weight that we place on the idea that Quine is targeting Carnap's view in the paper, let me first consider ways in which Carnap does seem to be the intended recipient of Quine's criticism. By balancing these points against ways in which it would be problematic to view Carnap as the sole or main target of the paper, I will establish that it is important to appreciate that the argument in 'Two Dogmas' is directed at a notion of analyticity that is playing a vital role within empiricism generally.

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[256] 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.41
[257] 'On Carnap's Views on Ontology', p.203

One way in which Carnap's views are crucial to the argument in 'Two Dogmas' is in relation to the development of Quine's ontological views, and how he sees these as bearing on Carnap's position. While these are thoughts that Quine had held about Carnap's philosophy for a while, they come into much sharper focus by 1951. A significant factor here is the publication of Carnap's 'Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology' in 1950, in which Carnap is very clear about how ontology and analyticity relate (Quine is sent a copy of this in 1949, right before 'Two Dogmas').[258] Quine focusses on this issue narrowly soon after 'Two Dogmas' in 'On Carnap's Views on Ontology'.[259]

It's true that some of Carnap's specific attempts at explicating the notion of analyticity (and his championing of explication generally) are considered in 'Two Dogmas', e.g. his use of state-descriptions or semantical rules.[260] Additionally, Quine's attack on the interrelated nature of analyticity with notions like truth in virtue of meaning also seems to fit with Carnap's informal characterisations of analyticity.[261] However, in many of these cases, it seems wrong to see these as direct criticisms of Carnap's view. For example, the problem that Quine raises for state-descriptions is something that Quine notes, as he raises it, that Carnap is aware of. Additionally, as I'll explain in §2.3.6, Quine challenges Carnap's appeal to semantical rules in the early 1940s, and so it's hardly a new worry. Quine's problem in 'Two Dogmas', rather, is more generally with the idea that definition can help shed light on analyticity. Such an approach is more general than Carnap's use of semantical rules.[262]

While I want to stress that Quine had empiricists generally in mind in 1951, especially those who are Quine's contemporaries, Carnap does occupy a special role in this extended family. Namely, Carnap is *the* contemporary empiricist in Quine's eyes, and Carnap's views have been gradually falling out of Quine's favour. We can see this clearly in the second section of 'Two Dogmas', i.e. the section outlining Quine's problems with reductionism and his positive proposal in its place. Carnap's *Aufbau* project is presented as the empiricist project

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[258] Carnap in Creath, R. 1990b. p.416
[259] See esp. p.203
[260] 'Two Dogmas', pp.23-5
[261] See Richardson, A. 1997. pp.147-48
[262] This is clear in 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement'. Quine first explains the use of definitions are a popular approach in recent philosophy, argues against this, and then claims that what he's said about the former "applies equally…to Carnap's more recent appeal to *semantical rules*." pp.32-3

that takes reductionism most seriously.[263] It is, Quine claims, "[r]eductionism at its most sanguine".[264]

Let me explain this point in more detail. Quine views Carnap as taking the next step forward from Russell. Quine writes: "Russell had talked of deriving the world from experience by logical construction. Carnap, in his *Aufbau*, undertook the task in earnest."[265] Russell had outlined the blueprints for the project Carnap would undertake, but Quine thinks that Russell's own view was lacking in detail and that Russell himself was lacking in confidence.[266] In particular, there are two important respects in which Carnap is taking the helm from Russell that help show why Quine thinks of Carnap as carrying out the next step in constructive empiricism. First, Carnap attempts the phenomenalistic project that Russell suggests (and then deals with the consequences of this project not working). Second, the logic that Carnap uses builds upon the *Principia* system that Russell and Whitehead developed, and that Quine was enamoured with.[267] Quine continually discusses the structural parallel between the projects in *Principia* and the *Aufbau*, viewing the latter as a more general and therefore ambitious project.[268] *The Aufbau*, then, is viewed by Quine as "[t]he dazzling sequel to *Our Knowledge of the External World*".[269] These points establish the fact that Quine views Carnap as championing this crucial empiricist project and introducing the logistic method into epistemology.[270] Indeed, Quine views Carnap as an empiricist that takes seriously the idea that philosophy should be approached with a scientific frame of mind. Quine writes that Carnap provides: "for the first time an example of what a scientific philosopher might aspire to in the ways of rigor and explicitness."[271] The *Aufbau*, for

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[263] Quine writes that Carnap "was the first empiricist who, not content with asserting the reducibility of science to terms of experience, took serious steps toward carrying out the reduction." 'Two Dogmas', p.39
[264] 'The Present State of Empiricism', pp.39-40
[265] 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.40. See also Hacker, P.M.S. 2006. p.240
[266] "In *Our Knowledge of the External World* Russell expressed no confidence that the plan he sketched could be fully realized. In his sketch, as he remarked, he took other minds for granted; moreover, he broached none of the vast detail that would be needed for the further constructions, except for a few illustrative steps." 'Russell's Ontological Development', p.84
[267] See 'Carnap's Positivistic Travail', p.120. *From Stimulus to Science*, pp.13-4
[268] For example, See Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.204: "The program of the *Aufbau* bears the same relation to science in general that the program of *Principia Mathematica* bears to mathematics; and the former program is more ambitious…"
[269] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.74
[270] See Quine sourced in Creath, R. 1990b. p.204
[271] 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.40

example, demonstrates to Quine an approach to philosophy that involves a strong understanding of physics and psychology.

Let me now offer some reasons to minimise the emphasis that we should place on the idea that Carnap's views are of primary importance for understanding Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas'. If Quine was primarily reacting to Carnap's use of analyticity in 'Two Dogmas', then it's simply unclear what explains Quine's decision to view this as an important target. This is because Carnap has rejected many of the views that are discussed by the time 'Two Dogmas' is published and so it's unclear, then, why Quine would want to evaluate them. Quine's evaluation of the view that Carnap held in the *Aufbau* is a good example of this. While the project of the *Aufbau* appears to be an important target in 'Two Dogmas', one good reason which speaks against the idea that Quine is targeting it directly is that Quine is clearly aware that this isn't a view that Carnap is defending anymore. Even as early as Quine's Carnap lectures in 1934, we find Quine stressing that he won't be focussing on the *Aufbau* because Carnap's work by then is so different that any discussion of it wouldn't be indicative of Carnap's view.[272] Additionally, and more generally, Quine stresses much earlier than 'Two Dogmas' that the strict reductive aims of the *Aufbau* are aims that empiricists generally have moved away from.[273] Indeed, the specific criticisms that Quine raises towards the *Aufbau* in 'Two Dogmas' are not new worries. Some are conceded by Carnap, and all are very plausibly well-known to him by then. All of these points make it clear that the focus of 'Two Dogmas' is not on undermining Carnap's project in the *Aufbau*, as this would be somewhat of a straw person.

So, it seems implausible that Quine's target in 'Two Dogmas' is directly Carnap's position in the *Aufbau*. However, what is significant about the placement of the *Aufbau* project in the paper is that it can help us appreciate the generality of Quine's target. While the reductionism of the *Aufbau* may be a thing of the past, Quine stresses that "the dogma of reduction has, in subtler and more tenuous form, continued to influence the thought of empiricists."[274] In 'Two Dogmas', Quine briefly explains Carnap's view in the *Aufbau* and then moves his focus away from Carnap's specific project, and onto the way in which reductionist tendencies have remained in verificationism, specifically focussing on the following view: "[t]he dogma of

[272] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.47
[273] See, for example, 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy', p.141
[274] 'Two Dogmas', p.40

reductionism survives in the supposition that each statement, taken in isolation from its fellows, can admit of confirmation or disconfirmation at all."[275] This lessens the importance of Carnap specifically, while still keeping him within the relevant set of views that 'Two Dogmas' is concerned with.

To elaborate on this point, Carnap's epistemological projects after the *Aufbau*, which accept that outright reduction is untenable (and so something weaker than elimination via reduction is sought), fit into this group of views. Carnap's reduction forms, for example, don't afford us proper definitions, and so don't provide us with elimination via definition when one translates scientific language into the language of sense-data, logic, and set theory.[276] In other words, reduction forms don't allow us to view the more cumbersome scientific language as superfluous for the logico-empirical language. Quine's problem with this view is that it still puts too much emphasis on empiricism being reductive. Quine makes this clear when, in the same year as 'Two Dogmas', he writes:

> In Carnap's current phase, his confirmation-theory phase, we find reductionism at its least assertive. At this stage, reductionism has been so watered down that all that needs to be accounted for any longer is a relation of confirmation between a scientific statement and the relevant observations.
>
> But reductionism even thus diluted is not dilute enough to suit my tender palate.[277]

This establishes that Carnap is a member of the set of empiricists that Quine is targeting in the second part of 'Two Dogmas'. Carnap's reductionism may have gotten weaker over time, but it is not weak enough in Quine's view.

Indeed, Quine's focus on verificationism in 'Two Dogmas' is explainable, in part, as being motivated by scientific considerations. It would, Quine stresses, "be very unscientific indeed not to look beneath it [verificationism] for a possible key to the problem of meaning and the

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[275] Ibid. p.41
[276] See 'Epistemology Naturalized', pp.76-7. For Quine's problems with Carnap's later more general notion of meaning postulates see 'Carnap's Positivistic Travails', pp.124-25
[277] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.181

associated problems."[278] The reason for this, Quine explains, is that verificationism "has established itself so firmly as a catchword of empiricism".[279] This reason, plus the fact that Quine is never *really* concerned with rationalism, means that verificationism is the most salient scientific option available, and so Quine focusses considerable attention on it.

A further way to appreciate the generality inherent in Quine's worries in 'Two Dogmas' is to consider how wide the range of positions there are for accepting reductionism. This is a point that Quine stresses when he writes:

> Actually this [reductionism] is not a doctrine, but a two-dimensional space of doctrines. One of the two independent variables is our standard of what is to qualify as protocol language, and the other independent variable is our standard of what is to pass for reduction.[280]

What unites this wide "two-dimensional space of doctrines" is individualism about empirical content. Quine makes this clear when he writes the following:

> But there remains, throughout even these more moderate forms of reductionism, a common trait: there remains the doctrine that each significant statement has its own separate and peculiar empirical content, its own separate and peculiar connections with immediate experience…[281]

It is this, i.e. individualism about empirical content, that remains in Carnap's epistemology in spite of his ambitions for reduction being relaxed significantly in his use of confirmation, according to Quine. It is this that is spread more generally throughout empiricism when Quine writes 'Two Dogmas'. Quine says this much in 'Two Dogmas' when he claims that "[t]he dogma of reductionism survives in the supposition that each statement, taken in isolation from its fellows, can admit of confirmation or disconfirmation at all."[282]

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[278] 'Two Dogmas', p.37
[279] Ibid
[280] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.180
[281] Ibid. p.181
[282] 'Two Dogmas', p.41

Quine makes a similar point in 1953, just after 'Two Dogmas'. He notes that one way to raise worries for the analytic/synthetic distinction is to say that the boundary is vague or that the ways in which it's defined involve notions that are themselves as unclear as analyticity. This seems to capture Quine's strategy in the first part of 'Two Dogmas'. However, Quine stresses that "[t]his is an easy level of polemic in philosophy, and no serious philosophical effort is proof against it."[283] Quine then explains that a deeper way of criticising the distinction is to try and work out where it arises from, i.e. what commitments would underlie one's acceptance of it. On this point, Quine speculates that commitment to the analytic/synthetic distinction comes from "a more or less attenuated holdover of phenomenalistic reductionism."[284] This shows that Quine is stressing the importance of putting the analytic/synthetic distinction into its historical and general empiricist context in order to evaluate it properly. Quine is not merely concerned with the question of what the distinction does for someone like Carnap, but, rather, with the deeper question of where the distinction takes root in the tradition of empiricism and why it still lingers.

Having this point in mind allows us to appreciate the nature of Quine's problem with the analytic/synthetic distinction in 'Two Dogmas'. Quine writes that the second dogma, reductionism, is "the real villain in the piece" and so should have been stressed more.[285] The reason for this is that reductionism is the dominant then-contemporary view that leads to the need for an analytic/synthetic distinction within empiricism. This is what Quine means when he describes the second dogma as "the more basic of the two".[286] The strategy in the first part of the paper, where Quine raises problems for the clarity of analyticity and related notions, is, as the quote above states, "an easy level of polemic in philosophy". The deeper way to criticise it, however, is to work out where the distinction arises from, which is what Quine does in the second section when he addresses verificationism.

On this point, an important aspect of Quine's more general perspective on analyticity is that Quine appreciates the deep historical roots which underlie the wide acceptance of analyticity amongst his contemporaries. 'Two Dogmas' includes a number of references to philosophers from the wider history of philosophy which allows Quine to contextualise his discussion by

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[283] 'Mr Strawson on Logical Theory', p.138
[284] Ibid
[285] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.104 f3
[286] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.180

providing reasons as to why acceptance of the analytic/synthetic distinction is prevalent at the time. Hume gets a handful of mentions, both as a precursor to Kant's distinction, as well as being a naïve reductionist. Quine also sees Hume's copy principle, which plays a constructive role in Hume's empiricism, as being something like a proto-version of the verification principle.[287] Leibniz also gets a mention, with his kindred account of analyticity in terms of possible worlds being linked directly to Carnap's use of state-descriptions. In these parallels, we see that Quine isn't merely providing the historical background of the analytic/synthetic distinction. He is, moreover, linking contemporary empiricist accounts with their historical antecedents.

Further good evidence that this is the case is found if we consider the way in which 'Two Dogmas' was requested. 'Two Dogmas' was written with the request that Quine discuss "what questions and issues remain still to be settled in the light of programs and achievements of the previous half century's work".[288] This is not a request to write a paper specifically about Carnap's philosophy, for example. We see more evidence for this in the fact that Quine was initially hesitant to meet the request because he didn't think that he was good at giving *historical* surveys.[289] This suggests that Quine saw the paper as having relevance for a broad audience, and it gives us a picture of 'Two Dogmas' that's historically oriented, but not merely a historical survey.

Moreover, consider again the negativity that Quine had about the paper (discussed in §2.2.1). Quine is displeased about the value of 'Two Dogmas' because the paper is almost wholly negative, with the positive alternative offered in it stated in bare metaphorical terms. Crucially, though, this attitude reveals the generality of Quine's target. Quine writes: "[t]he paper is negative: an expression of distrust of two doctrines which have come to assume a central position in current empiricism."[290] Quine makes a similar claim in a letter to Paul Weiss, writing that part of what 'Two Dogmas' shows is: "[t]he observation that the analytic-synthetic distinction has never been adequately def'nd though all too widely taken granted."[291] These reflections indicate a perspective that overlooks a broad horizon. Indeed,

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[287] 'Two Dogmas', p.38. Quine makes this semantic reading of the copy principle clear in a number of places. See, for example, 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.68
[288] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.96
[289] See Ibid
[290] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.180
[291] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.97

this focus is made clear in the very first sentence of 'Two Dogmas': "[m]odern empiricism has been conditioned in large part by two dogmas."[292]

Appreciating that Quine is concerned with how the analytic/synthetic distinction has taken root in empiricism also helps us to understand the strength of Quine's argument against it. This is the fourth point that I want to highlight as vital for appreciating Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas'. On this point, Quine stresses that his "misgivings over analyticity and related notions are not just cavilling over fuzzy boundaries."[293] Rather, Quine's misgivings are meant for someone whose reaction to giving up on strict reductionism is to still hold that sentences can have their empirical significance individually, rather than this only making sense with sentences collectively. This difference between Quine and his target is one of principle. Quine makes this clear when he writes:

> My misgivings over the notion of analyticity are thus misgivings in principle. But those also who espouse the notion espouse it mainly in principle, granting freely that the boundary between the analytic and synthetic can be troublesome and indecisive in application.[294]

In 'Two Dogmas', Quine is not merely negative about the ways in which philosophers try to understand the analytic/synthetic distinction, i.e. Quine doesn't just have strong doubts about the possibility of an adequate explication or clarification of the distinction. In addition to these doubts, Quine presents a perspective from which pursuing an epistemologically significant notion of analyticity isn't even a task that is motivated, i.e. holism. The strength of this approach is that it leads to a clean rejection of the distinction. In other words, Quine is not presenting something like a gradualist picture of analyticity, where some statements will end up as being more or less analytic than others. Rather, Quine claiming that from the perspective of holism, trying to make sense of an analytic/synthetic distinction is neither motivated nor coherent.

Against the idea that the empirical content of statements can be understood in an individualistic way, Quine stresses the truth of the holistic nature of empirical content. Quine

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[292] 'Two Dogmas', pp.20-3. See also *Word and Object*, p.67 f7
[293] 'Mr Strawson on Logical Theory', p.138
[294] Ibid.

writes that "our statements about the external world face the tribunal of sense experience…only as a corporate body."[295] The reductionist, then, has too restrictive a picture about the nature of empirical content, and is wrong to think that we have to conceive of things like mathematics and logic as being epistemologically significant in a different way from the other claims in science. This significantly weakens the motivation for substantiating and clarifying the analytic/synthetic distinction. Moreover, as long as it seems to make sense that statements possess empirical content individualistically, it seems, as Quine puts it, "significant to speak also of a limiting kind of statement which is vacuously confirmed…and such a statement is analytic."[296] However, on Quine's alternative picture, the idea that there is a significant class of statements that are "vacuously confirmed", i.e. analytic, is shown to be vacuous itself because "[a]ny statement can be held true come what may, if we make drastic enough adjustments".[297]

This alternative picture that Quine puts forward against reductionism in 'Two Dogmas' is also said to come from Carnap. If this is the case, then it's very confusing as to how 'Two Dogmas' could be at all hostile to Carnap.[298] We see evidence for this when Quine claims that his holism issues "essentially from Carnap's doctrine of the physical world in the *Aufbau*".[299] And, Quine writes, more specifically, that "the Duhem effect [i.e. holism] is strikingly and imaginatively depicted" in Carnap's use of the principle of least action.[300]

However, we can explain why Quine describes his holism as being influenced by Carnap without it undermining the idea that Quine is pushing a substantial contrast in attitude between himself and Carnap (as well as empiricists generally). As Lugg has emphasised, it's not a problem that Carnap accepted holism because Quine thinks that he is *extending* his holism further than Carnap would allow.[301] In particular, Carnap sees holism as applying to

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[295] Ibid
[296] 'Two Dogmas', p.41
[297] Ibid. p.43
[298] Some philosophers attempt to defend Carnap's position from Quine's argument in 'Two Dogmas' by emphasising Carnap's holism. See, for example, Hacker, P.M.S. 2006. p.241 f10. Creath, R. 1995. pp.292-93
[299] 'Two Dogmas', p.41
[300] 'Carnap's Positivistic Travail', p.125. Quine also claims that we find holism in Carnap's *Scheinprobleme* from the same year as the *Aufbau*. See also Carnap, R. 1937a. p.318
[301] Lugg, A. 2012. p.241

our theory after we've introduced an analytic/synthetic distinction, whereas Quine thinks that holism applies more generally to our whole theory. Hence, Carnap's analyticity/synthetic distinction, and the priority of that distinction over other aspects of Carnap's empiricism, keeps Quine and Carnap at a considerable distance. In this way, the label 'holism' is deceptive.

This reading fits with the way that Quine writes about his and Carnap's respective holisms. Quine often writes that Carnap, as well as other empiricists, didn't see the significance of a holistic outlook to anywhere near the same extent that Quine did.[302] In this way, Carnap didn't emphasise his holism strongly enough, nor did he follow holistic considerations to their logical conclusion. Appreciating this point makes sense of the fact that Quine often presents his holism as something that isn't radical. Rather, Quine's point is that people like Carnap don't take holism seriously enough, and so fail to appreciate the radical results a holistic view leads us to. We see this clearly when Quine compares his holistic view with Carnap's and writes:

> It was a strange one, too, not only because Duhem's point seems so evident, but because Carnap himself recognized it and failed to appreciate its significance….in the *Aufbau* the very mechanism of the Duhem effect is strikingly and imaginatively depicted. …The guiding principle is the principle of least action: so choose the distances as to minimize the differences of color within short intervals of space and time. This is a very perceptive caricature of the role of simplicity considerations in scientific theory, and it is holistic. It is one of Carnap's deepest insights, and we can only regret that it did not play a fundamental role in his subsequent philosophy.[303]

Crucially, Quine thinks that the consequence of taking holism more seriously is that it blurs boundaries that are often taken to play important philosophical roles. Carnap, in not taking his holism as seriously as Quine, still has sharp boundaries in place. As Quite puts it:

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[302] Quine claims that other members of the Vienna Circle, in addition to Carnap, didn't take holism seriously enough. See 'Twentieth-Century Logic', p.65. Perhaps surprisingly, Quine also thinks that Duhem's holism was insufficient. See *Pursuit of Truth*, p.14

[303] 'Carnap's Positivistic Travail', pp.125-126. See also 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.182

> Sharp boundaries were Carnap's style early and late: a boundary between scientific sense and metaphysical nonsense, and a boundary between what is true by linguistic convention and what is true as a matter of fact. Dubious boundaries, I came to think.[304]

The analytic/synthetic distinction, crucially, is a prime example of this. This shows that Quine is taking holism seriously by the time of 'Two Dogmas' since it is this picture of the nature of empirical content that Quine presents to show that the analytic/synthetic distinction is a dogma that empiricists no longer need to cling to. In other words, Quine is not merely presenting an alternative picture of the nature of empirical content to reductionism. Quine is, rather, presenting what he takes to be an accurate picture of that relationship, even if that picture is lacking in many details.

Putting these points together, then, Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' is distinctive in at least four vital ways. First, Quine is challenging the empirical and scientific respectability of analyticity and related semantic notions. Second, Quine's claims are not merely expressions of doubt about the possibility of explicating analyticity clearly, rather, they come from the perspective of someone with conviction that progress on this point is not to be expected. Third, Quine's doubts come from the perspective of someone who has both a strong grasp on the ramified nature of analyticity within empiricism, as well as someone who appreciates both the roots of such a distinction and the fact that these roots explain why it lingers. Fourth, Quine has sufficient faith in an alternative conception of empiricism that he feels confident enough to challenge this general basis for the analytic/synthetic distinction. This shows both that the analytic/synthetic distinction isn't motivated, and that a strict distinction between two classes of sentences should not be strived for. Relating this back to the overall project of the chapter, then, if we're interested in investigating how far back Quine's distinctive position in 'Two Dogmas' extends into his early work, then these are the features that we ought to keep in mind as our targets.

2.3 Quine's Early Evolving Attitude Towards Analyticity

[304] 'Carnap', p.144

In this section, I undertake a careful and extensive investigation into Quine's early engagement with analyticity on the path to 'Two Dogmas'. In §2.3.1-§2.3.8 I chronologically examine important eras where Quine engages with the analytic/synthetic distinction in his work before 1951. Throughout this process, I assess the extent of Quine's worries, and relate them to his position in 'Two Dogmas' (as set out in §2.2.2). I end this section, in §2.3.9, by summarising my findings. Overall, I argue that Quine's relationship with analyticity is extremely complex but, importantly, not so bleak in the early days such that we can trace his later perspective in 'Two Dogmas' too far back into his work. There is, rather, a natural progression from relatively small worries about the notion and optimism about progress being forthcoming, to substantial worries and pessimism about the prospect of clarifying it. Crucially, it is not until very late in Quine's development that the pieces align properly in order for Quine to accurately be described as ready to occupy the perspective he has in 'Two Dogmas'.

2.3.1 Graduate School

Perhaps we can find traces of Quine's problems with analyticity as early as his graduate work. In retrospecting 'Two Dogmas', Quine finds himself going back not to 1951, but to his earliest work on *Principia Mathematica*, i.e. to his graduate work. The reason for this, Quine explains, is that both works are reacting to his "distrust of mentalistic semantics".[305] Analyticity is just "another elusive notion of intuitive philosophical semantics", and so needs to be vetted.[306] This appears to give us a link between Quine's worries about analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' and his worries much earlier.

However, exactly what is driving this distrust is complicated to work out precisely. Quine first links these common worries about *Principia Mathematica* and 'Two Dogmas' to his preference for behaviourism, and to Watson, specifically. Given the close relationship between Quine's behaviourism and his empiricism, it might seem that Quine's distrust of mentalistic semantics, and of analyticity in particular, is a constraint which arises from his empiricism. This is largely true, however, this doesn't seem to be the parallel that Quine is

[305] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.390-91
[306] *Word and Object*, p.65

drawing between his distrust of analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' and in his work as a graduate student. After drawing this connection, Quine links his worries with mentalistic semantics not to empiricism, but to *extensionalism*.

This might seem confusing, but we shouldn't see Quine's behaviourism and his extensionalism as completely separate commitments. Quine links these two theses in the following way:

> …when we think of examples of what's not extensional, they *are* pretty much of the introspective kind. "Necessity" in this sense of conviction is what we have until "necessity" is spelled out in a way that we can extensionalize, namely in terms of say "logical necessity," which we can formulate by semantic ascent in talking about the sentences and their structure.[307]

Quine's claim appears to be that there is a parallel between his preference for extensionalism and distaste for intensionalism on the one hand, and his preference for behavioural intersubjective evidence and distaste for introspective evidence on the other. In both cases where Quine has a favourable attitude, there's an emphasis on being clear about the identity criteria of the notions involved, which allows us to put forward something scientifically objective. This seems to give us a link between what drives Quine's worries about analyticity in 'Two Dogmas', and his attempt to clean up the *Principia* by extensionalizing it as a graduate student. But it doesn't provide us with actual doubts about analyticity specifically in Quine's graduate work.[308]

Isaac has presented more direct reasons for thinking that Quine's graduate work is tied to 'Two Dogmas'. Isaac stresses that Quine's graduate work demonstrates important aspects of his developing, though rudimentary, empiricism. We can see this in the tensions that Quine identifies in the sorts of distinctions he was presented with from people like C.I. Lewis, where the empirical is distinct from the conceptual.[309] Isaac notes that, when Quine was in graduate school, the use of analyticity was widespread in empiricists, and connected with a lot of problems that philosophers of Quine's generation would need to deal with, e.g.

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[307] 'There Is Always a Further Step', pp.93-4
[308] See also Sinclair, R. 2016.
[309] Isaac, J. 2005.

convention, meaning, epistemology, and the nature of science. In graduate school and in 'Two Dogmas', Quine is both engaging with analyticity, through his engagement with empiricism, and is critical of important distinctions within empiricism.

There's another important sense in which Quine's worries about Lewis' distinction between the given and the pragmatic a priori are significant for understanding Quine's development. Quine is influenced by Lewis' distinction, before he's aware of Carnap's distinction between the analytic and the synthetic. However, Quine's problem with Lewis' distinction is with the idea of there being a sharp distinction between the conceptual and the empirical.[310] Quine's worries with Lewis mirror Quine's later problems with Carnap's work, and empiricism generally, at a very basic level. Engaging with Lewis' epistemology, then, seems to give Quine the seeds of an isomorphic worry to his later worry about the analytic/synthetic distinction.[311]

While Quine seems to have concerns about the idea that there is a strict analytic/synthetic distinction in his graduate work, Isaac claims that Quine: "was not yet compelled to make his dissatisfaction an issue of much importance."[312] However, on the face of it, these tensions seem significant. In one paper, Quine treats analyticity as an empirical notion, and, therefore thinks that analytic truths are able to be changed based on empirical considerations. Already, this view is different to Carnap's.[313] In later work, Quine stresses the empirical nature of his appraisals of analyticity: "I have protested more than once that no empirical meaning has been given to the notion of meaning, nor, consequently, to this linguistic theory of logic."[314] The linguistic theory of logic being the idea that logical laws are analytic, and so true in virtue of the meaning of their words.

The reason for this seems to be that Quine presents views that are suggestive of something like a rudimentary form of holism. Indeed, philosophers often emphasise that Quine has a holistic view of scientific theories and their relation to experience much earlier than 'Two

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[310] See also Ibid. pp.222-23
[311] See also Sinclair, R. 2012. p.337. 2016. p.77
[312] Ibid. pp.218-20
[313] It's unclear whether Quine was aware of Carnap's view at this time. Quine became aware of the *Aufbau* in 1931 from John Cooley. Herbert Feigl then recommends that Quine goes to Carnap if he gets a travelling fellowship. See 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.41
[314] *The Roots of Reference*, p.78

Dogmas'.[315] This is one of the ways in which Quine's view in 'Two Dogmas' is not meant to be novel. Quine's early work gives the appearance of being deeply holistic because of the way that he writes about modifying our theory of the world in light of unexpected observations. For example, Quine writes about the "latitude" one has "as to where he may make his readjustments in the event of an experience recalcitrant to his system".[316] Even as early as 1927, in a college paper, Quine describes our system of the world metaphorically as a "web".[317] This is the metaphor that is often associated with Quine's later holistic approach. These claims are certainly telling but, for reasons I'll explain throughout this chapter, viewing the early Quine as holding anything as strong as a robust holistic view seems too optimistic. Quine's epistemological views in his early work are fairly naïve, often fluctuate, and aren't developed and definitive until much later.

Indeed, in the same graduate paper, Quine presents himself as *accepting* Kant's formulation of the analytic/synthetic distinction.[318] Thus, there's no real sense in which Quine has understood the consequences of the former view. In later work, Quine presents his critical view of analyticity, and alternative holistic conception of epistemology, in sharp contrast with Kant. So, while Quine certainly seemed to be having some suggestive thoughts, he cannot be said to have had a robust, substantial, and consistent epistemology in his graduate work that challenges, or provides an alternative to, the analytic/synthetic distinction. Moreover, as I demonstrated, the parallel Quine draws between his graduate work and 'Two Dogmas' is due to his push for scientific objectivity generally, rather than there being common worries specifically about analyticity.

2.3.2 1933

The following year, when Quine travels to Europe in 1933, we find more evidence of discontent with the distinction. Tennant has uncovered the following in Carnap's notes about

[315] See, for example, Isaac, J. 2005. pp.212-20. Lugg, A. 2012. p.239. Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.106-11
[316] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.107
[317] Sourced in Ibid.
[318] See Isaac, J. 2005. p.219

Quine's view of the distinction between logical and empirical statements being a matter of degree:

> Quine, 31.3.33
> He says after some reading of my "Syntax" MS:
> 1. *Is there a difference in principle between logical axioms and empirical sentences?* He thinks not. Perhaps I seek a distinction just for its utility, but it seems he is right: gradual difference: they are the sentences we want to hold fast.[319]

Quine points to this as an antecedent to his view in 'Two Dogmas'.[320] Perhaps, then, we can put Quine's graduate work to one side (given that it alternates between mild worries about analyticity and acquiescence in the analytic/synthetic distinction), and gesture to this very early point in the first year of Quine's career as evidence that his view in 'Two Dogmas' is found in some form earlier.

Of course, this is merely a short note, and one that is not even written by Quine. It hardly indicates a substantial argument against analyticity, nor a developed conception of epistemology that differs from Carnap's. As a further reason for exercising caution when evaluating the significance of this note, consider the following. While Quine has linked the doubt expressed in this note to his misgivings about analyticity in 'Truth by Convention' two years later, it is important to bear in mind that Quine had forgotten that this doubt had been raised until Tennant uncovered the note significantly later than 1933.[321] This should lessen the emphasis that we place on the note.

Moreover, there's good reason to doubt that analyticity is really in trouble for Quine at this time. Quine writes in 1934, i.e. the year after the note is written, that meeting Carnap allowed him to get over his epistemological worries about mathematics and logic:

> I gained by the end of my five and a half weeks in Prague what I deemed to be a fair command of Carnap's philosophical and logistical theories […] it has answered to my

[319] Sourced in 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.391.
[320] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', pp.391-392
[321] 'Exchange between Donald Davidson and W.V. Quine Following Davidson's Lecture'. pp.153-54. 'Comments on Neil Tennant's "Carnap and Quine"'. p.218

> satisfaction the question of the epistemological status of mathematics and logic, a question formerly perplexing to me…[322]

This does not sound like someone who is having doubts about a crucial epistemological notion in Carnap's philosophy. As Verhaegh argues, this gives us a picture of Quine that is fairly Carnapian in his lack of hostility towards analyticity. Again, Quine's thoughts about analyticity in this period are suggestive, but he doesn't appear to have any developed worries about the notion.

2.3.3 1934

In 1934, Quine gave three lectures on Carnap's philosophy to the Harvard Society of Fellows. On the face of it, these lectures seem significant given that Carnap is an important influence on Quine, if not *the* most important influence, and Quine's worries about analyticity are often presented directly against Carnap. It's important, therefore, to see how much of Quine's lectures are sympathetic, critical, and neutral towards Carnap's views on analyticity, and whether Quine has moved away from the seemingly friendly attitude outlined in the previous section.

A number of philosophers have taken Quine's early views to be Carnapian, especially his work before 'Two Dogmas', where the break with Carnap is supposed to have occurred.[323] Accordingly, philosophers interpret Quine's views in the Carnap lectures in this way. For example, Creath and Isaacson read Quine as advocating Carnap's view in the lectures, and Isaac sees Quine as merely outlining the virtues of Carnap's view.[324] Against the idea that the lectures are critical, Isaac stresses that the purpose of the lectures isolate them from Quine's own views. The lectures are meant to showcase an exciting new approach to philosophy, but one that isn't Quine's. Even if Quine had worries, he would have seen it as inappropriate to air these in the context of the lectures.

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[322] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.107
[323] See also Morris, S. 2018a. p.403
[324] Creath, R. 1987. pp.479-80. 1990b. p.1. Isaacson, D. 2004. p.239. 2005. Isaac, J. 2005. Esp. pp.205-06, pp.228-29

Quine has described the lectures, retrospectively, in ways that fit with this reading. Quine describes them as "uncritical" and "abjectly sequacious", and, more positively describes himself as being "very much [Carnap's] disciple for six years."[325] Quine writes to Carnap just after the lectures stressing that he "is in complete agreement with the ideas of your book".[326] Quine even seems shocked to have discovered this. In re-reading the lectures, he writes: "I am startled to see how abjectly I was hawing Carnap's line".[327]

All of these points suggest that Quine has an uncritical perspective on analyticity in the lectures. Whatever the exact nature of Quine's relation to Carnap, it would be extremely surprising for him, in 1934, to have worries comparable to those in 'Two Dogmas' about analyticity, given the importance of that notion in Carnap's philosophy.[328] Quine's closing remarks of the lectures appears to fit with this uncritical picture:

> Views will differ as to the success of Carnap's total thesis that all philosophy is syntax. Carnap has made a very strong case for this thesis; but it must be admitted that there are difficulties to be ironed out. We cannot be sure that we have found the key to the universe. Still Carnap *has* provided us, at the worst, with a key to an enormous part of the universe. He has…shown conclusively that the bulk of what we relegate to philosophy can be handled rigorously and clearly within syntax.[329]

This gives us a picture where, although there are minor reservations about how universal Carnap's success is, Quine thinks that the bulk of Carnap's view *is* successful, and that Carnap's general syntactic treatment of philosophy works. The way in which it's critical is also presented as something that doesn't seem out of bounds with what Carnap would accept. As Hylton puts it: "[i]f there is such a thing as damning with faint praise, this may surely be described as a case of endorsing with very faint qualification."[330]

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[325] 'Autobiography of W.V. Quine', p.16. 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.266. 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.41
[326] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.151
[327] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.83 f10
[328] See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.294
[329] 'Lectures on Carnap', pp.102-03
[330] Hylton, P. 2001. p.257

Quine's attitude towards Carnap's general syntactic method in the lectures is positive. Quine sees Carnap as having taken notions that, ordinarily in philosophy and common language, are handled vaguely, and given them a technical and precise treatment. This is especially notable when Quine discusses notions that typically would be handled intensionally, e.g. synonymy and content. Quine describes synonymy understood in terms of meaning as giving us "a more difficult notion…than synonymity itself". [331] Carnap defines the latter syntactically. On analyticity specifically, Quine explains that Carnap's syntactic treatment of content allows us to understand what it means to call an analytic sentence devoid of content; analytic sentences only have analytic consequences on Carnap's view. Quine's view of Carnap's treatment of analyticity seems positive: "…here with Carnap, for the first time, the phrase receives a definite technical meaning."[332] Or, as Quine puts it more generally:

> These samples are already sufficient to suggest the gain afforded by rigorous methods in syntax. Such concepts as "content" and "synonymity" are usually couched in hopelessly vague terms…The problems associated with these notions are vaguely handled in epistemological logic or intensional logic or theory of meaning. Such matters here become sharply formulated for the first time and put on a basis where we have full command of what we are talking about…[333]

This outlook generally, as well as specifically in relation to analyticity, all seems highly positive, and it differs drastically to Quine's perspective on such notions in 'Two Dogmas'.

However, against this picture, Hylton argues that the lectures, while appearing uncritical, display the seed of tension: "they reveal fundamental assumptions that are at odds with the views they espouse – especially about analyticity."[334] The root of the tension that Hylton highlights is more or less the same worry that Quine gives the next year in 'Truth By Convention'. Namely, Quine worries that the process we provide for giving implicit definitions, and so creating analytic truths, can be carried out indefinitely, and so any

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[331] 'Lectures on Carnap', pp.80-1
[332] Ibid
[333] Ibid
[334] Hylton, P. 2001. p.257, pp.262-63

sentence can be counted as analytic. That is, analyticity expands too widely, and thus becomes trivial.

One way that we could draw a line between the analytic and the synthetic is by exploiting the pre-existing *a priori*/*a posteriori* distinction. We carry out definitions until all of the truths that are *a priori* are captured, stopping short of empirical truths, and hence the process doesn't continue to the point of triviality. However, Hylton doesn't think that this option is open to Quine because he doesn't think that Quine sees there being a strict distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* truth, even at this early stage. Hylton writes: "[a]lthough Quine uses the expressions "a priori" and "empirical," his uses seem to be loose, and more or less for the sake of argument."[335] Hylton justifies this claim by noting Quine's attitude towards the *a priori* in 'Truth by Convention' and the Carnap lectures. Quine explicitly claims that: "[t]he distinction between a priori and empirical does not concern me here".[336] And Quine often speaks of logical, mathematical, and empirical vocabulary as 'so-called logical', etc., vocabulary.[337] Hylton claims that this illustrates that Quine "pointedly refrains from endorsing the existence of such distinctions at the outset."[338] The consequence of this view for analyticity is that attaching the label 'analytic' to some class of truths simply isn't going to give them a significant trait, and it isn't going to constrain what counts eventually as analytic.

Hylton's point isn't merely that what's analytic on Quine's account will end up being trivial, as his argument is often read. The problem is deeper: whatever analyticity turns out to be, it's going to be built upon a set of sentences that are already accepted as true. If we pick out a sentence that we're going to view as being analytic, this sentence will already be taken to be true before we refine our truths to settle on this truth as an analytic one. Implicit definitions, which carry out this refining process, can't be the means by which these sentences are made true, and so analyticity can't account for why these beliefs end up being true. Analyticity is *supplementary* to the truth of a sentence. What this suggests is that Quine is already

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[335] Ibid. p.262
[336] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.49
[337] Ibid. pp.52-3, p.61. 'Truth by Convention', p.100. Quine also describes the *a priori*/*a posteriori* distinction as an "apparent contrast". p.102
[338] Hylton, P. 2001. p.262

questioning the explanatory role of analyticity very early. Namely, Quine is questioning any epistemological role it can have in explaining the truth of a sentence that we already accept.

What's especially significant here, as Hylton emphasizes, is that Quine is starting with ordinary language in focusing on the class of truths that we already accept. Quine is not starting with a detached artificial or formal language. He starts with "our accepted sentences", and these aren't neatly divided into kinds.[339] Quine, in 1934, is taking "the starting point of philosophy to be our actual language, and our actual system of knowledge, as going concerns."[340]

On this significant point, Hylton seems to be right.[341] For example, when Quine dismisses the relevance of "the distinction between a priori and empirical", he is considering true sentences in which some word occurs; the word can be "mathematical, logical, or otherwise", and he focusses not on distinguishing between these as true empirically or true *a priori*, but merely as "true according to the given stage in the process of science" we're working from.[342]

Moreover, on the seemingly little weight that Quine places on calling things 'empirical', 'logical', etc., not only does Quine use qualifiers like 'so-called', but also he notes that while we opt to define so-called logico-mathematical words before empirical ones, this is due to the simplicity that this seems likely to lead to. Quine stresses that this is a "conventional and arbitrary" decision, and hence only has pragmatical value.[343] What is needed is merely a distinction between vocabulary that is logico-mathematical and that isn't. But, crucially, this doesn't give you an *a priori*/*a posteriori* distinction. Moreover, even within the logico-mathematical definitions, we'll need to make arbitrary choices about which of those terms to define before others, and this again will be pragmatic, with our choices leading to "alternative systematizations of logics and mathematics".[344] Quine stresses that: "the distinction between these categories is somewhat vague and corresponds to no sharp structural cleavage".[345]

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[339] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.63
[340] Hylton, P. 2001. p.264
[341] In §2.3.6, I'll explain that Quine eventually becomes aware that this approach contrasts with Carnap's.
[342] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.49
[343] Ibid. p.52
[344] Ibid. p.53
[345] Ibid

Hylton's main points are crucial, and they highlight distinctly Quinean views that are on display early. This helps to illustrate just how suggestive Quine's thoughts towards analyticity are this early. However, I want to suggest some considerations that caution how strongly we ought to read these suggestive thoughts. Indeed, Hylton also stresses that we shouldn't read them too strongly. As I explain shortly, he thinks it's a mistake to attribute substantial epistemological views to Quine at the time. My method, however, is to highlight ways in which Quine's views in the lectures appear to show him also wanting to place some theoretical weight on the *a priori*. This helps to show that, while the attitude Quine displays here is suggestive when one looks at it with Quine's later, robust attitude towards analyticity in mind, we shouldn't put too much emphasis on how developed Quine's worries about analyticity are at this time. Hylton seems right to view this as a period where Quine's view contains tensions, and these further points support the idea that these tensions are strong.

We can see that Quine places some weight on the *a priori* in his presentation of the notion at the start of the first lecture. Quine writes:

> Analytic judgements are consequences of definitions, conventions as to the uses of words. They are consequences of linguistic fiat. *Clearly* they are *a priori*; their truth does not depend upon experience, but upon vocabulary. Among analytic judgements are to be reckoned logic and the bulk, at least, of mathematics.[346]

While Quine often uses categories like the *a priori* loosely, as explained above, Quine's claim here seems firm and uncritical; Quine is saying that analyticity judgements are clearly *a priori*.

On the other hand, one might think that the *a priori* would threaten Quine's commitment to empiricism. Empiricism is often contrasted with rationalism in so far as the former rejects *a priori* knowledge or truths, while the latter accepts the existence of these. Hence, Quine, a life-long empiricist, can't be amenable to the *a priori*. Yet, this needn't be the case. Carnap doesn't see acceptance of the *a priori* as violating empiricism because it can be viewed as analytic. Quine explains this view in the lecture, and so one might think that Quine simply

[346] 'Lectures on Carnap', pp.47-8. The first emphasis is mine.

accepts a Carnapian view of *a priori* synthetic truths, rather than holding his later view, or a firm version of the view that Hylton attributes to him earlier, where these sorts of distinctions don't hold weight. Consider the way that Quine presents Carnap's view:

> …the development of foundational studies in mathematics during the past century has made it clear that none of mathematics, not even geometry, need rest on anything but linguistic conventions of a definitional kind. In this way it becomes possible to relegate geometry to the analytic realm, along with the rest of mathematics.[347]

What's significant in Quine's presentation of this view is that it's a rejection of Kant's position that the analytic and the *a priori* aren't co-extensive, because things like geometry are *a priori* but not analytic, and so must be synthetic (yet not empirical, so not *a posteriori*). What allows Carnap to arrive at this view is the developments in modern logic that Quine sees himself and Carnap as integrating into philosophy; a result achieved through "the development of foundational studies in mathematics during the past century".[348] We can view geometry in terms of linguistic convention, thus making it analytic: "[t]his empties out the *a priori* synthetic".[349] While Carnap makes a syntactic decision to get this result, Quine doesn't see this as devaluing it. If one didn't make such a decision, Quine stresses, it would lead us to metaphysical problems about the validity of the *a priori,* and this would be an "ill-advised syntactic" decision.[350] Hence, Carnap's treatment of the *a priori,* explained in the Carnap lectures, is something that Quine admires, exemplifying the method that he and Carnap champion. The fact that there is good evidence for both Hylton's claim that Quine rejects a sharp distinction between the *a priori* and the empirical, and for Quine's positive attitude of Carnap's treatment of the *a priori* illustrates how deep these tensions run in Quine's view at the time.

To return to Hylton's point more directly, he argues that this specific tension about analyticity in 1934 is further suggested by a more general and fundamental tension that seems to exist in the lectures. Quine seems to entertain the strongly anti-Carnapian view that there

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[347] Ibid. p.48
[348] Ibid. Developments from people like Poincare, Schlick and Reichenbach.
[349] Ibid
[350] Ibid, p.66

are genuine philosophical problems that we should try to solve, rather than merely showing them to be illusions.[351] Quine claims:

> In all our general thinking, whether within metaphysics itself or in the natural sciences or in mathematics, we seem invariably to come up finally against some philosophic, non-empirical problem which cannot be permanently swept aside…[352]

Quine claims that we can't reject these problems completely as meaningless. Instead, we have to deal with them as syntactic issues. This shows that Quine is caught between wanting to be a devout Carnapian disciple and wanting to view philosophy as something more robust than Carnap would allow. According to Hylton, Quine's struggling attitude towards analyticity is further indication of this more fundamental tension. This is because analyticity is what plays this role of demarcating legitimate philosophy from illegitimate metaphysics.

However, I think that we can soften the strength of this apparent tension. Quine makes this claim as a challenge to Carnap's picture: philosophy as syntax will either reject such issues as meaningless or deal with them using syntactic methods. If Carnap's project handles them mainly using the former option, it's a negative view, and if mainly the latter, it's a constructive view. Quine's aim is to show "the constructive quality and importance of Carnap's method."[353] It's true that there's a difference of emphasis between Quine and Carnap; Carnap seems unlikely to word the prospect of metaphysics so openly as Quine. However, Quine is also, on this specific point, defending Carnap's view to a considerable extent. Quine then goes on to explain how one can use the syntactic method to avoid metaphysical treatment of a whole range of philosophical issues, like talk of modality and meaning.

Let's return to the prospects of analyticity in the Carnap lectures more directly. We've seen that there are significant tensions in Quine's attitude towards analyticity. But we need to know how deep these tensions run. Given the state of play in the lectures, Hylton writes:

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[351] Hylton, P. 2001. pp.266-67
[352] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.88
[353] Ibid

> We wait for the conclusion the mature Quine was to draw: that calling sentences "a priori," or "analytic," adds nothing to calling them "firmly accepted" – adds, that is, nothing by way of explanation to the bare behavioral fact that these are sentences about which we will change our minds only under the most extreme circumstances, if at all.[354]

However, Hylton doesn't think that Quine sees analyticity as negatively here. We saw above that Quine has doubts about analyticity's explanatory worth in some contexts. But, crucially, Hylton claims that Quine doesn't see analyticity as unexplanatory in *every* context. Unlike in Quine's later work, Quine thinks that the sentences that we firmly accept themselves give us something that needs to be explained. Quine writes:

> …it is convenient so to frame our definitions as to make all these sentences [the most firmly accepted ones] analytic…[W]e are equally free to leave some of our firmly accepted sentences outside the analytic realm, and yet to continue to hold to them by what we may call deliberate dogma, or mystic intuition, or divine revelation: but what's the use, since suitable definition can be made to do the trick without any such troublesome assumptions? If we disapprove of the gratuitous creation of metaphysical problems, we will provide for such firmly accepted sentences within our definitions, or else cease to accept them so firmly.[355]

This shows that Quine thinks that the fact that we firmly accept some sentence demands an explanation, and if that explanation isn't that the sentence is analytic, then we have to worry about "gratuitous metaphysical problems", or else stop holding them so firmly.

This decision, for Carnap, is a syntactic one, but Quine views it as scientifically significant because of the economy it gives to our theory: "it has the importance of enabling us to pursue foundations of mathematics and the logic of science without encountering extra-logical questions as to the source of the validity of our *a priori* judgements."[356] Here we have, as Hylton emphasises, a further contrast from Carnap. While Carnap claims that no belief is unrevisable, the fact that it is such a belief doesn't need explained. This is because for certain beliefs, revision amounts to changing the language itself, and there's not

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[354] Hylton, P. 2001. p.268
[355] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.65
[356] Ibid. p.66

something left that needs to be explained. For Quine, however, the fact that a belief is held fixed does need to be explained.[357]

Additionally, Hylton notes that this brings out a change in attitude between the later and earlier Quine. In particular, Quine's behaviouristic account of a sentence as being unrevisable, or firmly accepted, isn't as liberated from philosophical presuppositions as it is in his later work. In the Carnap lectures, Quine is focussed on a narrower set of sentences that we hold fixed than he does in his later work; he's focussing on sentences that, when it comes to their justification, could be seen to raise metaphysical worries, like '2+2=5', rather than sentences that we hold fixed, but that we can account for empirically, like 'there have been white dogs'.

Quine's problem at this stage is that it doesn't look like this narrower class of sentences can be picked out using the behavioural notion of analyticity. What underlies this problem is that the metaphysical, non-empirical, way in which we could justify these sentences, i.e. viewing them as *a priori*, is undermined for Quine because he doesn't think that language is divided sharply in this way. Quine's empirical outlook, even at this stage, doesn't seem to be restricted to only apply to some of the sentences in our overall theory of the world. Yet the role that analyticity is meant to play for Quine at this time does require this discriminatory form of empiricism. Hence, we're brought back to the fact that there is a strong tension in Quine's view at this stage.

One might be tempted to make sense of the existence of the tension in Quine's view by attributing a developed epistemological view to him. Hylton seems right to reject this idea. He writes: "…the young Quine was first and foremost a logician…he did not, at this point, hold any definite views about matters epistemological."[358] Nor does Hylton think that Quine clearly sees the link between epistemology and analyticity at this time. One way in which someone might read Quine as having a developed epistemology in the Carnap lectures to account for logic and mathematical truth is because we might read his holism into his view. This would explain what motivates Quine's empirical outlook as not being restricted to only some sentences. But Hylton doesn't think that Quine has a holistic view here: "there is no

[357] See Hylton, P. 2001. p.268 f24
[358] Ibid. pp.269-70

sign [of it] at all in the lectures."[359] At best, Quine starts from within language, with the sentences we accept as true, and doesn't split those into *a priori* and *a posteriori* sentences, but this isn't substantial enough to be called a holistic view. Moreover, even if Quine's views were suggestive of something like holism in the Carnap lectures, it is certainly not the case that Quine presents them as leading to a developed perspective that directly opposes an epistemological outlook that places value in the analytic/synthetic distinction. In §2.3.1, I emphasised that while Quine's early work includes views that are suggestive of something like a rudimentary form of holism, Quine's early epistemological views are fairly naïve, in flux, and aren't developed and definitive until much later. Hylton seems right, then, to dismiss this explanation of the tension in Quine's view.

To summarise, I began this section by examining how Quine's position in the Carnap lectures is usually interpreted. This suggested that Quine's perspective on analyticity in the lectures is uncritical. Quine's more general statements about Carnap's view are very positive, and while Quine may have minor reservations about the total success of Carnap's project, he thinks that the bulk of the view is successful. Quine is also very positive about Carnap's treatment of notions that are ordinarily handled vaguely, including analyticity. Beneath the surface, however, there are tensions that are significant when retrospectively looking back from the perspective of the later Quine. Perhaps Carnap, if looking closely at the content of these lectures, should have grown suspicious of his disciple's true allegiance. Quine can be seen to question the explanatory role of analyticity very early by questioning what epistemological role analyticity can have in explaining the truth of a sentence. But, at the same time, Quine doesn't seem to have doubts about the explanatory worth of analyticity in every context. The fact that sentences are firmly held is a phenomenon that Quine thinks needs to be explained. These points, combined with Quine's relative naivety about epistemology, make it highly likely that tracing the view in 'Two Dogmas' back as early as 1934 is far too strong an interpretation of Quine.

2.3.4 1935-36

[359] Ibid

Quine also points to 'Truth by Convention' as an antecedent of 'Two Dogmas'.[360] This paper is both a substantial piece of philosophy, and, importantly, it is Quine's *own* published work as opposed to a note written about Quine or a lecture given by Quine on the work of another philosopher. Assessing the status of Quine's view of analyticity in this paper is intimately connected to the topic of §2.3.3. Not only is there very little time between the first Carnap lecture and 'Truth by Convention', but there's also an interesting structural parallel between them. Namely, in both places, Quine begins by focussing on definition, then looks at the idea that convention can account for logical truths, and then considers the extent of conventional truth.[361] 'Truth by Convention', then, can only differ in its hostility to analyticity in the ways that it differs from the first lecture.

We seem to find evidence of negativity about analyticity at the beginning of the paper:

> …developments of the past few decades have led to a widespread conviction that logic and mathematical are purely analytical or conventional. It is less the purpose of the present inquiry to question the validity of this contrast than to question its sense.[362]

This seems notably negative. Creath, however, claims that it's open to interpretation: "[t]his could be interpreted as a slyly phrased assertion that analyticity is without sense or as a request for further clarification or as anything in between."[363] While it tends to be read as the former, Creath thinks that the paper doesn't provide an argument for this; in fact, the paper "is not at all hostile to Carnap", and hence to Carnap's view of analyticity.[364]

On this point specifically, there's good reason to think that Creath is right, but this is in light of different evidence that is much less open to interpretation. The point that Quine is making at this point in the paper is not that it's problematic to view mathematics and logic as analytic. Rather, the problem is in drawing a contrast between the claim that mathematics and logic are analytic with the claim that physical science differs from these areas because it's not wholly conventional. It is this specific contrast, rather than the more general one between the

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[360] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', pp.391-92, *Word and Object*, p.67 f7
[361] Some sections are verbatim. See Creath, R. 1987. pp.486-87
[362] 'Truth by Convention'. p.77
[363] Creath, R. 1987. p.486
[364] Ibid

analytic and the synthetic, that Quine is drawing, and hence *this* is what the paper appears to be trying to undermine. This claim lacks the strength to topple analyticity generally as something unintelligible.

Now, Quine's position here isn't wholly new. In the first Carnap lecture, Quine also stresses that we can make any truth, via contextual definition, end up being true by convention, and so analytic. This undermines the contrast, then, between logico-mathematical truths and other truths, including those in science. This process seems to have the effect of continuing to such an extent that it trivialises analyticity.[365] But Quine doesn't see himself as claiming something negative when he makes this point in the lectures. Rather, Quine's point is that we *could* do this for all sentences, but that we *won't* do it for most sentences. Importantly, this isn't a principled point: "…we simply would not bother to render [certain sentences] analytic by deliberate definition."[366]

Likewise, our decision to view certain sentences as synthetic is seen as pragmatic and tied to the fact that, if we're faced with an unexpected observation, or failed prediction, we want those sentences to be the ones that we revise first. Quine explains this in terms that sound very much like the principle of minimum mutilation:

> In general we can choose, to *some* extent, where to revise, what principle to dislodge. Our choice is guided largely by the tendency to dislodge as little of previous doctrine as we can compatibly with the ideal of unity and simplicity in the resulting doctrine. Hence we may propose, by and large, to disturb first only such principles as support or underly, in a logical way, a minimum of other principles. It is therefore convenient to maintain a merely provisional, non-analytic status for such principles as we shall be most willing to sacrifice when need of revision at one point or another arises.[367]

If we didn't do this, Quine stresses, it would greatly impede the progress of science; we'd constantly be redefining our terms, and we'd be at a loss about how to make changes when we're faced with a failed prediction since all changes are on a par.[368]

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[365] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.62
[366] Ibid
[367] Ibid. p.63
[368] See also Creath 1990b. p.29

But reflecting on this attitude shows a way in which Quine is in fact friendly to analyticity in the Carnap lectures and 'Truth by Convention'. Quine's picture of how we make revisions to scientific theory involves definitions, and re-defining, and Quine sees definitions as leading to analytic truths. So, while what's counted as analytic will be arbitrary and pragmatic, it's still classed as analytic:

> Yet we must define—and we must define sufficiently to make verbal usage specific in matters at least which are subject to rigorous treatment, as in the rigorous sciences. And we cannot define without making *some* of our accepted sentences analytic; it is a matter merely of choosing which.[369]

By this pragmatic standard, we will end up classifying the logico-mathematical truths as analytic: "...we may as well make the accepted sentences of mathematics and logic analytic."[370] Although, these won't be the only truths on our list. We'll also want some physical truths as analytic, and so not sought after for revision. Similarly, Quine describes our choice of sentences as synthetic as something "we may as well" keep, describing them as having a "provisional status" as synthetic.[371]

Quine's perspective on analyticity both in the Carnap lectures and in 'Truth By Convention' is intended to match up with the practice of science; it's not a purely philosophical notion, but one grounded in scientific practice. Quine explains how it fits not just with logico-mathematical truths, but also with some truths of physics, and gives Einstein's definition of simultaneity as an example. This example fits with Quine's characterisation of the analytic because he sees Einstein's choice to define simultaneity in the way that he did as aiming to enhance "the rigor of physics".[372] By this, Quine means that Einstein's definition of simultaneity fits with the more general picture that he gives of our use of analytic conventional truths. Namely, they are those that we don't want to revise. Quine's attitude to analyticity, in this respect, seems friendly.

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[369] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.63
[370] Ibid
[371] Ibid. p.64
[372] Ibid. 'Truth by Convention', p.77

In ‘Truth By Convention’, analyticity is first approached in detail at end of the first section. Quine notes that if we grant the success of *Principia Mathematica* and accept that mathematics can be defined in terms of logic, such that we can view it as true by convention into logic via definition, this isn’t enough to ground the truth of mathematics in convention. For this to happen, logic, in turn, would need to be seen as true by convention. Analyticity fits in here because: “an *analytic* statement is commonly explained merely as one which proceeds from logic and definitions, or as one which, on replacement of definienda by definientia, becomes a truth of logic.”[373] Quine relates this view to Carnap, as well as Frege and Behmann, noting that Carnap’s use of analyticity stands out in being more “subtle and rigorous”.[374] At this point, Quine notes that this might be all we mean in calling mathematics true by convention, or analytic; we’re not trying to claim that convention has the power to make something like mathematics true.

The problem, though, is that, given this process can’t ground the truth of mathematics because logic in turn needs to be true by convention, this impoverishes the “fundamental simplification for philosophy” that analyticity is meant to provide.[375] This use of definition is merely the transformation of truths, mathematics into logic, rather than the founding of something as true.[376] Postulates are often noted for their ability to generate, rather than transform, truths, and so the second section looks at this way of making sense of truth by convention.

So far, then, nothing notably negative has been raised against analyticity; Quine has merely motivated the direction of the paper for narrowing its focus onto postulates. The second section of the paper is notably non-critical and optimistic. Quine outlines a system of conventions that generate all the statements we want to count as true which involve logical expressions essentially. This is explicitly intended to capture the infinitude of logical truths.

Quine then opens the third section by explaining how we can extend these methods to count mathematics as also true by convention, even if we take issue with the sort of *Principia* reduction of mathematics to logic, and hence don’t see the fact that logic is true by

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[373] Ibid. p.87
[374] Ibid
[375] Ibid
[376] Ibid. p.88

convention as sufficient for also capturing mathematics as true by convention. But the problem here is that this method can be extended "into the so-called empirical sciences", thus making these scientific truths also true by convention in the same way as the mathematical truths.[377] Quine stresses that this is part of what makes them empirical. If they were defined in terms of logic and mathematics, then they'd be assigned to pure mathematics. Here we have the argument that Quine also outlines in the Carnap lectures, and hence it is nothing new. However, against the looser classification of language in the Carnap lecture, where Quine talks of the 'so-called' empirical truths, Quine seems to have a more in principled distinction at the point of 'Truth by Convention' between the empirical and the *a priori*. That is, defining the empirical in terms of logic and mathematics is explained by Quine as an "impossibility".[378] The tension that was present in Quine's view in the Carnap lectures that I explained in the previous section can still be felt in 'Truth by Convention'.

We could carry out this method in such a way that we reduce our overall body of empirical expressions, defining them in terms of logic, mathematics, and other empirical expressions, until we're left with a minimum collection of primitive empirical expressions. Carnap fits in here because, in the *Aufbau*, this is exactly the task that he attempted. But Quine distances himself from taking this view seriously at this time. He stresses: "[b]ut for the present cursory considerations no such spectacular reducibility need be presupposed."[379] Hence, Quine's argument here might bear on the *Aufbau* project, but it's in no way specifically focussed on it. Moreover, Carnap has moved on from the *Aufbau* view by this time, as Quine is aware.

On such a general approach, any statement would be viewed as an abbreviation of statements which contain only logico-mathematical, and the limited empirical, primitives, and we can circumscribe each primitive such that it now renders all of our truths as true by convention in the way that the logico-mathematical truths are so viewed. Quine outlines this approach both in 'Truth by Convention' and the Carnap lectures. However, an important difference in 'Truth by Convention' is Quine's assertion that *if* what this picture intends to show is that what it means for logic and mathematics to be conventionally true is merely that we can set up conventions which make all of the truths of these fields generated as true, then this is an

[377] Ibid. p.100
[378] Ibid
[379] Ibid

empty claim. This is because it extends to "any other body of doctrine as well."[380] In viewing it as an *empty* claim, Quine pushes this problem in more explicitly critical terms here than in the Carnap lectures.

Quine also outlines some other options of what the significance of this approach could be. For example, perhaps it's meant to show merely that speakers adopt these conventions for logic and mathematics but not for other fields, but then it's "uninteresting", at least philosophically.[381] Alternatively, if the claim is that it's an actual practice that we explicitly adopt such conventions only in logic and mathematics, then it's simply "false".[382] Again, we see Quine pushing the problem in more explicitly critical terms than in the Carnap lectures.

With these three options undermined, Quine then turns his attention to the idea that there's an *a priori*/*a posteriori* distinction operating which explains the respective difference between logical and mathematical claims and empirical claims. Quine's language at this point of the paper is notably cautious, which is in line with Hylton's claim about Quine's view of the distinction between the empirical and the *a priori* in the Carnap lectures. This is an "apparent contrast", but Quine immediately puts it in behavioural terms to make sure it's not characterised in terms of a "metaphysical system".[383] Again, we have Quine emphasising a behavioural way to make sense of analyticity, but it's not put forward as a substantial account in its own right. Rather, a behavioural characterisation of analyticity appears to be a minimal constraint on what would legitimise the notion of analyticity for Quine. According to such an account, the difference between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* is "a contrast between more and less firmly accepted statements".[384]

This brings us to one consideration which speaks against the idea that Quine is rejecting a significant analytic/synthetic distinction in 'Truth by Convention'. In terms of this behavioural distinction, Quine separates logical and mathematical truths from other scientific truths in claiming that: "these statements are destined to be maintained independently of our observations of the world".[385] Such statements are too "basic…to our whole conceptual

[380] Ibid. p.102
[381] Ibid
[382] Ibid
[383] Ibid
[384] Ibid
[385] Ibid. See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.107-08

scheme."[386] This is a point that holds "regardless of what further we may have to say of their status in the course of a subsequent sophisticated philosophy."[387] And it's because of this behavioural fact that Quine claims that "we may as well make use…of our technique of conventional truth assignment and thereby forestall awkward metaphysical questions as to our a priori insight into necessary truths."[388] So, despite the bareness of this behavioural characterisation, the fact that there is this difference between logico-mathematical statements and empirical ones is sufficient such that we can dodge problematic metaphysics for the conventional approach. Quine's language towards supposedly sharp distinctions might be loose, but, at the same time, Quine is allowing a lot to ride on this difference in kind between two types of statements. As is the case with his view in the Carnap lectures, Quine's attitude appears to contain significant tensions that are visible when looking closely at his perspective on analyticity.

Moreover, because of this difference between logico-mathematical and empirical claims, Quine claims that there's no corresponding worry that awkward metaphysical questions will arise for empirical statements, and so there's no need to extend the conventional approach to those claims. It's only "philosophically important" to do it in the case of the logico-mathematical claims.[389] This is a substantially more nuanced position than the one outlined in the Carnap lectures, and Quine avoids giving the pragmatic approach to deciding where we end our use of convention. There's a principled reason, grounded in the behavioural difference between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, for only using convention to deal with logic and mathematics.

Let us pause to reflect on this attempted behavioural emphasis of analyticity and related notions. There seems to be a notable shift from Quine's perspective in 1933 and 1936. As we saw in §2.3.2, Quine's focus on analyticity, as the letter Quine wrote in 1934 shows, is epistemological, in the sense that he's concerned with analyticity's role in justifying mathematics and logic. However, in 'Truth by Convention' Quine is often interpreted *not* as presenting the notion from a distinctly epistemological point of view. Creath and Verhaegh, for example, have characterized Quine's treatment of analyticity as being presented in a

[386] 'Truth By Convention', p.102
[387] Ibid
[388] Ibid
[389] Ibid

distinctly *psychological*, rather than normative, sense.[390] This explains the behavioural presentation that Quine gives of analyticity; analyticity explains our psychological reaction to choose not to revise certain statements. Moreover, it's sometimes stressed that Quine doesn't appreciate that this is a different conception of the role of analyticity than Carnap's, where analyticity has an important epistemic function in justifying logico-mathematical statements. As evidence for this interpretation, we might focus on Quine's claim that "the apparent contrast between the a priori and a posteriori truths (and thus the analytic and the synthetic) retains reality "*behavioristically* […] as a contrast between more and less firmly accepted sentences"".[391]

But we have to be careful about how powerful this behavioural way of thinking about analyticity is taken to be. It is not offered as a substantial explication of analyticity, but nor is it purely psychological. Rather, it is a suggestion for the basis of an explication that would make sense by Quine's own standards, and a basis that is compatible with, though not tied to, more substantial ways of making sense of analyticity that Quine considers, e.g. convention.[392] Quine speaks of the behavioural distinction being stripped of a metaphysical system, but the idea would be that we take, as minimum, the behavioural distinction, and then supplement this with more distinctly philosophical ideas to illuminate the nature of analyticity, including its epistemological function. In the first lecture, Quine stresses that: "[t]he analytic depends upon nothing more than definition, or conventions as to the uses of words."[393] Hence, this explains the main focus being on this particular way of understanding analyticity the following year. The behavioural way of understanding analyticity, rather than providing the key to analyticity, constitutes a minimal condition for what would count as an acceptable explication by Quine's standards. It's also minimal in an importantly impoverished way. Quine stresses that it's "barer" than the "bare statement" that logico-mathematical truths are *a priori*.[394]

It would also be especially surprising if Quine's treatment of analyticity was not epistemic, at least at times, given that Quine emphasizes the epistemic role that analyticity is brought in to

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[390] Creath, R. 1987. pp.485-86, p.492. 1990b. pp.30-1. Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.116-17
[391] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.117 f30. Quoting 'Truth by Convention', p.102. Verhaegh's emphasis.
[392] See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. pp.300-01
[393] 'Lectures on Carnap', p.49
[394] 'Truth by Convention', p.106

serve for empiricists, especially when he discusses Carnap.[395] This is especially clear in Quine's discussion of the role of reductionism in empiricism, and the contrast that his later holistic picture has with this view.[396] Moreover, Quine's reflections on his grapples with analyticity place it right in the centre of epistemology. He writes about it being involved in: "a sweeping epistemological dichotomy".[397] Recall that the previous section emphasised the relative naivety of Quine's epistemological outlook. In doing so, I explained that Hylton thinks that, in the Carnap lectures, Quine doesn't yet appreciate the relation of analyticity to epistemology. Such an outlook would fit with the idea that Quine views analyticity purely behaviourally, rather than epistemologically, in 'Truth by Convention'. However, for the reasons provided above (including Quine's motivation for focussing on convention specifically), I think it's plausible that Quine has at least *some* grasp on the role that analyticity is meant to play widely in epistemology by 'Truth by Convention', even if his own positive views are fairly undeveloped. Moreover, recall Isaac's point, discussed in §2.3.1, that Quine's graduate work involved him engaging with the use of analyticity in empiricism. The use of analyticity in this context is epistemological, and so it's unlikely that Quine didn't see this carrying over into Carnap's use of the notion. Indeed, in §2.3.2, I stressed that Quine wrote that meeting Carnap cleared up questions about the epistemological status of logic and mathematics. All of this makes it likely that Quine both had at least some grasp on the fact that analyticity was vital to epistemology, and intended his own view to have epistemological significance.

Let's return to the argument in 'Truth by Convention'. Quine next outlines a further and deeper worry; one that isn't present in the Carnap lectures. This is the problem that an infinite regress is involved in the idea that logic is true by convention: "the difficulty is that if logic is to proceed *mediately* from conventions, logic is needed for inferring logic from the conventions."[398]

It's in relation to this worry that the paper is often read as being negative.[399] Indeed, Lugg claims that this marks a difference between Quine in the Carnap lectures and Quine a year or

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[395] See 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', p.24. 'Quine Speaks His Mind', p.26
[396] See 'Reply to Geoffrey Hellman', p.207
[397] *Word and Object*, p.67
[398] 'Truth by Convention'. p.104
[399] See, for example, Baldwin, T. 2006. p.77. See Ebbs, G. p.194 for more examples of this reading.

so later; Quine doesn't have a substantial problem with analyticity in 1934, but by 'Truth By Convention', he rejects the view that he held in the lectures for understanding analyticity.[400] Lugg thinks that Quine realises that the process given for showing logical truths to be analytic requires logic itself, and so won't work. This means that Quine can't distinguish between conventional and non-conventional truth, and so claiming that a statement is analytic doesn't add anything to it beyond the behavioural characterisation of it as "firmly accepted". This gives Quine the beginning of his worries that will, according to Lugg, intensify as he approaches 'Two Dogmas'.

That this point is critical appears to be confirmed by Quine's later discussion of it. In reply to Hellman, Quine discusses the objection.[401] He considers Hellman's reply on behalf of Carnap, where conventions stipulate the logical truths, and then responds to this by pointing out that without prior logic, this simply won't allow us to infer from all of the logical truths, or to generalise on the basis of some, to all logical truths with the same form. This is presented as decidedly critical. It might leave open the possibility that some truths are conventional, but the truths of logic cannot *all* be conventional.

After raising the regress worry, Quine then criticises the idea of there being implicit conventions that we can detect by examining our behaviour before we explicitly formulate them. The problem here is that it's hard to make sense of this notion; it's hard to distinguish between behaviour that involves antecedently adopted conventions and behaviour that doesn't. Because of this, Quine does explicitly stress that this is an explanatorily poor option: "[i]n dropping the attributes of deliberateness and explicitness from the notion of linguistic convention we risk depriving the latter of any explanatory force and reducing it to an idle label."[402] And, in particular, it's not clearly adding anything explanatory beyond the idea that such truths are *a priori*, or those we won't revise (where this is understood in terms of the bare behavioural account). But this is only one way of explicating analyticity via convention, and it's one that Quine barely dedicates any time to.

What seems distinctly negative and general, though, is Quine's closing remark: "…as to the larger thesis that mathematics and logic proceed wholly from linguistic conventions, only

[400] Lugg, A. 2012. p.236, pp.235-36
[401] 'Reply to Geoffrey Hellman', p.206
[402] 'Truth by Convention', p.106

further clarification can assure us that this asserts anything at all."[403] We've seen that Quine raises two worries towards the end of the paper that undermine the idea that we can understand analyticity via convention, and this closing remark suggests that these problems undermine *any* hope of illuminating analyticity via a conventionalist approach.

However, as Creath emphasises, soon after 'Truth by Convention', Quine gave some arguments in favour of treating logical truth as a matter of convention. [404] Creath is referring to a paper Quine gave in 1937, 'Is Logic a Matter of Words', which remains unpublished. Therein, Quine doesn't seem to worry about the fact that we need logic to express convention. Quine also gives arguments in favour of the linguistic doctrine of logical truth, and so his position in 1937 *still* seems friendly to Carnap. This undermines the force that the regress worry seems to have in affecting Quine's attitude towards analyticity at this time, including his attitude specifically towards the conventional route of explicating analyticity.

Moreover, just like the opening of the paper, Quine's closing remarks are open to interpretation. For example, Morris stresses that despite seeming negative, this doesn't amount to a rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction; it's a call to keep working on the distinction, something that Quine himself does in later work.[405] In addition to the point above about Quine giving arguments in favour of the linguistic doctrine of logical truth in 1937, in the next few sections, we'll see in more detail that Quine continues to attempt to explicate analyticity, despite having increasing doubts about it. Quine clearly hasn't reached so drastic a position as the one that he has by the time of 'Two Dogmas'.

To summarise, in 'Truth by Convention, Quine's view is notably negative in the sense that he's beginning to question more seriously, armed with a further doubt about a possible way of explicating analyticity, the explanatory role that analyticity is meant to play. But, here, his view is far more optimistic that such a route can be found than he is the closer he gets to 'Two Dogmas'. While we see further evidence that Quine wants to understand analyticity behaviouristically, we should understand this as Quine providing a minimal behavioural basis from which an explication of analyticity could be put forward. Such a basis could be supplemented with a more distinctly philosophical conception of analyticity. This explains

[403] Ibid
[404] Creath, R. 1987. pp.493-98
[405] Morris, S. 2018a. p.404. See also Creath, R. 1987. pp.493-98

Quine's focus on convention, since appealing to convention would be one way of building upon this minimal foundation. Quine raises a worry for analyticity that is not found in the Carnap lectures, namely, that an infinite regress arises if logic is to be true by convention, and Quine rejects the plausibility of a view that appeals to implicit conventions. However, this latter view is of relatively minor significance, and concerning the broader conventionalist approach, Quine doesn't seem sufficiently troubled by the regress worry such that he feels the need to reject conventionalism. Indeed, a further reason for not taking these views on analyticity explicated through convention to be particularly critical is that Quine and Carnap don't *really* discuss these worries in their correspondence (at least the published correspondence) around and after 'Truth By Convention'. They don't talk as if there's some big objection between them about convention and analyticity, and tensions aren't clear until Carnap's intensionalism starts to surface in 1938. Carnap mentions Quine's view on convention as something they might discuss at a proposed conference, but it's not presented as something they need to debate as such.[406] The tensions in Quine's view that we saw in the Carnap lectures appear to be growing, but Quine is still considering attempts to explicate the analytic/synthetic distinction.

2.3.5 1940-41

Quine has also traced his problems with analyticity to a series of discussions at the Harvard Logic group from 1940-41. Quine writes:

> The critique of analyticity to which "Two dogmas" is in large part devoted is an outcome of informal discussions…from 1939 onward with Professors Carnap, Alonzo Church, Nelson Goodman, Alfred Tarski, and Morton White…[407]

These discussions start after the six-year period in which Quine has claimed to be a disciple to Carnap. Hence, they seem to mark the place to look for Quine's departure from Carnap, and Carnap's notion of analyticity. Indeed, Quine says this much himself. On this note, he writes: "[i]n 1939 Carnap came to Harvard as visiting professor….Then it was that Tarski

[406] Carnap in Ibid. p.245
[407] *From a Logical Point of View*, xii. These discussions don't take place in 1939. See Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. pp.295-96

and I argued along with Carnap against his idea of analyticity."[408] It seems, then, that these discussions are a good place to look for the development of Quine's attitude towards analyticity.

One way in which these discussions could have helped develop Quine's worries about analyticity is through their focus on nominalism. The group were considering a nominalist language in which parts of arithmetic would end up being synthetic, therefore showing Quine that the class of analytic truths could be smaller than the whole of mathematics.[409] Quine's views in the Carnap lectures and in 'Truth by Convention' don't consider this possibility.

Indeed, Frost-Arnold notes that this gives us the *opposite* possibility to the one considered in 'Truth By Convention'. Quine's worry there, if we even want to call it a worry, is that in using convention to make sense of analyticity and so conferring a special epistemological status on sets of sentences, i.e. those true by convention, one can too easily expand this to include truths that we don't think of as analytic with no natural stopping point. Scientific truths, and even ordinary common-sense truths, could be counted as true by convention in the same way. On this picture, analyticity is still shielding logic and mathematics; it's not called into question that these truths will count as analytic. But, in the Harvard discussions, the nominalist position that Tarski outlines raises the possibility that what counts as synthetic could extend into the truths that, even on the conventional approach, were safely counted as analytic, e.g. the truths of arithmetic. So, the significance of this possibility, combined with both Quine's earlier worries from 1935 *and* his temporary drive for nominalism to be rendered acceptable, conjures the perfect storm for Quine to jettison himself from the Carnapian ship. It "shows him concretely that the boundary between the analytic and the synthetic can be considered porous in both directions."[410]

Quine's specific move away from Carnap can also be felt strongly in their disagreements about analyticity during these discussions. Carnap's *Introduction to Semantics* is a prominent point of discussion. It's highly significant that Carnap's defence of analyticity, by the 1940s,

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[408] 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.43. See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. pp.295-96. Quine also relates these discussions to his view in 'Truth By Convention'. See Quine, Sourced in Mancuso, P. 2010. pp.364-65

[409] Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. Esp. pp.298-300

[410] Ibid. p.300

had seen him shift from extensionalism to intensionalism. Quine gives these discussions an important place in his retrospection about the inception of his doubts about Carnap's semantics, and analyticity specifically. Quine writes:

> My misgivings over meaning had by this time issued in explicit doubts about the notion, crucial to Carnap's philosophy, of an *analytic*, sentence…I voiced these doubts, joined by Tarski, before Carnap had finished reading us his first page. The controversy continued through subsequent sessions without resolution…[411]

Quine felt like he'd found an ally in his fight for extensionalism in Carnap. The extensionalism prevalent in Europe, but lacking at Harvard by the time Quine travelled to Europe in 1933, was championed by Carnap in Quine's eyes. Carnap's *Logical Syntax*, for example, aimed to be extensional with analyticity treated syntactically, and Quine was witness to this emerging directly out of the typewriter.[412] We can even see the extensionality of Carnap's approach being emphasised by Quine in his Carnap lectures, when Quine notes intensional notions that "we must be on our guard" about, as well as through Quine's praise for Carnap's syntactic method generally, as explained in §2.3.3.[413]

Following Tarski's work on truth, especially 'On the Concept of Truth in Formalized Languages' (1933), Carnap realizes semantics is no less acceptable than syntax, even within the constraints of a more scientific approach to philosophy. And Gödel taught him that there is a need for semantics over and above syntax. While Quine is also strongly on Tarski's side, the problem of fitting these three figures together is that Tarski and Quine's approach to semantics is austere, whereas Carnap is less strict, bringing in modal logic as a way of characterising matters of meaning from matters of fact; only the former are true in all models. Retreat to semantics for Quine doesn't mean that we give up the commitment to extensionalism in any form, but, for Carnap, it appears to have relaxed this demand. Carnap's commitment to extensionality, despite Quine's hopes, was "insufficiently austere".[414] We see good evidence of this in print slightly before the Harvard meetings. For example, in 1938,

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411 *Time of My Life*, p.150
412 'Homage to Carnap', p.41
413 'Lectures on Carnap', p.101. See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.302
414 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.392. See also Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. Esp. pp.304-05

Quine writes to Carnap in dismay about his move to modal logic.[415] And Quine aligns his approach to semantics with Tarski, and against Carnap: "[t]he great Tarski […] is one whom, unlike Carnap and Russell and Reichenbach, I consider genuinely sound and undeluded in his semantics and his philosophical orientation toward logic".[416] Carnap's retreat to semantics may not have been sufficient to motivate Quine to be more wary of analyticity by itself, but the manner of Carnap's retreat seems to locate him at a considerable distance from Quine.

Tarski is also ideally placed to have sparked further doubt in Quine's mind about analyticity. While Quine's worries take time to gain traction, Tarski was voicing similar worries to the later Quine about the lack of a sharp distinction between the analytic and the synthetic much earlier. Mancosu has provided strong evidence that Tarski raised these worries. For example, in a diary entry from Carnap in 1930, he writes:

> …with Tarski at a Café. About monomorphism, tautology, he will not grant that it says nothing about the world; he claims that between tautological and empirical statements there is only a mere gradual and subjective distinction.[417]

And this view is also found in 1935 in Neurath's summary of a discussion from a Congress in Paris:

> In the discussions the "analytic" vs. "synthetic" opposition came to the fore repeatedly. In reply to comments by Tarski to the effect that one could not formulate the distinction sharply, Carnap explained…[418]

Tarski connects this view to the idea that logical statements are not going to be true come what may, or that non-logical statements can end up as unrevisable if we make adjustments to our overall theory. On both of these points, Mancosu takes the evidence of Tarski holding these views as early as 1930 to show that Tarski's position predates Quine's, and so could have been a clear influence on Quine's development. The fact that Tarski had these distinctive views, and had been raising them against Carnap repeatedly,

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[415] 'Carnap's Positivistic Travail', p.123
[416] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.109 f12
[417] Quoted in Mancuso, P. 2010. p.363. See pp.363-64
[418] Neurath, O. Sourced in Mancuso, P. 2010. p.363.

make it highly likely that Tarski put forward points like this to Carnap in front of Quine during the meetings at Harvard.

Indeed, what appears to explain why Tarski was critical of the analytic/synthetic distinction is that he also held views indicative of the sort of holism that we find Quine expressing in 'Two Dogmas'. Accordingly, Verhaegh and Frost-Arnold have both suggested that it's plausible to think that Tarski influenced the development of Quine's holism in the 1940-41 meetings.[419] To this end, Verhaegh uses the following from a letter from Tarski to Morton White to demonstrate Tarski's holism:

> [W]e reject certain hypotheses or scientific theories if we notice either their inner inconsistency, or their disagreement with experience, or rather with individual statements obtained as results of certain experiences. No such experience can logically compel us to reject the theory: too many additional hypotheses [...] are always involved. [...] Axioms of logic are of so general a nature that they are rarely affected by such experiences in special domains. However, I don't see here any difference 'of principle'; I can imagine that certain new experiences of a very fundamental nature may make us inclined to change just some axioms of logic. And certain new developments in quantum mechanics seem clearly to indicate this possibility.[420]

As Frost-Arnold stresses, "it seems unlikely that Tarski never voiced these views about logic in Quine's presence during their year together at Harvard".[421] Indeed, it seems especially unlikely given that Quine and Tarski were clearly discussing the tenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction at the time. Moreover, the case that Tarski gives to illustrate his holism is the very case that Quine gives in 'Two Dogmas' to show that "no statement is immune from revision":

> Revision even of the logical law of the excluded middle has been proposed as a means of simplifying quantum mechanics; and what difference is there in principle between

[419] Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.108-11. Frost-Arnold, G. 2011. p.301. Frost-Arnold-G. 2008. Esp. pp.300-02
[420] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.108
[421] Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.301

> such a shift and the shift whereby Kepler superseded Ptolemy, or Einstein Newton, or Darwin Aristotle?[422]

In support of the idea that Quine was influenced by Tarski's view at this time, Quine writes to Marja Tarski after Alfred Tarski's death emphasizing the latter's influence on him. In particular, Quine emphasizes how strongly he agreed with Tarski's view during the Harvard meetings. Quine writes:

> …Alfred was a kindred spirit philosophically. Invariably when issues arose in the philosophy of logic, whether privately or in a group or at a logic convention, we found ourselves in full agreement. One notable case was our joint effort against Carnap on analytic and synthetic judgements, when we were all three together at Harvard in 1941.[423]

However, again, the strength of these worries from the Harvard discussions for developing Quine's view on analyticity have to be weighed carefully. If Tarski's holism did influence Quine's thought, then it takes a lot of time for this influence to gain sufficient traction. Quine does not present his own holistic view until long after these meetings, as I'll explain in §2.3.8. Indeed, as I'll explain in the next few sections, Quine's perspective in the years following the meetings often involves him stressing that while analyticity appears to be an unsatisfactory notion, he is at a loss as to what empiricism would look like without it. If Quine had a sufficient grasp of holism, it would be extremely unlikely that he would feel so torn. Quine certainly doesn't feel this conflict in 'Two Dogmas'.

Moreover, to return to Quine's criticisms of Carnap during the meetings, it's true that Carnap presenting analyticity in an intensional way could have made it easier for Quine to be suspicious about the notion of analyticity generally, given that it was no longer being presented as wrapped up in the comforting blanket of extensionalism.[424] But Quine's specific worries are also directed at Carnap's idiosyncratic and then-current version of analyticity. Quine's worries are that using modality to explicate analyticity is unclear, and that we shouldn't view a sentence of the form 'S is analytic' as analytic itself. This gives Quine good

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[422] 'Two Dogmas', p.43
[423] Quine to Marja Tarski, 1984. Quoted in Mancosu, P. 2010. p.387
[424] See Frost-Arnold, G. 2011. p.314

cause to turn his back on Carnap, their perspectives being much further apart than in times gone by, but it doesn't give Quine an argument against analyticity generally, as he has in 'Two Dogmas'.[425] Quine's worries are also focused specifically and self-consciously on Carnap's views about semantics, further narrowing their focus.[426]

Though, Quine's worries are also focussed on who he takes to be the prominent epistemologist of the time, and, as Frost-Arnold speculates, this may: "have further inclined Quine to think that no scientifically acceptable characterization [of analyticity] could be found."[427] Seeing Carnap's move away from an extensional approach to analyticity, mixed with Quine's doubts about having a respectable notion of analyticity generally, surely didn't do much to give Quine further confidence that the notion could be made respectable. Indeed, Quine's specific problems with Carnap's account in the Harvard discussions are strongly opposed to that position. There's no real sense in which Quine's views could ever be reconciled with the intensional, modal brand of analyticity that Carnap offered at this time.

And yet, 'Two Dogmas' doesn't appear for around a decade after Carnap and Quine appear to have parted ways significantly over analyticity. It's strange to think, in particular, that Quine would feel compelled to write more about analyticity, ten years later, if his focus was still primarily on Carnap. A couple of points are worth stressing to further soften how strongly we take these worries at this earlier stage in Quine's development.

First, Quine's worries about Carnap's intensional approach aren't always presented as if they come from the perspective of someone strongly opposed to those views. For example, in the letter where Quine stresses that his worries are narrowly on semantics in 1943, Quine's overall summary of *Introduction to Semantics* is positive, though not excessively fulsome in its praise: "I'm impressed with it as a masterly job of organization and presentation, and

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[425] See Frost-Arnold, G. 2013, p.89. In the Carnap lectures, unlike in 'Truth by Convention', Quine does think that ascribing analyticity to a statement is analytic too. See Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.295 f5

[426] See Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. pp.294-95. Though, Quine also stresses ways in which these worries creep into epistemology, rather than just semantics. For example, Quine writes: "it began to appear increasingly that the distinguishing feature of analytic truth, for [Carnap], was its epistemological immediacy in some sense." Ibid. p.295. Carnap replies by denying this. Carnap in Ibid. p.308

[427] Frost-Arnold, G. 2008. p.307

much of the theory is decidedly to my liking despite my dissension on certain points."[428] What we see here is a generally positive response to Carnap's view, but a response that differs drastically from the strongly positive comments Quine gives on the *Logical Syntax* and *Aufbau*. Such comments on Carnap's later work also aren't particularly present in Quine's later work, work in which Quine is still notably positive about Carnap's earlier work. Quine is also involved in proofreading and trying to get Harvard to subsidise the costs of Carnap's books on semantics, and so he writes positively about it to these ends. But this isn't mere praise for the sake of helping a respected friend. Quine stresses that as a work on semantics, Carnap's view is important both to appreciate his shift away from his syntactic view, as well as providing a more serious and responsible treatment of semantics than was often being given at the time. He stresses, in particular, that Carnap's treatment of semantics differs from that offered by the Institute for General Semantics and Stuart Chase, namely, in treating semantics as being science, rather than pseudo-science.[429]

Second, much of the correspondence between Quine and Carnap at this time isn't presented so much as if they are arguing about opposing views, but, rather, it's presented as if they are trying to clarify their views to determine how much they have in common. It takes a lot of time, then, for Quine and Carnap to appreciate that they are in a very different position to each other, thus, the split between the two is more gradual than it might seem. Creath has a similar reading to mine about the correspondence:

> Those letters are…between philosophers who believe that they are in fundamental agreement who are slowly and unwillingly discovering that what they thought was a minor disagreement is turning out to be more fundamental than either had supposed.[430]

This is further shown by the fact that those letters during their attempt at clarification are numerous, and then sharply decline afterwards.

Quine has characterised this eventual breaking point with Carnap in a way that bears on this point:

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[428] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.294
[429] See Quine, letters to Laing, and to Malone in Ibid. pp.288-93
[430] Ibid. pp.33-4

> In later years his views went on evolving and so did mine, in divergent ways. But even where we disagreed he was still setting the theme; the line of my thought was largely determined by problems that I felt his position presented.[431]

This is most clearly appreciable if we consider Quine's later views that obviously parallel Carnap's. Namely, Quine's persistent return to the issue of analyticity and his naturalized epistemology being presented as a rational reconstruction of our knowledge of the world. But, interestingly, it also bears on this gradual split between the two over intensionality. For example, Quine emphasises Carnap's influence over his developing views on modality in 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic'.[432] It also bears directly, and interrelatedly, on their views on metaphysics.[433] While Carnap's philosophy changes in notable stages, from the *Aufbau*, to the *Logical Syntax*, to his intensional turn, it's not the case that Quine sees him giving up the scientifically rigorous approach to philosophy that inspired him, even if Carnap has slipped in abiding by those standards.[434]

In this section, I have examined the extent of Quine's doubts about analyticity during the early 1940s. I have shown that Quine was exposed to a number of views that plausibly had some influence in leading him to question more seriously the plausibility of a strict distinction between the analytic and the synthetic. For example, Quine considered a nominalist project where arithmetic would end up being synthetic, and so the scope of what is analytic contracts. It's also likely that Quine was made aware of Tarski's views on analyticity and holism, both of which have strong parallels to Quine's later position. Perhaps the most significant factor in shaping Quine's outlook is Quine's confrontation with Carnap's intensional perspective on analyticity. Carnap, the preeminent epistemologist for Quine, ends up with a position on analyticity that is strongly opposed to Quine's attitude. All of this suggests that the stars are falling quickly from Quine's eyes when it comes to the tenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction. The split between Quine and Carnap over analyticity during this period is decisive. However, their awareness of the significance of this divergence appears to have been gradual. Moreover,

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[431] 'Homage to Rudolf Carnap', p.41. Quine also talks about this divergence much earlier when he presents 'Epistemology Naturalized'. See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.160. See also 'On Carnap's Views on Ontology', p.203

[432] 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic', p.48 f9

[433] 'On Carnap's Views on Ontology'. p.203

[434] 'Replies to Professor Riska's Eight Questions', p.214

Quine still appears to lack a general argument to use against the analytic/synthetic distinction within empiricism broadly construed. This is the position that Quine presents in 'Two Dogmas'. Quine's worries in this period are focussed directly on Carnap and not the dogma that was widespread in empiricism.

2.3.6 1943-45

Shortly after the Harvard Logic Group meetings, Quine starts to appreciate the inter-defined nature of analyticity more seriously. This is an important development because, as I explained in §2.2.2, a substantial part of Quine's argument in 'Two Dogmas' concerns elucidating the inter-defined nature of analyticity and stressing the same need for clarity with respect to the other notions related to it. For example, Quine realizes that analyticity might be definable in terms of synonymy and logical truth. He also stresses that meaning is tied into these interrelated notions, and so is in the same need of clarification.[435] This realization takes place around 1943. In support of this, note, for example, that Quine doesn't talk about synonymy in papers like 'Truth by Convention'.

This development is also significant because, as Verhaegh stresses, it shows that Quine is becoming clearer about what would count as an acceptable notion of analyticity.[436] We see evidence for this in a letter from Quine to Carnap:

> The definition of this relation of synonymity, within pragmatics, would make reference to criteria of behavioristic psychology and empirical linguistics. …I find it interesting to have reduced the notion of analytic to…synonymity because I feel this shows, more clearly than hitherto, the gap that has to be bridged.[437]

Quine stresses that, while he hasn't yet found a satisfactory definition of synonymity, he considers it as something "that it would be very useful to do…both for philosophy and for

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[435] 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic', p.44. Quine also links 'Two Dogmas' to this paper. Quine writes that: "a statement is analytic if it can be turned into a logical truth by putting synonyms for synonyms." Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.297

[436] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.118

[437] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. pp.294-300. See also p.357. 'Notes on Existence and Necessity', p.120

empirical linguistics".[438] This shows, crucially, that Quine has determination to try and clarify analyticity via synonymy. In 'Two Dogmas', the interdefined nature of analyticity is used to establish that the notion is in bad shape. But in 1943, the fact that analyticity can be seen to be defined in terms of other notions is a sign to be hopeful that one can make analyticity tenable. This is an important change in Quine's attitude. Additionally, it's notable that Quine's tone is more optimistic about this route than in many of his discussions of explicating analyticity via convention, and certainly of viewing it intensionally. Quine's attitude towards analyticity at this time, then, seems optimistic and positive.

A second important development which takes place in this year is Quine's discovery that there is a methodological contrast between what he and Carnap would count as an acceptable explication of analyticity. We see that Quine and Carnap become aware of this difference in correspondence relating to their debate about analyticity. For example, in a letter to Church from 1943, Quine writes:

> …my attitude toward 'formal' languages is very different from Carnap's. Serious artificial notations, e.g. in mathematics or in your logic or mine, I consider supplementary but integral parts of natural language. […] Thus it is that I would consider an empirical criterion […] a solution of the problem of synonymy in general. And thus it is also that […] I am unmoved by constructions by Carnap in terms of so-called 'semantical rules of a language'.[439]

The contrast is also visible in a letter from Carnap to Quine:

> Here is an important methodological point. I believe that we cannot construct an exact and workable theory of concepts like 'true', 'analytic', 'meaning', 'synonymous', 'compatible' etc. if we refer merely to the actually used language of science. It seems to me that we can use those concepts only if we replace the given language by a system of rules; in other words, we have to go from pragmatics and descriptive semantics to *pure*

[438] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.298.
[439] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.120. See also Quine and Carnap in Creath, R. 1990b. pp.435-39

> *semantics*. …the pragmatical definition cannot be taken as the basis for the semantical theory.[440]

Quine highlights this contrast in 'Two Dogmas'.[441] In that paper, Quine raises the point in the midst of his lament at the state of analyticity in empiricism. However, at this earlier stage of his development, this methodological point about Quine's own view has a constructive purpose in trying to shed light on analyticity. Understanding this contrast can illuminate what Quine is asking of analyticity (as well as other related notions) in order for it to be acceptable. Quine views artificial languages as parts of natural language.[442] Indeed, we saw hints of this attitude as early as the Carnap lectures. Accordingly, Quine claims that an artificial notion has to be made sense of first in terms of natural language, and that natural language itself has to be made sense of in empirical terms. This means that Quine requires that the notion of analyticity, even when used in an artificial language, be grounded in our natural language use of analyticity.

Moreover, Quine explains, in a letter to Carnap from the same year, what would count as having given an empirical criterion for a notion like analyticity. Quine compares how we would handle the notion of analyticity with how an empirical linguist would handle the notion of a sentence:

> The empirical linguist who goes into the field to study and formulate a language unrelated to any languages hitherto formulated has a working idea, however vague…of *sentence* in general…Now when for theoretical discussion we specify an artificial language as object, we again specify…the class of expressions which are to be regarded as sentences for this language. The idea of "sentence" is the same in both cases; only the languages are different…It is only thus that we understand what is intended…when you tell us: "the following are to be the sentences of my new language". Otherwise it would be as if you said "the following are to constitute, for my new language, what I shall call the class α". This latter remark would be uninteresting, except insofar as possibly introducing an auxiliary concept whose purpose would be explained

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[440] Carnap in Ibid. p.309. See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.119
[441] 'Two Dogmas', pp.32-7
[442] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.74, pp.116-20. pp.142-47

> afterward…Now my view on the notion of "analytic"…is similar to my view on the notion of sentence…It is only by having some general, pragmatically grounded, essentially behavioristic explanation of what it means in general to say that a given sound- or script-pattern is analytic for a given individual, that we can understand what is intended when you tell us (via semantical rules, say) "the following are to be analytic in my new language". Otherwise your specification of what is analytic for a given language dangles in midair…[443]

So, for Quine, you can specify the particular sentences of a language syntactically, but the actual notion of a sentence has to come from an empirical, pragmatic theory based on actual language. And, of course, the same holds for the notion of an analytic sentence:

> The grammatical rules are artifices of the linguist to enable him to specify the class of expressions which are (by observation) in fact sentences for the people in question; and correspondingly for the semantical rules, in relation to "analytic".[444]

We saw in earlier sections that Quine emphasises behavioural criteria for making sense of analyticity very early on. The attitude that Quine expresses at this later stage certainly aligns generally with such a view. However, the behavioural demands that Quine now makes are more detailed and weighted when compared to his earlier, rather bare, request. As we saw above, Quine asks for "some general, pragmatically grounded, essentially behavioristic explanation of what it means in general to say that a given sound- or script-pattern is analytic for a given individual", and he stresses that, in doing so, we should bring in "behaviouristic psychology and empirical linguistics". In his earlier work, Quine saw a behavioural classification of a sentence as providing the barest beginnings of an explication, but now Quine wants an understanding of behaviour to provide something more meticulous.

Carnap's view of artificial languages, however, is more artificial than this. Carnap doesn't seek the same behavioural clarity for analyticity and related notions that Quine does, and, accordingly, Carnap thinks that semantic notions can be defined using semantical rules.

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[443] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b.. pp.337-38
[444] Quine in Ibid. pp.337-38

Indeed, Carnap's point is that such concepts are too unclear in natural language to be a robust or theoretical concept. Indeed, Carnap stresses that because of this unclarity, it's only relative to a language system, with explicit semantic rules, that there is an analytic/synthetic distinction. This doesn't apply, as Carnap puts it in his reply to 'Two Dogmas', "with respect to a historically given natural language."[445] It's true that Quine also stresses that analyticity will be unclear in natural language, but Carnap is then happy to make the jump to pure semantics whereas Quine is not. This is a more artificial treatment of semantic notions than Quine allows.

To return to Quine's position on this methodological contrast in 'Two Dogmas', Quine is critical of Carnap's use of semantical rules for explicating analyticity in the paper.[446] While Quine's own methodology is used constructively at this earlier time, in examining the contrast between Quine and Carnap's methodology, we can see that Quine is already critical of this move in 1943. Quine is "unmoved by constructions by Carnap in terms of so-called 'semantical rules of a language'.[447]

To summarise, I have established that there are two important developments in Quine's attitude towards analyticity between 1943-45. First, Quine comes to appreciate more seriously the interdefined nature of analyticity. Quine sees the fact that analyticity can be defined in terms of notions like synonymy as providing hope for an explication of analyticity. This attitude contrasts sharply with his position in 'Two Dogmas' where the interrelated nature of analyticity is part of the problem. Second, Quine comes to realise that there is a methodological contrast between what he and Carnap would consider as an acceptable explication of analyticity. This shows that Quine requires that analyticity, even when used in an artificial language, be grounded in natural language. I demonstrated that this is especially significant because it shows that Quine wants an understanding of behaviour to play a more substantial role in explicating analyticity. In addition, Quine isn't impressed by Carnap's use of semantical rules to explicate analyticity. This is part of Quine's criticism of the dogma of analyticity in 'Two Dogmas'. By this time, the pieces are starting to come together more visibly for Quine. However, Quine's overall attitude is optimistic, rather than negative.

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[445] Carnap in Creath, R. 1990b. p.432
[446] 'Two Dogmas', pp.32-7
[447] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.120

2.3.7 1946-48

Let's now examine Quine's attitude to analyticity in the later part of the 1940s, starting with 1946. In this year, Quine gives a lecture, 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', which provides good evidence about the extent of his worries at this time. Quine claims that the aim of the lecture is to "convey some idea of the ramified character of the problem of defining *analytic* statements."[448] In the previous section, I explained that, by 1943, Quine appreciates seriously that analyticity is interdefined with other semantic notions. However, at that time Quine's outlook was positive. In 1946, in contrast to this, Quine stresses that it is "remarkable" that such an important notion "is not even moderately clear in anybody's mind."[449] Moreover, Quine emphasises how central the problem of the analytic/synthetic distinction is for philosophy. We see this when he describes the issue of whether there are *synthetic* a priori truths as "one of the basic issue[s] of philosophy" and when he claims that the notion of analytic statements is a "key concept for philosophy".[450] The proposal that analyticity is both central to philosophy and not at all clear suggests that Quine is quickly losing his optimism for an adequate explication of analyticity.

Let me explain the reasons that Quine gives at this time for thinking that analyticity is obscure. Quine's evaluation of analyticity in the lecture is very similar to 'Two Dogmas', albeit briefer and sketchier. He begins by focussing on meaning, which leads him quickly to synonymy and logical truth. On synonymy, Quine argues against the idea that definitions can shed light on analyticity, appealing to the practice of lexicography to show that such an appeal is "a mirage".[451] Quine also relates this problem to Carnap's use of semantical rules. This is a problem we saw that Quine appreciated in 1943. This problem with definition then directs Quine back to the notion of synonymy itself. Quine considers some behavioural ways of making sense of synonymy, but claims to "have no such definition to offer", while

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[448] 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', p.25
[449] Ibid. p.24
[450] Ibid
[451] Ibid. p.32. Even if 'bachelor' turns out to fare okay here, Quine stresses that there are other cases where it's just not clear at all, e.g. 'Everything extended is coloured'. Quine is clearly, then, considering a wider class of analytic truths by this point than he does much earlier, e.g. in the Carnap lectures.

stressing that the idea that there is one "is constantly presupposed in all our glib discourse about analytic statements".[452]

Quine also raises a few issues not found in 'Two Dogmas'. For example, he raises worries about the fact that homonyms can complicate synonymy, and that understanding synonymy behaviouristically might turn on the notion of belief. This, in turn, would require we make sense of dispositions, which Quine is not clear on at this time. Progress on either of these two fronts would help to shed light on analyticity, yet Quine stresses that we've not *really* begun to understand these notions yet. In light of this, Quine finally decides to consider a behavioural definition of analyticity directly, and to then derive synonymy from this. These points establish that Quine is starting to seriously appreciate that the interrelated nature of analyticity to other semantic notions is not the promising route to providing an understanding of analyticity that it once seemed.

When considering a behavioural definition of analyticity, Quine gives a very short account of the fact that we don't give up analytic statements in the face of observational evidence, despite our having a choice about which statements to revise. Quine is fairly brief and non-committal on this point: "…through what channels…could we hope to get a criterion of analytic? Perhaps on the basis of relative reluctances in the face of contrary evidence, to discard a statement as false."[453] Analytic statements are viewed as "the ones which we choose to reject last."[454] We see Quine still trying to make behavioural sense directly of analyticity, instead of in terms of synonymy, and open to a gradualist picture of analyticity.

Quine notes that analyticity, understood in terms of this rough behavioural characterisation, would end up admitting of degrees.[455] This view is in contrast with his later attitude. Recall that, on Quine's later view, statements should not be seen as more or less analytic. There's no trace of a gradualist picture in 'Two Dogmas', and, as Verhaegh has uncovered, Quine did not intend a gradualism there. This is clear when Quine writes: "[m]y position on analyticity was flat rejection of the distinction, rather than gradualism.".[456] Quine must have reached this

[452] Ibid. p.34
[453] Ibid. p.35
[454] Ibid
[455] See also 'Animadversions on the Notion of Meaning', p.155
[456] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.111 f16

conclusion sometime between 1947 and writing 'Two Dogmas', as we still see that he's reluctant but open to the gradualist picture in 1947. Quine describes the idea that the analytic/synthetic distinction could end up as a matter of degree as a "dismal possibility".[457] Quine's view at this time, then, isn't as strong as it would be in 'Two Dogmas' since it doesn't involve a "flat rejection of the distinction".

In §2.2.1, I explained that Quine viewed 'Two Dogmas' as constituting a wholly negative contribution to philosophy. Quine's summary of this lecture in 1946 also presents his attitude in a negative way. He writes that the views he's discussed: "have been mainly negative: the obscurity of our conception of analytic, and the difficulty of doing anything about it."[458] However, Quine is in a subtly different position in these two points in his development. Quine's attitude towards analyticity is certainly building in its hostility in 1946. However, Quine does not *yet* present an alternative form of empiricism to one that places value on the analytic/synthetic distinction, i.e. holism. Quine is truly at a loss at this stage; he still has some drive to remedy the situation because he is not yet in a position where the analytic/synthetic distinction is irrelevant to his own epistemological outlook. We see evidence of this when Quine writes that, while he lacks a behavioural characterisation of synonymy, he considers the problem of finding one not only difficult, but "one which demands solution".[459]

Quine ends the lecture on an optimistic tone, intentionally given to contrast with his negative summary that I explained above. Quine stresses that his view:

> …is not one of defeatism, nor one of dismissing problems as illusory….My feeling is that we philosophers, in connection at least with this complex of problems, haven't been doing very well; and that we should recognize that we haven't been doing very well, but not that we should give up trying.[460]

However, from what has been said so far about Quine's view in 1946 we can appreciate that, while Quine seemed optimistic about explicating analyticity via its related notions in 1943,

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[457] 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic', p.45 f4
[458] 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement'. p.35
[459] Ibid. p.34
[460] Ibid. p.35

by 1946, Quine appears more frustrated than optimistic given his further doubts concerning the clarity of these notions.

In §2.2.2, I explained that a vital aspect of Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas' is his focus on analyticity as a prevalent notion within empiricism generally. It's plausible that a significant factor in leading Quine to have this perspective is the preparation that he did for his 1946 Hume lectures.[461] Within the lectures, Quine's philosophy becomes saturated with a historically focussed and informed picture of empiricism, and after the lectures we see a continual stress on the relevance of analyticity to the wider empiricist movement. Quine's Hume lectures help him to ground empiricism, including empiricism's use of the analytic/synthetic distinction, in its historical context. These lectures are not purely descriptive, neutral, or historically focussed. Within them, Quine not only evaluates Hume, but also contextualises Hume's work within the development of modern empiricism, and highlights ways in which empiricists have advanced on Hume to reach the sort of views that people like Lewis and Carnap have. It's plausible, then, that preparing these lectures allowed Quine to appreciate that his worries with analyticity had a much more general target.

We see evidence of this when Quine ends the Hume lectures by explaining that the "Humean point of view" that remains in "modern empiricism" is a significant factor in leading to reductive and pragmatic projects in epistemology.[462] Quine also relates Hume's distinction between relations of ideas and matters of fact to the analytic/synthetic distinction, and stresses that, while it's not clear how meaning fits precisely into Hume's distinction, the analytic/synthetic distinction still "fits his point of view."[463] Quine emphasises that what is certain on Hume's view ends up either being "immediate experience" or analytic, and that this is "the creed likewise of the empiricists of today."[464]

An important development in Hume's view, according to Quine, is his move away from the earlier distinction between internal and external relations to the distinction between relations of ideas and matters of fact. Quine explains that it's not until the *Enquiry* that

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[461] Quine started preparing the lectures in late-1945. Buickerood, J. in 'Lectures on Hume's Philosophy', p.37
[462] 'Lectures on David Hume's Philosophy', p.135
[463] Ibid. p.134
[464] Ibid

Hume grants that geometry, in addition to arithmetic and algebra, is certain, and Hume does this using the latter distinction in place of his earlier view, which excluded geometry from being certain. Quine then links Hume's account to Leibniz's, but stresses that Hume's fits more with the contemporary analytic/synthetic distinction.[465] Moreover, Quine stresses that if we then consider Hume's empiricism as focussed on words, rather than ideas, then this leads us to the view of the Logical Positivists on logico-mathematical truth. What these points show is that Quine is engaging with the historical precursors of the analytic/synthetic distinction and relating these roots to empiricism as Quine found it. Analyticity, Quine appreciates, is deeply embedded in the tradition of empiricism.

We see further evidence for this in the fact that in 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', Quine also stresses the importance of analyticity generally for empiricism.[466] Quine begins by stressing the relevance and importance of the analytic/synthetic distinction not to Carnap's view specifically, but, rather, within the history of philosophy. The distinction is traced to its Kantian roots and even to the antecedents of such roots. Carnap's view is mentioned only in relation to his use of semantical rules and in a discussion of dispositions. Quine more often talks about the Logical Positivists as a group. Quine then stresses the central importance of analyticity to philosophy, describing it as a "basic issue of philosophy".[467] It's within this context, of analyticity figuring as a central node in philosophy, that Quine introduces his worries about the notion:

> Since the notion of analytic statement…*has become such a key concept for philosophy*, it is remarkable if the notion is not even moderately clear in anybody's mind. But I venture to say that it is not.[468]

Moreover, the worries that Quine outlines for analyticity are explained as having very general consequences for philosophy, not just for Carnap's project. Quine makes this clear

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[465] Hume's distinction "brings us closer to modern (Kant and successors) *analytic vs. synthetic*" Ibid. p.88. In the lectures, Quine provides more details on how Leibniz's view relates to analyticity than he usually does. Importantly, Leibniz's view is presented as being more sophisticated than Descartes in recognizing that the distinction between truths of reasons and truths of facts is not grounded in the world, but rather is grounded in the way that we gain knowledge. See p.57

[466] 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', pp.24-5

[467] Ibid. p.24

[468] Ibid. Emphasis added.

when he writes: "[t]he ramifications of the central problem have been such, moreover, as to request a pretty formidable segment of the field of philosophy."[469]

By 1947, Quine is stressing that analyticity is interrelated with necessity, properties, and attributes, as well as synonymy, etc.[470] He relates Hume's view to the analytic/synthetic distinction, and explains how Aristotle's influence, with its emphasis on the notion of essential attributes, also explains the prevalence of analyticity in empiricism. In doing so, Quine stresses that this shows "how central the topic [of analyticity] is to philosophy."[471]

Quine reiterates his determination towards finding an adequate definition of synonymy, as well as stressing his lack of a current answer. Quine makes this clear in a letter to White:

> It's bad that we have no criterion of intensional synonymy; still, this frankly and visibly defective basis of discussion offers far more hope of clarity and progress, far less danger of mediaeval futility, than does the appeal to attributes, propositions, and meanings.[472]

Moreover, Quine makes use of analyticity in this year. Despite it lacking a clear definition, Quine stresses that: "the notion is clearer to many of us, and obscurer surely to none, than the notions of modal logic; so we are still well advised to explain the latter notions in terms of it."[473] Quine then provides an interpretation of (pre-quantificational) modal logic using analyticity. This might all seem quite positive. However, Quine is also doubtful about the notion of analyticity employed here because of its vagueness, describing the proposal as a "conjecture".[474] Note that while Quine seems optimistic about analyticity and synonymy at this time, his claim is comparative. Analyticity is presented as clearer than "attributes, propositions, and meanings" as well as "the notions of modal logic". In other words, analyticity is clearer than things that Quine thinks are paradigmatic instances of unclear philosophical notions. This is hardly a positive sign for the status of analyticity.

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[469] 'On the Notion of an Analytic Statement', p.35
[470] 'The Problem of Interpreting Modal Logic', pp.44-5. 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy', p.143
[471] Ibid
[472] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.121
[473] Ibid, p.45
[474] Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.410

Additionally, in a lecture in 1947, Quine is even less committal about which avenue of explicating analyticity is most hopeful.[475] Recall from Chapter 1 (§1.4.1) that Quine highlights the problem of confirmation as something that an empiricist has to either solve or realise is unsolvable, because outright reduction won't work when it comes to reducing our theory to experience. In this way, he stresses that it is "an *essential* problem for empiricism."[476] Quine then mentions some people who are engaged in this problem, noting that he is: "far from content with the results to date".[477] Quine, then, is fairly pessimistic about formulating an adequate account of confirmation, leaving the door only very slightly open for analytic statements to be understood in terms of joint confirmation. This position is telling, but it's not as strong as Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas'.

Of course, confirmation is a crucial part of empiricist views in the Vienna Circle, as seen, for example, in the debates about protocol sentences; sentences are meaningful if they imply protocol sentences.[478] The views that Quine is considering are responding to the realisation that strict reductionism won't work, and so are the very same as those Quine is responding to in 'Two Dogmas'. Indeed, the list of philosophers that Quine cites as holding this view is wide-ranging, and doesn't include Carnap specifically. Quine writes that "[e]mpiricists and pragmatists from Pierce through Wittgenstein to Professors Lewis and Bridgman have agreed, in varying idioms, that the meaning of a statement consists in the methods of its empirical confirmation."[479] Quine, by this time, as Isaac nicely puts it, views empiricists generally as positing "the empirical plus".[480] That is, empiricism *plus* analyticity, or *plus* the relations of ideas, and so on.

All of these developments seem to culminate in Quine's realisation that he is caught between his drastic negativity towards the prospects of clarifying analyticity, and his not knowing

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[475] 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy'
[476] Ibid. p.142. In a few places, in work from before 1947, Quine seems more optimistic about making sense of confirmation. See, for example, Quine in Creath, R. 1990b. p.387. 'Logic, Mathematics, Science', p.172
[477] 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy', p.142
[478] 'Carnap's Positivistic Travail', pp.123-24
[479] 'The Importance of Logic for Philosophy', p.143
[480] Isaac, J. 2005. pp.210-11

what else to do besides persevering in his quest to clarify it. We see clear evidence of this in a letter from Quine to Hugh Miller in 1948:

> I am with you in questioning the currently popular boundary between analytic and synthetic. I feel, indeed, that the distinction means virtually nothing, pending the devising of some behaviouristic criterion such as no semanticist to date has given us an inkling of. But, for the same reason, I don't know what it would mean to say, with you, that arithmetic is *not* analytic.[481]

To summarise, in this period Quine appears to be torn between optimism and frustration about the analytic/synthetic distinction, with his optimism fading noticeably from earlier in this decade. While Quine clearly appreciates the interrelated nature of analyticity, he comes to realise that this does not afford the promising route for understanding analyticity that he'd hoped it would. More positively, Quine attempts to characterise analyticity behaviourally, however, in doing so, he presents a gradualist picture of analyticity. This shows that Quine's view is not as strong as it would be in 'Two Dogmas', as it doesn't involve a straight rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction. Moreover, Quine appreciates seriously that the problems he has with analyticity have significance for philosophy generally. I argued that a substantial factor that helps Quine to reach this perspective is that, by 1946, he understands the historical roots that analyticity has that then explain the prevalence of the distinction in philosophy as Quine found it. Crucially, however, at this time Quine's attitude is not quite negative enough to match his outlook in 'Two Dogmas'. Quine is caught between the serious doubts he has about analyticity, which undermine the idea that it can be a robust theoretical notion, and the lack of an alternative that he has to present in place of an epistemology that places value on the notion. The pieces of 'Two Dogmas' are visibly coming together, but perhaps the most important piece of all, Quine's holism, is still missing.

2.3.8 1949

This brings us nicely to 1949. There is good evidence that Quine is thinking in holistic terms by this time, and so there is good evidence that Quine has found his alternative perspective to

[481] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.94

an epistemology that requires an analytic/synthetic distinction. First, I will provide support for the idea that Quine appreciates this plausible epistemological alternative by 1949, before returning to examine his increasingly bleak outlook on the prospects of analyticity.

To support the idea that Quine has found his positive alternative epistemological outlook, Tennant has uncovered the following in Carnap's notes from this year, where Carnap attributes to Quine a view a view of our conceptual scheme that is very similar to the holistic picture that Quine gives in 'Two Dogmas'. Carnap writes:

> Main difference: Quine sees much in terms of differences in degree (with not even a crude boundary line through aggregations), where I want to draw a boundary line…
>
> 'Conceptual scheme': This includes for him the structure of language, as well as the recognized laws and the recognized singular statements; empirical science, mathematics, logic, everything is together and inseparable. There is only the difference in degree of readiness to give something up as might be required by new experiences. At the center stand: logic of truth tables (this will be the most difficult to give up, and so, if one wished to put it that way, 'analytic' in the highest degree); near to that lower predicate logic; arithmetic; higher mathematics; laws of theoretical physics, etc; finally at the periphery singular observable facts.[482]

On the view that Carnap is attributing to Quine, there's still a gradualism about the analytic/synthetic distinction, which differs from Quine's stronger rejection of it in 'Two Dogmas'. However, Verhaegh has emphasised further evidence which provides a more definitive reason for thinking that Quine's view is holistic by this year.[483] In the first draft of *Methods of Logic*, we see Quine's first written explanation of holism that is explicitly extended to logical and mathematical knowledge. Quine first presents a broadly holistic picture of inquiry, writing:

> Physical objects are known to us only as parts of a systematic conceptual structure which, taken as a whole, impinges at its edges upon experience. […] When […]

[482] Carnap, R. Tennant's translation. In Tennant, N. 1994. p.215
[483] Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.109-11

> predictions turn out wrong, the system has to be changed somehow. But we retain a wide latitude of choice as to what statements of the system to preserve and what ones to revise. […] Our statements about external reality face the tribunal of sense experience not individually but as a corporate body.[484]

Next, Quine extends these holistic considerations to mathematics and logic, explaining why they seem to be necessary and so different from other truths.[485] We see this when Quine writes:

> Mathematics and logic, central as they are to the conceptual scheme, tend to be accorded […] such immunity, in view of our conservative preference for revisions which disturb the system least; and herein, perhaps, lies the "necessity" which the laws of mathematics and logic are felt to enjoy.[486]

Quine then claims that, in light of their holistic nature, mathematical and logical claims can be revised. Quine even uses the example of quantum mechanics affecting logic that, as I explained in §2.3.5, Tarski provided to illustrate his own holistic view. Tarski's view, then, does seem to have influenced Quine, but it took time to gain traction in Quine's thought. The following year, Quine presents this holistic view as an alternative to reductionism when Quine presents 'Two Dogmas'.

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[484] *Methods of Logic*, (1st draft). xii-xiv. Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.109-10. Quine makes this link between his view in 'Two Dogmas' and *Methods of Logic* in 'Reply to Geoffrey Hellman', pp.207-08

[485] Quine's extension of holistic considerations to logic and mathematics is vital to his position in 'Two Dogmas'. Without making this claim, the epistemological status of logical and mathematical statements will require an explanation, and that explanation is likely to be that they are analytic. Some philosophers think that Quine had a commitment to a narrow-scoped version of holism in work before 1949, according to which logic and mathematics are not understood holistically. See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.106-11. For the reasons I've given elsewhere in this chapter, e.g. §2.3.1, I think that this reading puts too much emphasis on Quine having a positive and developed epistemological view in his earlier work. That being said, even if it is accurate to view Quine's early work, at least at some point, as involving commitment to a narrow-scoped form of holism, for Quine to reach the position he has in 'Two Dogmas', he needs holism to be wide-scoped. Regardless of how developed or substantial his epistemological views are before 1949, Quine does not present this latter view until then.

[486] *Methods of Logic,* (1st draft). xiv. Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.110.

In the previous section, we saw that Quine's patience towards analyticity was wearing thin. Quine's attitude in 1949, on the cusp of 'Two Dogmas', continues to follow this trend. For example, Quine criticises Lewis' account of synonymy in terms of 'having the same criterion in mind' for being "too vague and unempirical."[487] In doing so, Quine is emphasising that empiricists, in appealing to unclear semantic notions, are not living up to their own empirical standards.

Quine also considers the role of analyticity in a wide range of contexts, such as in the Positivistic idea that analytic statements lack a factual component, through the use of entailment in the Cambridge analysts, and in modal terms. He then raises Carnap's use of semantical rules and singles this out as the "[m]ost confusing of all".[488] Importantly, however, Quine identifies all of these as being "repetitions at best".[489] This shows not only that Quine is appreciating that empiricists generally appeal to what I referred to in the previous section as the "empirical plus", but, moreover, it shows that he identifies all of these appeals as, roughly, gesturing towards the same thing. In this way, it becomes increasingly clear to Quine that analyticity is a *dogma* in empiricism.

Quine then raises a more general worry for the idea that we can separate the factual and linguistic component of a statement. Because of the level of doubt that Quine has about the interrelated notions that would make sense of such a distinction, such that he lacks a criterion for distinguishing them, he suggests "[m]aybe whole separation of linguistics from factual components is groundless metaphor."[490] This provides a picture of our theory of the world in which some of our beliefs will be less likely to be rejected, and, in this sense, are true in virtue of language. But, also, in this way, they are only seen as being more analytic, rather than analytic in a full-bloodied sense. Again, we have a gradualist picture. Quine's view here is close to 'Two Dogmas', and the fact that this is the year that Quine's holism started to emerge in his writing seems likely to be a major factor in this close proximity to the views he gives in 'Two Dogmas'. This is also put forward as a proposal, rather than a commitment that Quine adopts, and so Quine doesn't *quite* seem ready to explore the consequences of a holistic view and thereby press further against the analytic/synthetic distinction.

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[487] 'Animadversions on the Notion of Meaning', p.153
[488] Ibid
[489] Ibid. p.154
[490] Ibid

Quine's perspective on behavioural explications of analyticity also takes a more critical turn in 1949. Quine stresses, again, that the adequacy of a behavioural criterion for analyticity is comparable to: "the field linguist's implicit behaviouristic criterion of sentencehood".[491] But his worry here isn't merely that such a criterion is missing for analyticity. Quine's worry is the more critical one that it's missing *and* philosophers generally are often assuming analyticity without even worrying about providing such a clarification. Quine writes:

> Curiously, professedly scientific philosophers feel no need of such criterion and are even willing to assume absolute concept of analyticity and the rest.
>
> Challenged, they sometimes say: let's hope for clarification, but meanwhile postulate these concepts subject to certain laws which we should require any ultimate clarification to realize.
>
> But scientific philosophy is notoriously at a standstill, and maybe the facile postulation of improbable concepts is to blame.[492]

This appears to be an unforgiving passage directed generally towards philosophers who cling to analyticity. These are "professedly scientific philosophers" who are failing by their own scientific standards, hence 'professedly', and Quine stresses that this situation leaves "scientific philosophy…notoriously at a standstill". This shows that Quine thinks that the problems that he is raising about analyticity in empiricism are indicative of a problem that is responsible for impeding the process of science, as well as a problem that isn't likely to be solved. Quine, then, wants to move away from this standstill in reaction to the lack of hope he has about explicating analyticity because he sees it as unscientific to cling to a notion like this without such a criterion.

Indeed, Quine's pessimism is especially notable in the following passage:

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[491] Ibid. p.156
[492] Ibid

> As a novel experiment in logical empiricism and scientific philosophy, I propose talking sense: adhering to terms for which we can fashion at least rough criteria on the occasion of using them. Maybe this policy will lead to a clarification of analyticity and cognitive synonymy, at least, in terms of degree. Or better, maybe it will steer us away from such notions altogether, away from the last vestiges of Aristotelian essentialism.
>
> Maybe there are more fruitful ways of anatomizing the behavior of talking animals, the methodology of science. Our chances of falling into such ways could be improved by freeing ourselves from the dead hand of entailment, analyticity, and meaning.[493]

Quine's view here seems about as negative as it can get. However, he is still partially on the fence (he writes: "maybe it will steer us away", "maybe there are more fruitful ways", "[o]ur chances…could be improved"). His language is much more definitive in 'Two Dogmas'. It's not the case, for example, that Quine thinks there that our chances to provide a better picture of human behaviour 'could' plausibly be improved by avoiding talk of analyticity there. Quine's point in 'Two Dogmas' is stronger; we have substantial reasons to avoid such an appeal. Once Quine's holism is presented directly as an alternative to reductionism, even his behavioural way of thinking about analyticity will lack the power to cut out a class of truths to call analytic; any truth can be unrevisable, and any truth revisable. What this shows is that, while it seems clear that Quine appreciates holism in 1949, he doesn't yet place holism in direct opposition to reductionism, and, thereby, stress the irrelevance of pursuing the analytic/synthetic distinction. This move is soon to follow. 1949 is a significant year in Quine's development because it is only *now*, at this relatively late stage, that the pieces of the puzzle are properly aligning, even if Quine is still one move away from finishing it.

2.3.9 Taking Stock

Let me bring my investigation to a close by summarising my findings. We've seen that Quine's appraisal of analyticity both before and within 'Two Dogmas' is extensive. More specifically, we've seen that, while Quine's overall relationship with analyticity is complicated, there is a fairly natural transition from his harbouring doubts concerning the

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[493] Ibid

analytic/synthetic distinction, but with a cautious optimism for the prospect of progress, to his dire frustration and pessimism about the outlook of analyticity. Recall from §2.2.2 that I identified four vital aspects of Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas' in order to guide our investigation in §2.3. Here, I will distil the results of the investigation with respect to these four markers to help clearly relate his development to the perspective that he has in 'Two Dogmas'.

Let's start by summarising how the points raised in §2.3 bear on the first aspect of Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas', i.e. the fact that Quine has the outlook of someone who has both a thorough grasp on just how ramified the nature of analyticity is within empiricism, as well as confidence that things will not improve on this front. Quine's earliest work, i.e. as a graduate student through to 'Truth by Convention', expresses both suggestive thoughts concerning the tenability of analyticity, and concerns about its prospects. Fairly early into his career, Quine questions the explanatory role of analyticity in some, though not all, contexts. For example, we saw this in §2.3.3 in relation to Quine's claims in the Carnap lectures. Here we saw visible tensions between the lack of significance Quine appears to place on classifying something as *a priori* and his admiration for Carnap's treatment of the *a priori*. Overall, however, I argued that Quine's attitude is fairly friendly towards analyticity in this early period, and it is *certainly* more optimistic than it is the closer we get to 'Two Dogmas'. Indeed, as I argued in §2.3.2, Quine wrote that meeting Carnap in 1934 satisfied his worries about the epistemological status of logic and mathematics. In §2.3.3, I emphasised that Quine praises Carnap's treatment of notions like analyticity and synonymy. Moreover, as I argued in §2.3.4, Quine doesn't even appear to think that his worries against conventionalism are sufficient to reject that route of understanding analyticity, at least by 1937, let alone sufficient to reject the tenability of the analytic/synthetic distinction generally. Quine, throughout the 1930s, continues to try to explicate analyticity, despite having increasing doubts about possible ways of understanding it.

In §2.3.5, I established that, as we move into the 1940s, there are a number of significant factors which suggest that Quine was more seriously questioning the plausibility of a strict distinction between the analytic and the synthetic. Plausibly, the most significant of these factors is Quine's strong opposition to Carnap's switch to an intensional perspective on analyticity. Here we find a decisive split between Quine and Carnap, where the prospects of reconciliation are bleak. In Quine's eyes, Carnap's appeals to analyticity are strongly

undermined at this time, however, Quine *still* lacks a general argument to use against the analytic/synthetic distinction within empiricism.

Continuing into this decade, §2.3.6 then established that two important developments in Quine's thought take place by 1945. First, Quine begins to take seriously the idea that analyticity can be inter-defined with other semantic notions, e.g. synonymy. As I explained in §2.2.2, this is an important part of Quine's negative attitude towards analyticity in 'Two Dogmas'. Second, Quine realises that, when it comes to analyticity, his methodology differs sharply from Carnap's. I explained that understanding the significance of this contrast helps us to see that Quine requires behaviour to have a more robust role in explicating analyticity at this time. On both of these points, however, Quine is optimistic about the possibility of explicating analyticity, and appears determined to take steps towards an understanding of the notion.

By 1946, we see a noticeable dip in Quine's optimism. In particular, he realises that the interrelated nature of analyticity is not a plausible way in which we can understand the notion. Here, Quine's arguments which demonstrate the lack of clarity in the interrelated notions are very similar to the ones that he provides in 'Two Dogmas'. We also see Quine as being open to a gradualist account of analyticity until very close to the paper, which contrasts with the sharp rejection he has of the distinction there. Quine's position, then, though strongly negative, is not *as* negative as it would be in 'Two Dogmas'. Moreover, at this time, Quine does not present an alternative form of empiricism. This means that Quine still has motivation to fix the notion of analyticity, albeit with an increasingly frustrated outlook. This attitude typifies Quine's perspective until 1949, when Quine's frustration is close to boiling point. By this point, Quine is certainly reacting negatively to a dogma that is prevalent in empiricism, but he has a shred of determination to overcome the problem; determination that he would soon lose.

Let us now move on to the second important aspect of Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas', i.e. his desire to be scientific when it comes to philosophical notions. Throughout §2.3, we've seen that an important part of Quine's appraisal of analyticity and its associated notions is that attempts to clarify them are either sharpened scientifically or rejected for scientific reasons. Quine is trying to be more scientifically rigorous than other empiricists in providing an empirically adequate perspective on analyticity. For example, in §2.3.1, I explained that,

as early as Quine's graduate work, he claimed to be reacting to suspicions about semantics understood in mentalistic terms. While I argued that the parallel that Quine draws doesn't show that he had worries about analyticity in his graduate work, it does show that, in both cases, Quine is emphasising the need to be scientifically objective by being clear about the identity criteria of the notions involved. This link between extensionality and analyticity becomes much more direct when, as discussed in §2.3.5, Quine despairs at Carnap's move towards an intensional treatment of analyticity.

Moreover, a fairly consistent way in which we saw Quine emphasising the importance of empirical criteria for semantic notions was in his insistence for behavioural characterisations of the analytic. This appears early in Quine's work. For example, we see it in 'Truth By Convention', where Quine focusses on a bare characterisation of the set of sentences that we firmly accept. I argued that, in his early work, this behavioural characterisation constitutes a minimal standard for Quine to make sense of analyticity, from which more substantial ways of explicating the notion could be added. This behavioural perspective then appears to develop into something more substantial when Quine stresses that he views artificial languages as parts of natural language, which, ultimately, have to be made sense of in empirical terms. In this way, Quine's emphasis on an understanding of behaviour becomes more demanding and weighted. Additionally, in §2.3.8, we clearly see Quine's worries about the unscientific nature of the empiricist's appeal to analyticity when he emphasises that such appeals have halted the progress of philosophy. In such a way, it becomes increasingly clear to Quine that empiricists are generally appealing to analyticity without a clear understanding of what it amounts to by those very standards that empiricists are meant to employ. In other words, it becomes increasingly clear to Quine that the analytic/synthetic distinction is a dogma of modern empiricism; it is "a metaphysical article of faith".[494]

Let us now move to the third facet of Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas'. In §2.2.2, I stressed that to understand Quine's perspective here, it is misleading to focus on the paper as being significant because it marks Quine's decisive break from Carnap. Rather, Quine *really* is reacting generally to what he thinks are fairly dogmatic views within empiricism.[495] What

[494] 'Two Dogmas', p.37

[495] Lugg has also emphasised that 'Two Dogmas' is more generally about the place of analyticity within empiricism, but he doesn't present this as a way of softening reading the paper as being about Carnap. Lugg claims that seeing 'Two Dogmas' as being focussed on

we've seen in §2.3 strongly supports this idea, and it shows that this is a perspective that Quine gradually builds towards. The picture of Quine's development that I've provided shows that Quine moves from his more narrowly focussed evaluation of analyticity in Carnap's work towards an evaluation of analyticity more generally. From the moment that Quine travels to Europe to meet Carnap, as discussed in §2.3.2, until slightly into the 1940s, Quine's engagement with analyticity is primarily engagement with Carnapian variants of the notion. However, the further into the 1940s we get, the less Quine's focus is on Carnap's views specifically, and the more it is focussed on the notion of analyticity at work in empiricism generally.

Indeed, by 1946, Quine comes to continually stress that analyticity is a prevalent notion in empiricism generally, and he engages with the notion as used in a wide range of views. Aided by the preparation for his Hume lectures, he also develops a historically informed perspective on empiricism. That is, he appreciates the historical context of the distinction which then leads to analyticity taking root amongst the philosophers that he is engaging with. Quine's own worries with analyticity are then pushed against this general and deeply entrenched target. By this point, Quine is not merely concerned with the question of what analyticity does for someone like Carnap, but, rather, he is concerned with the more fundamental question of where the distinction takes root in the tradition of empiricism and why it still lingers. It becomes increasingly clear to Quine, through these considerations, that analyticity is a prevalent *dogma* in empiricism.

Finally, concerning holism, I stressed that, from a remarkably early stage, Quine presents views that are indicative of understanding inquiry holistically. Crucially, however, I argued that there are important limits on how seriously we should interpret these signs. In particular, Quine's relatively naïve and underdeveloped positive views on epistemology make it highly unlikely that analyticity is in too much trouble at many stages of his earlier development. Moreover, in §2.3.5, I stressed that despite it being very plausible that Quine became aware of Tarski's holistic views in the early 1940s, which bear close parallels to Quine's view in 'Two Dogmas', such influence takes time to gain sufficient traction in Quine's thought.

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empiricism generally is important because it therefore shouldn't be surprising that rationalists aren't persuaded by its arguments. Lugg, A. 2012. p.234

Indeed, it is certainly not the case that Quine presents an alternative holistic conception of epistemology in his own work until relatively late. Even if Quine's views are suggestive of holistic thoughts, Quine doesn't embrace these thoughts and present them as directly opposed to an epistemological outlook that places value in the analytic/synthetic distinction. Rather, Quine is approaching epistemology from the other side, where the need for such a distinction is felt, despite Quine's increasing doubts. This seems to characterise Quine's position from approximately the Carnap lectures right up until 1948. If Quine had sufficient appreciation of holism during this early period, it would be extremely unlikely that he would feel so torn about the prospects of analyticity. As I discussed in §2.3.8, we finally see Quine's holistic outlook appear in 1949, and he uses it to explain away the seeming necessity of logic and mathematics. Quine's view at this time is very close to that in 'Two Dogmas', but he doesn't *quite* seem ready to acquiesce in a holistic view and present it in direct conflict with the analytic/synthetic distinction. Quine needs confidence in holism to challenge the "more basic" dogma, i.e. reductionism.[496] Attacking where the analytic/synthetic distinction takes root is a deeper way to challenge the distinction, and it's an attack that Quine doesn't seem to make until 'Two Dogmas'. That being said, it appears that the parts of Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' are all there, they merely need time to coalesce.

Quine stresses that the second dogma, reductionism, is "the real villain in the piece".[497] The reason for this, as I explained in §2.2.2, is that reductionism is the dominant then-contemporary view that leads to the need for an analytic/synthetic distinction within empiricism. Quine's challenge to this general position in 'Two Dogmas' is to stress that the way in which it conceives of the relation between evidence and theory is incorrect. Appreciating holism shows reductionism to be wrong and this then also removes the drive for an analytic/synthetic distinction in the first place, given that we can explain the seemingly special features of logical and mathematical truths without needing analyticity. As Quine puts it shortly after 'Two Dogmas', from his perspective "to legitimize an analyticity concept is not even an agendum".[498]

I've argued that Quine is not in a position to issue this specific challenge to this general set of views until near the end of his journey towards 'Two Dogmas'. This makes sense of the fact

[496] 'The Present State of Empiricism', p.180
[497] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.104 f3
[498] Quine to Goodman, 1953. Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.106 f7

that Quine's reflections on 'Two Dogmas' suggest that he only seems to have appreciated that analyticity "is not even an agendum" *after* giving explication a decent shot. Quine writes: "I now perceive that the philosophically important question about analyticity and the linguistic doctrine of logical truth is *not* how to explicate them; it is the question rather of their relevance to epistemology".[499] As we've seen throughout this chapter, much of Quine's early work lacks this perspective; legitimizing analyticity *is* a major agendum in Quine's early work, even while his doubts about the respectability of the notion grow and his optimism fades. The absence of holism is felt in Quine's push for analyticity to be rendered acceptable.

That being said, recall that, in 1949, Quine writes that "[c]uriously, professedly scientific philosophers feel no need of such criterion [for analyticity] and are even willing to assume [the] absolute concept of analyticity and the rest."[500] Such an approach does not seem to fit Quine's overall attitude to analyticity, even from very early on, and this makes his position distinctive. Quine does not postulate analyticity freely and put it to use on the assumption that its details can be filled out later. Even in his more optimistic days, Quine is always cautious when it comes to the notion.

Putting all of this together, the investigation into the evolution of Quine's attitude towards analyticity shows that the claim that Quine's doubts about analyticity had existed in some form for a long time before 'Two Dogmas' is misleading. Understanding the true nature of Quine's challenge to an epistemology that places value on the analytic/synthetic distinction, as well as the nature of Quine's development, requires cautious analysis. The multifaceted nature of Quine's challenge to analyticity in 'Two Dogmas', and the complexity of his development towards the perspective that he occupies when he makes this challenge, shows that, while it's true in *some sense* that Quine's doubts about analyticity were present very early in his work, this claim requires careful qualification. How we make sense of these considerations in relation to the emergence of Quine's naturalism will be the focus of the next section.

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[499] 'Reply to Geoffrey Hellman', p.207. See also Lugg, A. 2012. p.233
[500] 'Animadversions on the Notion of Meaning', p.153

2.4 'Two Dogmas' and Naturalism

Let us return to the problem which motivated the investigation in §2.3. Recall that the issue was that, while 'Two Dogmas' is often seen as important for Quine's development towards naturalism, there were reasons for thinking that the paper did not represent a substantial change in Quine's attitude. More specifically, there were reasons for thinking that Quine's attitude towards analyticity in the paper wasn't new. If Quine's attitude doesn't go through a substantial change in 'Two Dogmas', then it seemed unlikely that it could represent an important step in the direction of naturalism. In §2.3, however, I argued that the idea that Quine's doubts towards analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' were not new is only true *if* understood in a heavily qualified way.

So far, then, I've established that the idea that 'Two Dogmas' could be important for the development of naturalism is not undermined. The paper involves Quine's decisive rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction, a perspective that Quine hasn't adopted until 'Two Dogmas', and it is *this* specifically that is often thought to be vital to Quine's move to naturalism. This means that the chronological picture that I've established in Chapter 1 no longer seems muddled or murky. To return to that picture, recall that Chapter 1 established that Quine is not a naturalist before 1951, and that, shortly after this point, we find Quine's naturalistic outlook in operation when he rejects phenomenalism. This leaves just enough room for 'Two Dogmas' to play a crucial role in the emergence of naturalism. Let me end this chapter, then, by offering some suggestions about the significance that 'Two Dogmas' has for the emergence of naturalism to add further details to the picture that has been provided.[501]

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[501] In viewing Quine's rejection of the epistemological significance of the analytic/synthetic distinction as important for his development towards naturalism, one might worry that this claim sits uneasily with the fact that, in later work, Quine includes a notion of analyticity in his positive epistemology. See, for example, *The Roots of Reference*, pp.78-80, *Pursuit of Truth*, p.55, *Word and Object*, p.66. In particular, this development might appear to threaten pushing Quine back to a less sophisticated stage in his development, before naturalism emerges. However, while Quine thinks his later account of analyticity does justice to certain intuitions that we have about why some truths are true, he is also clear that his point of contention in 'Two Dogmas' still stands. He writes: "…my reservations over analyticity are the same as ever, and they concern the tracing of any demarcation, even a vague and approximate one, across the domain of sentences in general." ('Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.396) Quine's naturalistic notion of analyticity doesn't lead to a sharp analytic/synthetic distinction, nor does it uncover a significant difference in kind between two types of

In §2.2.1, I explained that Quine's own negativity about 'Two Dogmas' was largely down to the paper's negative contribution to knowledge. That is to say, Quine thinks that the argument in the paper is substantially negative, rather than constructive, and that what it does offer as a positive replacement for an epistemology with an analytic/synthetic distinction is very bare. Quine stresses this very strongly. For example, we see this in a letter from Quine to Paul Weiss, where he describes his positive contribution in 'Two Dogmas' as: "[t]he tentative conjecture that epistemology might develop more fruitfully under some very different sort of conceptualization, *which I do not provide*."[502] Moreover, in papers just after 'Two Dogmas', Quine stresses the vagueness and metaphorical nature of his view, and his hope to sharpen it.[503]

While the details of Quine's positive outlook may be lacking in 'Two Dogmas', this should not downgrade the significance that the views expressed in this paper have for Quine's development. As I made clear in §2.3, Quine's perspective *does* undergo a substantial change in the paper. Namely, Quine is setting out, albeit briefly and metaphorically, an alternative conception of epistemology which both rids him of the pull towards analyticity, after his long struggle with trying to accommodate the notion satisfactorily, and sets him at odds with a wide group of empiricists. This, in itself, is a significant development.

The important question, then, is whether this substantial development is a substantial development *in relation to* the emergence of naturalism.[504] Good evidence that this is the case can be seen if we reflect on the way that Quine characterises the important changes that have occurred within empiricism that lead to naturalism. In later work, Quine often orients

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statements. In this way, Quine's naturalistic variant of analyticity is not an epistemologically substantial notion, and it does not resurrect the dogma of the empiricists that Quine was reacting to in 'Two Dogmas'.

[502] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.97. Emphasis added.

[503] 'The Present State of Empiricism', pp.184-85. 'Mr. Strawson and Logical Theory', p.139. It's worth stressing that Quine does begin to unpack the metaphorical view that he provides near the end of 'Two Dogmas'. In addition to briefly outlining the holistic nature of the evidential relation, Quine explains the necessity that we feel about certain truths in terms of their *germaneness* to experience. This is Quine clarifying what it means for sentences to vary in distance from the experiential boundary. See 'Two Dogmas', pp.43-4

[504] Philosophers often link Quine's commitment to holism to his naturalism, although often they do so in very different ways. See, for example, Isaac, J. 2005. pp.211-12. Gibson, R. 1988. p.24. Kemp, G. 2006. p.28. 2012. pp.57-8

naturalism within the empiricist tradition by outlining five milestones in which empiricism has improved. He writes:

> In the past two centuries there have been five points where empiricism has taken a turn for the better. The first is the shift from ideas to words. The second is the shift of semantic focus from terms to sentences. The third is the shift of semantic focus from sentences to systems of sentences. The fourth is, in Morton White's phrase, methodological monism: abandonment of the analytic-synthetic dualism. The fifth is naturalism: abandonment of the goal of a first philosophy prior to natural science.[505]

Most of these milestones bear directly on Quine's outlook in 'Two Dogmas'. There, Quine explains the limitations that forms of empiricism focussed on ideas have (e.g. those of the British empiricists) and stresses that a significant step forward is the move to focus, first, on words, and, second, on sentences. This brings him to the main target in his paper, i.e. verificationism.[506] In other words, empiricism, as Quine was reacting to it in 1951, was at the second stage of this developmental picture. The third stage, "shift of semantic focus from sentences to systems of sentences", is holism. In 'Two Dogmas', then, in presenting his holism against verificationism, Quine crosses an important boundary which brings him one milestone closer to naturalism.

The next question to ask, of course, is how this third step (i.e. holism) relates to the fourth step (i.e. methodological monism). Their relation appears to be very close, for Quine writes: "[t]he fourth move, to methodological monism, follows closely on this holism."[507] Quine's characterisation of methodological monism is very brief. He writes that from the perspective of methodological monism: "[t]he organizing role that was supposedly the role of analytic statements is now seen as shared by sentences generally, and the empirical content that was supposedly peculiar to synthetic sentences is now seen as diffused through the system."[508] What leads to such an outlook is that one realises that the analytic/synthetic distinction is untenable via appreciating holism. Quine says this much when he writes that "[h]olism blurs the supposed contrast between the synthetic sentence, with its empirical content, and the

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[505] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.67
[506] 'Two Dogmas', pp.37-42. See also 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.70
[507] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.71
[508] Ibid, p.72

analytic sentence, with its null content."[509] This shows just how close the third and fourth steps of Quine's empiricist development are. That is, methodological monism is merely the result of taking seriously the holistic nature of empirical content. Having a sufficient appreciation of holism shows that the supposed duality between the analytic and the synthetic cannot be maintained, i.e. it shows us that our perspective should be one of methodological monism. As I explained in §2.2.2, this seems to characterise the state that Quine finds himself in during 'Two Dogmas', and so, by this time, naturalism appears to be close to Quine's reach.

Finally, we need to make sense of the gap between methodological monism and the fifth stage of empiricism's development, i.e. naturalism. Quine writes that one of the two sources of naturalism is realising that reductionism isn't going to work for theoretical sentences generally. He stresses that "[a] holistic or system-centred attitude should suffice to induce this despair."[510] Accordingly, it seems that, by 'Two Dogmas', this first source should be attained through Quine's understanding of the consequences of holism for the prospects of reductionism. Quine lacks this appreciation in his earlier work and attains this perspective by 'Two Dogmas', as established in §2.3. Thus, it looks like there *was* some obstacle in the way of the emergence of naturalism that is then cleared away by Quine's argument in 'Two Dogmas'. The gap between holism, methodological monism, and naturalism, starts to be crossed in 'Two Dogmas'.

However, this isn't the whole story. We can see that a further obstacle remains if we focus on the second source of naturalism that Quine identifies. Quine writes that "[t]he other negative source of naturalism is unregenerate realism, the robust state of mind of the natural scientist who has never felt any qualms beyond the negotiable uncertainties internal to science."[511] Recall that in Chapter 1 I explained how this attitude typifies Quine's naturalistic outlook, and, crucially, that this attitude is strictly lacking in Quine's earlier work. The reason for this is that Quine is open to forms of inquiry, until at least 1951, that place value on theorising that is epistemologically prior to science. To be clear, while Quine might reject phenomenalistic reductionism in 'Two Dogmas', Quine has *not* ruled out phenomenalism wholesale. During this time, Quine thinks that something like sense-data can be viewed as

[509] Ibid. p.71
[510] Ibid. p.72
[511] 'Ibid

more real than the posits that are found within science. Something, then, is stopping Quine from having access to the second source of naturalism in 1951.

Now, the next important question to consider is the question of what leads Quine to acquire an attitude of "unregenerate realism". What appears to lead Quine to this outlook is the same thing that leads him to the first source of naturalism, that is, taking holism seriously. As I explained above, taking holism seriously is what leads to methodological monism. Fully appreciating methodological monism has the consequence that our theorising becomes blurred together in vital ways. Methodological monism is characterised, as seen above, as "abandonment of the analytic-synthetic dualism", and Quine writes that his rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction involves a rejection of "the tracing of any demarcation, even a vague and approximate one, across the domain of sentences in general."[512] Crucially, this realisation constrains philosophical inquiry for Quine. As Verhaegh explains, an indirect effect of methodological monism is that it challenges the way in which the philosophy/science divide is often carved:

> …in blurring the boundary between matters of fact and matters of language, Quine indirectly challenged the supposed boundary between science (conceived of as the study of fact) and philosophy (conceived of as the study of meaning) that has dominated analytic philosophy for decades…[513]

Indeed, Quine makes this clear when he claims that Auguste Comte was already a representative of naturalism. The reason for this, Quine explains, is that Comte "declared that "positive philosophy" does not differ in method from the special sciences."[514] So, abstracting from this particular case to speaking about our theorising more generally, taking methodological monism seriously has two vital consequences. Positively, it allows us to make sense of the idea that our theorising belongs to our overall scientific theory.[515] Negatively, it shows that we can't make sense of the idea that there is some distinctly philosophical perspective on science, or, more particularly, on notions like reality and

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[512] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.396
[513] Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.104
[514] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.72
[515] We see this sort of picture in 'Two Dogmas', when Quine introduces his holistic picture of inquiry as involving a wide conception of science. Geography, history, atomic physics, and pure mathematics are all included. p.42

evidence. That is, taking methodological monism seriously leads one to an outlook that appears to be, for all intents and purposes, naturalistic.

This is a vital effect of methodological monism for Quine's development because the first philosophical form of phenomenalism that Quine was open to in his earlier work required that there be a substantial demarcation within our theorising, i.e. between science and that which is epistemologically prior to science, or between claims about reality as made within science and claims about reality that transcend science. But, according to methodological monism, there are no sharp boundaries like this to be hoped for. That is, there are no boundaries from which the claims of philosophy, as distinct from science, could be built upon. Methodological monism, in appreciating how thoroughly empirical content is "diffused through the system" of science, has the effect of blurring the prominent demarcations that are drawn in philosophy from which the coherence of first philosophical inquiry relies. On such an outlook, there is no way to characterise something like sense-data as epistemologically prior to science.[516] It's true that Quine is wary of distinctions like this before the early 1950s, but Quine now has a principled reason to think that the distinction doesn't hold weight, reached indirectly by taking holism seriously.

Good evidence that this realisation comes quick to Quine is that, soon after 'Two Dogmas', Quine relates his rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction, i.e. methodological monism, to the development of his ontological view. Quine writes in 1951 that it's "[i]nstructive to see that the prob. of analytic & the prob. of the nature of ontological issues are one."[517] In particular, he relates his methodologically monistic perspective to the idea that scientific and metaphysical posits are on the same footing. As Quine puts it in 'On Carnap's Views on Ontology': "[o]ntological questions…end up on a par with questions of natural science."[518] In 1952, as I explained in §1.4.2, we see Quine explain that sense-data and physical objects are both part of our ongoing scientific theory and, consequently, he rejects the idea that sense-data can be prior to science.

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[516] Similarly, philosophers also often see Quine's holism as undermining the *a priori*/*a posteriori* distinction. Philosophical truths, as *a priori*, cannot be separated from scientific, *a posteriori*, truths. See Haack, S. 1993. pp.338-39. Stroud, B. 1996. p.46. Lugg, A. 2012. p.234

[517] 'Response to Bergmann', p.186

[518] p.211

Putting all of this together, in 1951, Quine hasn't *quite* got a sufficient grasp on his holistic picture of inquiry, and the methodological monism it leads to. After all, Quine is negative about the status of 'Two Dogmas' because he doesn't think it provides an alternative conception of epistemology. On the face of it, this seems strange. What Quine has offered is very basic and metaphorical, but it is substantive enough to show that modern empiricists are chasing after a desire they need not have. However, it's not strange when one appreciates that Quine is still grappling with the problem of epistemological priority at this time. That is, he has not rejected the idea that the phenomenalist's conceptual scheme is epistemologically prior to science. A holistic version of empiricism is at odds with this constraint, and so Quine is, at least in some sense, torn between two paths. It's not until approximately 1952 that Quine appreciates that sense-data are part of scientific positing too because the idea of them being epistemologically prior to science is illegitimate. And, it's only then that Quine finally rejects phenomenalism outright. Hence, it's only slightly later than 'Two Dogmas' that Quine confidently takes seriously the alternative conception of epistemology that he puts forward in the paper, and, crucially, this allows him to reach the second source of naturalism.

Perhaps, then, this makes sense of the rather extreme nature of Quine's negativity towards 'Two Dogmas'. Recall from §2.2.1 that Quine writes, typifying the attitude explained above: "I had not thought to look on my strictures over analyticity as the stuff of revolution. It was mere criticism, a negative point with no suggestion of a bright replacement."[519] 'Two Dogmas' presents an alternative conception of epistemology, albeit a bare one, that is used with enough conviction that Quine presents it as showing that two dogmas of empiricism are misplaced. In this way, it seems to provide more than "mere criticism", however, the fact that Quine was also grappling with the tension in his outlook concerning both accepting the consequences of holism while not having rejected phenomenalism illustrates a reason that Quine might not have felt so sure of the position he'd advanced. Revolution may have been in the air in 'Two Dogmas', but Quine may not have been quite ready to overthrow phenomenalism.

These reflections suggest that the spaces between holism, methodological monism, and naturalism are not so much gaps, but, rather, they are periods where Quine's confidence

[519] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.393.

grows, and he thinks carefully through the consequences of the developments taking place within his outlook. Quine claims that between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object* he was concerned with unpacking the metaphor of our theory of the world being like a web of belief.[520] What we've seen suggests that Quine still needed a little bit more time to unpack this metaphor after 'Two Dogmas' in order to see that the consequences of this view undermine both the reductionist's appeal to analyticity and, more generally, the coherence of the phenomenalist's appeal to epistemological priority. By 1951, phenomenalism was a fairly entrenched thorn in Quine's paw. However, it seems that, in the time that it took him to remove it, he had managed to walk the road to naturalism.

In this chapter, I have undertaken an investigation into the development of Quine's evolving views on analyticity in order to better understand their nature and significance, including their relation to the development of naturalism. I began, in §2.2.1, by motivating this project. To do this, I first provided reasons for thinking that Quine's problems with analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' are vital for the development of naturalism. I then highlighted two factors which cast doubt on the idea that Quine undergoes a significant change in his attitude in the paper. To aid my investigation, in §2.2.2, I isolated four crucial features the perspective Quine occupies in 'Two Dogmas'. This investigation, carried out in §2.3, found that Quine's views towards analyticity evolve in a complex but fairly natural way from optimistic beginnings to dismal pessimism. Crucially, I argued that Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas' is distinctive in that it involves him presenting a holistic picture of inquiry in direct opposition to verificationism, and so, in turn, to the analytic/synthetic distinction. This showed that the idea that Quine had doubts about analyticity long before 'Two Dogmas' is only true in a carefully qualified way. I then ended the chapter, in §2.4, by offering some thoughts about why 'Two Dogmas' is significant for Quine's development towards naturalism.

[520] 'Replies', p.180

Chapter 3
Untangling Empiricism and Naturalism

3.1 Chapter Introduction

So far, we've seen a number of important developments that Quine's philosophy undergoes on his journey to naturalism. In Chapter 1, I argued that Quine is not always a naturalist because he's tolerant of forms of theorising that are first philosophical until, approximately, 1952. In Chapter 2, I argued that Quine's attitude towards analyticity gets continually more critical, but that, crucially, Quine is only significantly close to an outlook that is naturalistic relatively late into the period of his early work. The fact that Quine is not always a naturalist combined with the fact that it takes him time to develop towards a position that is naturalistic undermines the idea that Quine's naturalism is *the* systematic centre of gravity in his overall philosophy. To understand Quine's overall philosophy, then, we need to understand Quine in a different and more complex light. In what remains of this thesis, I will lay the foundations for such an understanding by turning my attention to one of Quine's most notable philosophical commitments, i.e. his commitment to empiricism.[521]

As I explained in the Introduction, one area in which Quine's influence is generally taken to be foundational is in epistemology. Naturalism appears to have taken root in contemporary epistemology and Quine, the preeminent naturalist, is often cited as the central influence on this movement. However, if the scope of Quine's naturalism has been generally exaggerated, then in order to properly assess Quine's influence on contemporary naturalistic epistemology, we need to be very careful about how we relate Quine's views to these positions. That is, if Quine was not always a naturalist, then we need a careful understanding of how Quine's naturalism and his empiricism relate to one another before we can assess Quine's legacy in contemporary epistemology.

[521] Interestingly, attempts to understand Quine's empiricism often focus on his distinctive naturalistic variant of empiricism and pay little attention to Quine's empiricist views before naturalism. See, for example, Kemp, G. 2012. pp.24-7. Gibson, R. 1988. Especially Chapter 2. Kemp, G. 2006. Chapter 4

As we've seen, Quine's empiricism undergoes a significant reorientation in the early 1950s. Quine describes the period between 'Two Dogmas' and *Word and Object* as him becoming "more consciously and explicitly naturalistic", and it's during this period that we see Quine shift from considering phenomenalism as a viable (though not exclusively viable) epistemology and towards accepting an epistemology that focusses on our physical interface with the external world in strictly scientific and naturalistic terms.[522] Now, one interesting feature of this transition is that Quine's growing confidence in naturalism leads him to present his view in strong contrast to more traditional forms of empiricism, especially phenomenalism. This gives the impression that Quine's move to a naturalistic form of empiricism involves a radical shift in his empiricist outlook. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this has also led to Quine's naturalized epistemology being interpreted as involving such a shift. Roth, for example, writes: "Quine's writings advocate a paradigm shift in epistemology — a change in methods, problems, and standards previously invoked in the subject."[523]

In this chapter, I will provide a thorough analysis of the subtle and complex relationship between the different forms of empiricism that Quine both considers and engages with throughout his career. Conducting such an analysis, I take it, will illuminate the distinctiveness of Quine's naturalized epistemology in contrast to the traditional forms of empiricism that it is presented as reacting to, and it will do so in such a way that coheres with the findings of Chapters 1 and 2.

To do this, I focus on important facets of both Quine's naturalistic empiricism and the traditional empiricist views, and I investigate the way in which Quine's naturalized epistemology evolves out of his engagement with these traditional forms of empiricism. §3.2 begins by establishing a minimal but common thread which connects the various instantiations of empiricism that Quine engages with at numerous points throughout his work. In §3.3, I then consider what underlies Quine's commitment to empiricism. I establish that Quine has a distinctive and principled reason for being an empiricist as a naturalist. I then explain that this route does not appear to be open to the more traditional empiricist. In particular, worries about circularity preclude such an empiricist from taking the naturalistic stance. I end the section by providing some speculative remarks concerning what, if anything,

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[522] 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.398
[523] Roth, P. 1990. p.100

underlies the early Quine's commitment to empiricism prior to the emergence of his naturalism.

Following this, in §3.4, I establish that as a naturalist, Quine has no problem embracing the circularity in his view of the relationship between philosophy and science. This shows that epistemology, for the naturalist, is an inquiry that takes place within science. Accordingly, in §3.5, I identify the precise scientific location of naturalized epistemological inquiry, i.e. I argue that such inquiry takes place in the philosophical periphery of psychological theorising. Identification of this fact requires an understanding of the aspirations of naturalized epistemology. To this end, I compare the aims of the different forms of empiricism that Quine engages with, and I establish that this comparison unveils a further commonality between them, namely, that they are all concerned with investigating the relationship between science and its evidence. Importantly, however, I highlight that each form of empiricism approaches this relationship in a unique way. Finally, §3.6 considers and makes sense of the speculative nature of naturalized epistemology. I do so by, first, establishing the naturalist's perspective on traditional scepticism (§3.6.1), and, second, identifying that the key motivation of the naturalized epistemologist's project is to address a naturalistically legitimate sceptical worry (§3.6.2). The speculative nature of naturalized epistemology, then, is purposeful and warranted insofar as a speculative approach is sufficient in order to address the problem at the heart of naturalized epistemology. I then summarise the findings of these discussions in order to deliver a more nuanced understanding of Quine's commitment to empiricism.

3.2 Connecting Empiricisms

Let me begin by addressing an important issue. That is, in focussing on the fact that Quine's naturalistic empiricism emerges in response to traditional forms of empiricism, including the form of phenomenalism that he was open to in his early work, one might worry that this diverse range of positions is so disparate that the positions are fundamentally disconnected from one another. In other words, one might worry that in discussing this diverse group of theories, we're not *really* talking about views that warrant treatment under the same heading, i.e. empiricism. Indeed, there is a more general worry here, namely, that it is mistaken to think that the history of empiricism marks a distinct

and traceable trend throughout the timeline of philosophical thought.[524] When we look closely, empiricists often have significant differences between their views. In this way, empiricism is like naturalism. Quine even suggests this himself when he writes: "I would certainly consider myself an empiricist (that's so broad as not to say much)".[525] So, while a commitment to empiricism *by itself* might not say much, the important question to ask at this stage of our inquiry is whether it says enough such that we can link together the forms of empiricism that we are concerned with.

Fortuitously, Quine does think that there is a link. Namely, Quine thinks that traditional epistemologists were right about one vital thing, i.e. that all of our information about the world ultimately comes from sensory experience. Quine makes this clear when he writes that "[t]he crucial insight of empiricism is that any evidence for science has its end points in the senses."[526] This is a minimal but central commitment that is held across the range of empiricist theories that we are concerned with here. In this way, Quine characterises it as "the watchword of empiricism", or the "empiricist manifesto".[527]

Now, not only are there many important differences between the forms of empiricism that concern us in this chapter, but there are also precise and important differences between the ways in which these forms of empiricism understand the above empiricist creed. In the following sections, I will explain these differences. But, in order to provide a framework for this discussion, it is vital to have established the above point since it shows that whatever differences there are between these forms of empiricism, they are still, in a minimal sense at least, forms of the same type of view. That is, they are all legitimate forms of empiricism as Quine understands the view.

3.3 Validating Empiricism

[524] See Richardson, A. 1997. p.164
[525] 'Philosophy', p.36
[526] 'On Mental Entities', p.225. See also 'Epistemology Naturalized': "whatever evidence there *is* for science *is* sensory evidence". p.75
[527] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19. *From Stimulus to Science*, p.4. See also pp.4-6

Now that we have established what Quine takes the central commitment of empiricism to be, let us consider why the empiricist thinks that this claim should be accepted. In this section, I establish that Quine has a principled and distinctive argument for accepting empiricism as a naturalist. I then explain that the traditional non-naturalistic forms of empiricism seem unable to appeal to this argument. We will see that this difference both illuminates an interesting feature of Quine's naturalized epistemology and prompts investigation into further distinctive aspects of the view. Furthermore, if Quine is not a naturalist in his early work, but still maintains a commitment to empiricism, then this raises the question of what, if anything, underlies his earlier acceptance of empiricism. I end this section by offering some thoughts about why Quine has a firm commitment to empiricism so early in his development.

Let me explain Quine's naturalistic validation of empiricism. Recall from §1.3 that for the naturalist there is no higher standard of truth than the standard met by the truths which emerge within our ongoing scientific theory. For example, there is no sense in which truth can be understood in a distinctly philosophical way, nor is there a way in which the claims of science could be supposed to aim to correspond to what is *really* the case beyond what science could tell us. Science evolves, and through this process we might change our minds about what is reckoned to be true, but there is no higher authority that the naturalist can appeal to in order to attain truth about the nature of the world. Truth, in this way, is immanent to science.

Accordingly, for Quine as a naturalist, the truth of empiricism is also an immanent truth of our ongoing scientific theory. More precisely, it is by reflecting on our nature as physical objects within a scientific investigation of the world, including an investigation into the origins of our knowledge about the world, that we discover the empirical nature of the input that human organisms have. Quine stresses this point continually once his naturalistic view emerges. For example, he writes:

> Now how is it that we know that our knowledge must depend thus solely on surface irritation and internal conditions? Only because we know in a general way what the world is like, with its light rays, molecules, men, retinas and so on. It is thus our very understanding of the physical world, fragmentary

> though that understanding be, that enables us to see how limited the evidence is on which that understanding is predicated.[528]

In this way, Quine's naturalistic outlook validates empiricism. That is, the naturalist always works within science, and science tells us that empiricism is true. The naturalist, therefore, accepts empiricism because it is a truth of science. In this way, Quine characterises the truth of empiricism as being "a prime specimen of naturalized epistemology".[529]

Moreover, because naturalism insists that we always work within science, we can make sense of why Quine's naturalistic outlook does not appeal to other possible sources of information that might be seen to inform our theory of the world, such as telepathy or divine revelation. We see this when Quine writes: "there remains a fact — a fact of science itself — that science is a conceptual bridge of our own making, linking sensory stimulation to stimulation; there is no extrasensory perception."[530] This is an underappreciated normative aspect of Quine's naturalized epistemology.[531] That is, positively, naturalism validates empiricism, and negatively, it tells us not to trust sources like telepathy.[532]

Having explained the nature of Quine's naturalistic validation of empiricism, let's now reflect on its strength. It's true that accepting empiricism because it is a truth of our ongoing scientific theory will make this claim fallible. This is the case, Quine would concede, for any truth. We see this clearly when Quine writes:

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[528] 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.229. See also *Word and Object*, pp.2-4. 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.328, *The Roots of Reference*, pp.2-3
[529] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19
[530] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.2
[531] The idea that Quine's epistemology fails to be normative is a prominent objection in the literature. See Kim, J. 1988. Esp. p.389. For a reply to this worry from Quine, see 'Reply to White', pp.633-65
[532] For Quine, normativity generally survives in naturalized epistemology in relation to "the technology of scientizing." That is, norms emerge within the process of scientific theorising and discovery. 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', pp.468-69. *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19

> Even telepathy and clairvoyance are scientific options, however moribund. It would take extraordinary evidence to enliven them, but, if that were to happen, then empiricism itself…would go by the board. For remember that that norm, and naturalized epistemology itself, are integral to science, and science is fallible and corrigible.[533]

However, the fact that empiricism is fallible is not sufficient to undermine the idea that Quine's acceptance of empiricism as a naturalist is principled. This is because the naturalist *must* work within our ongoing scientific theory, taking the claims it makes as seriously as is possible, and our ongoing scientific theory tells us that empiricism is true. Fallible or not, this approach is as principled as inquiry can get for the naturalist.

Having established Quine's naturalistic argument for empiricism, let's now consider how this position compares to the traditional forms of empiricism that he is reacting to. Interestingly, Quine presents his realisation that the truth of empiricism is a discovery that is made within science, i.e. his naturalistic way of establishing that empiricism is true, as being in direct conflict with traditional forms of phenomenalistic empiricism. We can see evidence of this potential conflict when Quine writes:

> The champions of atomic sense data were seeking the unscientific raw materials from which natural science is made, but in doing so they were being guided, all unawares, by an old discovery that was the work of natural science itself… It is the discovery that all our information about the external world reaches us through the impact of external forces on our sensory surfaces.[534]

Quine's claim, then, is that the traditional epistemologist tried to appeal to things like sense-data, where these are understood as the "unscientific raw materials" that natural science is made from or supported by, while, at the same time, failing to appreciate that the truth of empiricism is actually a truth that comes from within our ongoing scientific theory. To illustrate this point with an example, Quine stresses that traditional epistemologists often thought that what they were doing when they made claims about sense-data as an

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[533] *Pursuit of Truth*, pp.20-1. See also for *From Stimulus to Science*, p.67. 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.328.
[534] 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.328. See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.29

epistemologically prior foundation for science was appealing to the results of introspection. Quine thinks that they were wrong about this. He writes:

> The old epistemologists may have thought that their atomistic attitude toward sense data was grounded in introspection, but it was not. It was grounded in their knowledge of the physical world.[535]

Now, from what has been said so far, it seems like Quine is accusing the traditional epistemologist of not fully understanding their own view. That is, he is claiming that they do not appreciate that their claims are part of science and so not prior to science. Quine suggests this when he writes: "[t]he old epistemologist failed to recognize the strength of his position."[536] However, this does not get to the bottom of things. This is because Quine *also* thinks that traditional epistemologists would reject this way of viewing their claims for a principled reason. That is, they intentionally avoid putting epistemological matters in scientific terms and do so because they are trying to *justify* science on some independent and epistemologically prior basis. One cannot, on such a view, provide that justification from a perspective that is internal to science as such a justification would be viciously circular. We see this clearly when Quine writes:

> But he [Berkeley] and the other old epistemologists would have resisted this statement of the matter, because they saw their problem as one of challenging or substantiating our knowledge of the external world. Appeal to physical sense organs in the statement of the problem would have seemed circular.[537]

According to Quine, it is for this reason that many traditional epistemologists do not view their claims about the empirical basis of science's evidence (i.e. their claims about sense-data, ideas, and so on) as coming from science. That is, they avoid putting things in these terms because it would be circular to provide a justification for science by using science.

Now, Quine thinks that through engaging in this sort of project, the traditional epistemologist reveals themselves to be committed to empiricism, i.e. to the view that all of our information

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[535] *The Roots of Reference*, p.2
[536] Ibid, p.3
[537] Ibid. See also 'Posits and Reality', p.254

about the world comes from sense experience. If this was not the case, Quine thinks, it would be unclear why the epistemological focus would be on something like sense-data. However, what motivates one to accept this position is not entirely clear since, as explained above, the motivation cannot involve appealing to a scientific story that explains our sensory input in scientific terms. Rather, the motivation for accepting empiricism is likely to be based on the idea that what we're immediately aware of is experiential. This is a position reached through introspection, and hence all of our knowledge must ultimately be founded upon that immediate empirical basis. Whatever epistemological salience our subsequent scientific knowledge has, then, must be derived from the epistemological salience which belongs to that which is epistemologically prior to science, i.e. it must be derived from experience. A perspective like this is required by the traditional epistemologist because they are attempting the project of justifying science on the basis of experience.

To take stock, what we've found is that while the traditional epistemologist who aims to justify science empirically may be committed to the empiricist creed, this creed itself can be understood in very different ways. That is, the specifics of that creed will vary depending on the nature of the form of empiricist theory that we're dealing with. For Quine as a naturalist, this claim is cast in overtly scientific terms. That is, it will contain reference to scientific notions like the irritations or triggering of the physical sensory organs of human organisms. *This* fact is an internal truth of our ongoing scientific theory. However, the traditional epistemologist who is out to justify science does not understand the empiricist creed in these terms. Rather, such an empiricist understands our empirical input in terms that are supposed to be prior to and separate from science, e.g. in terms of "unscientific raw materials". Accordingly, the empiricist creed amounts to something different for this form of traditional epistemologist compared to the naturalist, and, in particular, it amounts to something that cannot be an immanent truth of science on pain of circularity, and so comes before the science that it is meant to support. This shows that the naturalistic validation of empiricism is not available to this form of traditional epistemologist that Quine is reacting to. This is, as Quine stresses, an important contrast between a naturalized form of empiricism and the more traditional form of empiricism that he is engaging with.

Now, in contrast to the traditional epistemologist whose aim is to justify science in terms of experience, Quine also considers an alternative traditional view which aims merely to understand the relationship between science and observation. Quine writes: "[i]f we are out

simply to understand the link between observation and science, we are well advised to use any available information, including that provided by the very science whose link with observation we are seeking to understand."[538] However, Quine does not think that many of the epistemologists that he's engaging with, i.e. those who want to "understand the link between observation and science" rather than to justify science, would proceed in this way. That is, they would not conduct epistemology as a project that is internal to science. The reason for this is that there is an alternative motive for carrying out a more traditional phenomenalistic empiricist project. Namely, one might aim to *reduce* science into a phenomenalistic language (which includes logic and set theory). Such a project would not aim to justify science on the basis of experience, logic, and set theory, given that, if the reduction was successful, one would still have to address the further question of whether the latter group is itself justified.[539]

To better understand the contrasts between these different forms of empiricism, it is helpful to think of these types of views in terms of a distinction that Quine introduces in 'Epistemology Naturalized', that is, in terms of a distinction between epistemological projects that are *conceptual* and those that are *doctrinal*.[540] Epistemological projects that attempt to justify science in terms of experience are doctrinal projects. Conceptual projects, on the other hand, aim to clarify scientific knowledge by examining its relation to experience. In doing so, the epistemologist might explain posits like physical objects in sensory terms. For example, such a view might outright identify physical objects with items constitutes from our experience, as Hume attempted to do, or it might try to reduce the sentences of scientific discourse to sentences in a phenomenalistic language, as Carnap attempted. Reductive projects like these are not viewed by Quine as attempting the doctrinal aim whereby one tries to justify science via experience. Rather, reductive projects are valuable for the light that they shine on the evidence that science has. Moreover, a strict form of reductionism, i.e. one which aims to *translate* science to a phenomenalistic language, would be valuable in light of possessing the ability to clarify our theory of the world by showing that it can be constructed from a phenomenalistic language involving sense-data, logic, and set theory.

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[538] 'Epistemology Naturalized'. p.76
[539] Though, it would show science to be as legitimate as those things, since science can be reduced to them.
[540] See Ibid, pp.74-6

Now, to return to the issue of circularity, Quine also presents such a worry as being relevant to this second type of phenomenalism, i.e. to a form of phenomenalism which tries to reduce science to experience. Since someone undertaking this form of empiricist project does not attempt to justify science, the idea that they would resist characterising their view in scientific terms for fear of circularity has to be understood in a slightly different way. Let me explain.

Recall that one form of phenomenalism that Quine was open to in his early work (i.e. before 'Two Dogmas') aspired to reduce science to something like sense-data, where sense-data are viewed as being epistemologically prior to science. The idea is that sense-data are meant to be epistemologically purer than what is found within science and so are meant to belong to a more ultimate or immediate part of reality than the posits of science. In reducing science to its evidence, then, the phenomenalist requires that the evidence for science must not be on a par with the science that is being reduced to it. We see this when Quine writes:

> Epistemologists have wanted to posit a realm of sense data, situated somehow just me-ward of the physical stimulus, for fear of circularity: to view the physical stimulation rather than the sense datum as the end point of scientific evidence would be to make physical science rest for its evidence on physical science.[541]

The idea, then, is that, on this form of phenomenalistic view, the evidence for science itself cannot be viewed as a part of science, for then that evidence is not epistemologically prior to science after all. If this was the case, i.e. if sense-data were considered as being on a par with the posits of science, then the project could show that science can be reduced *to science*. This is a reduction that is plainly circular in its structure. Crucially, it would be circular in a problematic way because it would not achieve the epistemological aim that the reductionist is trying to reach, i.e. that of reducing science to that which is epistemologically prior to science.

Here, then, we find an important contrast between the natures of the two forms of empiricism that are important to Quine at different points in his career. It might be the case that, on both the naturalistic view and the reductive phenomenalistic view, the evidence for science is ultimately sensory evidence. But, crucially, the "end point of scientific evidence" is

[541] 'On Mental Entities', p.225

understood in very different ways on these two views. For naturalism, scientific evidence is understood in terms of scientific notions, such as the stimulation of our physical sensory receptors. However, on the form of phenomenalism that Quine was open to in his earlier work, scientific evidence is supposed to terminate outside of science. That is, scientific evidence is supposed to terminate in that which is epistemologically prior to our ongoing scientific theory. So, on this form of phenomenalism, although empiricism is still characterised as the view that all of our information from the world comes from our sensory input (as it is with naturalism), that input itself is characterised in terms that are meant to be epistemologically prior to science. This is because things like sense-data are meant to be immediate or direct as well as conceptually primitive from an epistemological point of view. In this way, according to Quine, they belong to a more immediate and ultimate part of reality than the posits of science. This shows that the reductive phenomenalist's characterisation of the empiricist's creed cannot itself be a part of science, as this claim makes use of notions that are supposed to be epistemologically prior to science. This statement of empiricism, then, can't be validated in the naturalistic fashion.

This contrast, i.e. between the validation of empiricism for a naturalist and a reductive phenomenalist, is especially notable if we consider how the naturalistic variant of the empiricist creed relates to a strict form of reductionism. The naturalist holds that all of our information about the world comes from things like the triggering of our sensory receptors. It is this scientific fact that the naturalized epistemologist appeals to in order to validate the truth of empiricism. Yet the reductive phenomenalist seems unable to properly appeal to such a fact. This is because the reductive phenomenalist aims to translate sentences involving posits like physical receptors, i.e. sentences involving scientific posits, into phenomenalistic sentences, i.e. sentences concerning that which is epistemologically prior to such posits. That is (at least as Quine understands the view), the phenomenalist's project aims to ultimately *eliminate* such posits by showing them to be merely a convenient apparatus that helps us facilitate our interactions with experience. The claim that is central to the naturalized empiricist, then, loses its lustre from the perspective of strict reductive phenomenalism. In aiming to reduce science to that which is epistemologically prior to science, the reductive phenomenalist has a more ultimate and transcendent goal than the naturalistic empiricist can hope to aspire to within the strict confines of scientific inquiry.

Finally, if the naturalistic validation for empiricism is not available to forms of reductive phenomenalism, and if Quine was open to a form of reductive phenomenalism in his early work, then one naturally wonders what underlies Quine's firm commitment to empiricism throughout this period. After all, while Quine moves from being tolerant to views like reductive phenomenalism to endorsing a naturalistic empiricism, his commitment to the empiricist creed itself remains firm. Indeed, commitment to this creed is plausibly the closest thing to a life-long commitment of Quine's that we can make sense of.[542]

Now, the idea that Quine utilises his naturalistic validation of empiricism in his early work is suggested in the literature. For example, Lugg's characterisation of Quine's position in 'Two Dogmas' is indicative of the idea that, within this work, Quine argues for empiricism naturalistically. Lugg writes:

> Though he [Quine] does not explicitly state that experience is the only sure guide to the truth about how things are, he was strongly of the opinion that experience is all we have to go on (and would have believed this substantive philosophical assumption requires no special defence beyond what can be learned from science itself).[543]

Similarly, Isaac suggests that Quine has a naturalistic argument for empiricism at some point in his earlier work. Isaac explains, as I have above, that naturalism leads to Quine's acceptance of empiricism since the truth of empiricism is a discovery that is made within science, and that it's for this reason that Quine accepts it. But Isaac also claims that this naturalistic form of empiricism provides a basis for Quine to extrapolate:

> …his famous doctrines: meaning holism, radical translation, underdetermination of scientific theory, and ontological relativity. Each can be taken as an instance of the broader philosophical enterprise that Quine called "naturalized epistemology." Such were the doctrines towards which Quine was moving as he made this way through college, graduate school, and the early stages of his academic career.[544]

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[542] Although, Quine's commitment to extensionalism also appears to be something like a life-long commitment as well. Quine writes: "[e]xtensionalism is a policy I have clung to through thick, thin, and nearly seven decades of logicizing and philosophizing." 'Confessions of a Confirmed Extensionalist', p.498

[543] Lugg, A. 2012. p.234

[544] Isaac, J. 2005. pp.211-12

It's unclear how far back this "broader philosophical enterprise" is meant to extend, but Isaac's reading at least suggests that Quine's naturalistic empiricism is in operation in his earlier work, especially since, as I argued in Chapter 2, Quine's holism plays an important role in leading Quine to a position that is naturalistic.

In spite of this, however, Quine does *not* appear to explicitly provide an argument for empiricism in his early work. As we've seen multiple times in this thesis, Quine's early epistemological views are often in flux, lack strong commitment, and, at times, are fairly naïve. In this way, it seems wrong to think that Quine has something as strong as his own positive, developed, and substantive empiricist theory at this time, and, instead, it seems plausible that he is merely open to views like phenomenalism. Appreciating that there is an absence of a developed theory of how evidence relates to science in Quine's early work makes it less surprising that he doesn't offer an argument in support of empiricism until he later arrives at such a theory, i.e. his naturalized epistemology. Indeed, as I mentioned in §1.4.1, it's plausible that an important reason for Quine not having more definitive views in epistemology in his early work is that his focus was more directly on questions of ontology. Quine's focus then shifts to epistemology in his later work where, as we've seen in some detail, his views blossom.[545] Now, as I've argued above, the reductive phenomenalist appears unable to appeal to the naturalistic argument for empiricism. To whatever extent the early Quine sympathises with reductive phenomenalism, he is correspondingly unable to appeal to a naturalistic validation of empiricism.[546]

On this topic, Quine sometimes stresses that the motivation for accepting a view like phenomenalistic reductionism is unclear. In Chapter 1, I explained that Quine thinks that epistemological priority is an obscure notion when compared with scientific notions like the triggering of our sensory receptors. One way in which Quine thinks that this obscurity is appreciable concerns what motivates the truth of empiricism within more traditional

[545] See, for example, 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.257

[546] Moreover, recall from §1.4.2 that in 'Two Dogmas' Quine appears to be open to an odd combination of holism and phenomenalism. Given that his consideration of such a view is fleeting, since his naturalistic empiricism emerges shortly after this time, and given the fact that Quine insists his view in 'Two Dogmas' was too sketchy to be worth debating (established in §2.2.1), I won't consider this view in any detail in this chapter.

approaches to epistemology like phenomenalistic reductionism.[547] As I've explained, the traditional epistemologist cannot appeal to the results of science to carry out their project without worrying about circularity. Accordingly, traditional epistemologists won't appeal to scientific notions like nerve endings to explain the input that human organisms receive from the external world. This means that it's simply unclear where the motivation for the truth of empiricism comes from on a more traditional outlook.

Additionally, when discussing phenomenalistic reductionism, Quine suggests that it is something like introspection, rather than science, that supports their empiricist position, just like it did for the more traditional form of empiricism that tries to justify science via experience. For example, we see Quine characterise views like Positivism this way shortly after 'Two Dogmas'. He writes:

> Falling in thus uncritically with the usage of old-fashioned epistemology and introspective psychology, let us consider, to begin with the process of language. It has been the fashion in recently philosophy, both that of some of the English analysts and that of some of the logical positivists, to think of the terms of science and ordinary language as having some sort of hidden or implicit definitions which carry each such term back finally to terms relating to immediate experience.[548]

Indeed, Quine explains that sense-data are posited in an attempt "to segregate the immediate."[549] That is, they are posited in an attempt to home in on what subjectively is closest in the causal story that takes place when our sensory surfaces are affected by external objects. The phenomenalist, Quine claims, merely fails to appreciate that this shows that they are posited in a scientific fashion. Plausibly, then, these remarks can be seen as applying to some degree to the early Quine given his tolerance of this view.

While Quine's early views lack commitment to a substantive epistemological theory, we can provide some speculative remarks which attempt to cast some light over Quine's firm commitment to empiricism in the early work. Now, it's certainly telling that while Quine's views fluctuate, they never do so in the direction of rationalism. Indeed, Quine frequently

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[547] See 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.327
[548] 'On Mental Entities', p.221
[549] 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.327

writes about the diverse range of empiricist influence that his early developing views had. For example, Quine writes:

> …during my graduate studies at Cambridge, I read a lot by Hume, Locke, and Berkeley. But I don't think that the influence [of empiricism] on me was distinctively American; it was rather one of international empiricism. It was in fact Whitehead, Rudolf Carnap, C.I. Lewis, and, among the Poles, Tarski, who influenced me a great deal.[550]

This establishes that Quine had a strong foundation of empiricist influence from a very early stage. Empiricism appears to be part of the way that Quine conceived of the world from the start of his philosophical journey. For example, we find Quine accounting for mathematics in empirical terms in his college days. Quine gave a talk at Oberlin's Mathematics Club about mathematical logic and wrote that, while logic is the "trunk supporting every branch" of mathematics, at root the "raw material is always experience."[551] Quine gives little detail about how mathematics relates to experience, but his remarks are suggestive of an underlying desire to be an empiricist and to not consider rationalist accounts from the very start, even when dealing with something like mathematical knowledge.[552]

Moreover, Quine's commitment to empiricism is often felt strongly in his early work through the constraints that he places on theorising. We saw this in detail in Chapter 2, where Quine is involved in an intricate investigation into the empirical adequacy of analyticity in which he argues that to get a more acceptable view of semantic notions, we need to take our commitment to empiricism more seriously. Quine's engagement with analyticity isn't merely negative, that is, Quine is striving to work out whether analyticity can fit within his own empirical outlook. This was notable, for example, in Quine's emphasis on behavioural ways of getting clear on semantic notions, and in Quine's emphasis on the fact that contemporary

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[550] 'Twentieth-Century Logic', p.61. Similarly, Quine explains that an important early influence on him was pragmatism. Quine explains that pragmatism is too vague a label for Quine to identify himself with, but he specifies that an aspect of pragmatism that he does identify strongly with is empiricism. See *Time of My Life*, pp.37-8. 'Replies to Professor Riska's Eight Questions', p.213

[551] Sourced in Isaac, J. 2005. p.215

[552] See also Sinclair, R. 2016. He notes that while Quine had little knowledge of epistemology when he started at Harvard, his college work had "a noticeable trace of empiricism". p.82

empiricist approaches to notions like synonymy appear to be in "a state more typical of metaphysics generally than empiricism has any right to be."[553] This doesn't provide Quine with a substantial empiricist doctrine about how experience and theory relate, but it does show ways in which Quine is adhering to a commitment to empiricism.

Importantly, the motivation behind this push from Quine is scientific. That is, it is a push to be scientifically objective when it comes to philosophical notions like analyticity. Indeed, in much of Quine's early work, he appears to be reacting to the unempirical state that philosophy is in, or to the fact that supposedly scientific philosophers are failing to meet the standards of empirical science. The scientific spirit that Quine often embodies in his early work, then, no doubt provides much of the motivation for him being attracted to the view. In other words, Quine accepts that scientific evidence is observational evidence, i.e. science's evidence is empirical, and Quine often wants to be scientific about things.[554] It is this, after all, that explains the value that Quine sees in focussing on linguistic behaviour rather than things like ideas. With this outlook, it's no wonder that, when Quine turns his attention to epistemological projects, he'd be drawn to phenomenalistic reductionism. However, for the reasons given above, this early scientific motivation for empiricism should not be viewed as the same scientific motivation that the naturalized empiricism has for being an empiricist.

To summarise, Quine may be right that the "crucial insight" for empiricism (i.e. the idea that science's evidence comes from sensory experience) is a common thread shared by the naturalist and the more traditional forms of empiricism that naturalism reacts to. However, for the naturalist, this insight is recognised to come from within science, whereas, for the more traditional epistemologist, this insight has to be understood in ways that are not purely scientific. This means that the naturalistic validation of empiricism is not available to either the reductive phenomenalist nor the phenomenalist who attempts to justify science. Moreover, the reason that this validation is not available to either form of traditional empiricism is that both projects put significant weight on epistemological priority, despite having different motivations for their respective projects. Here, then, we find significant

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[553] 'Animadversions on the Notion of Meaning', p.153

[554] Quine also takes science itself to be concerned with organising and predicting experience. This view of science is clear in 'Two Dogmas'. Quine characterises part of what it means to be an empiricist as being someone who thinks "of the conceptual scheme of science as a tool, ultimately, for predicting future experience in the light of past experience." p.44

differences between the respective natures of the forms of empiricism that are important to Quine, as well as differences between the respective arguments for these positions.

3.4 Embracing Circularity

In the previous section, I established that traditional forms of empiricism have problems concerning the circularity involved in Quine's naturalistic claim that empiricism itself is a truth of science. In this section, I explain the circular nature of naturalized epistemology to better understand the nature of the view and its relationship to the forms of empiricism that the naturalized epistemologist is reacting to. Namely, I demonstrate that Quine, as a naturalist, has no problem embracing the circularity inherent in his view.

Quine explains this circular relationship between epistemology and science as one of *reciprocal containment*.[555] That is, both epistemology and science are contained within each other, albeit in different ways. On the one hand, epistemology contains natural science in the sense that epistemology is focussed on accounting for how humans can acquire their scientific theory. Naturalized epistemology has this much in common with more traditional approaches to epistemology, though there's no reductive project that is aimed at, nor is there an attempt to ground science on an independent experiential basis. Quine makes this clear when he writes:

> The old epistemology aspired to contain, in a sense, natural science; it would construct it somehow from sense data. Epistemology in its new setting, conversely, is contained in natural science… But the old containment remains valid too, in its way. We are studying how the human subject of our study posits bodies and projects his physics from his data…[556]

On the other hand, for the naturalist, epistemology is treated as a part of science. As Quine puts it, epistemology becomes "science self-applied…the scientific study of the scientific

[555] See 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.83
[556] Ibid

process."[557] Now, it is this side of the containment that Quine thinks the traditional epistemologist will deny, and hence we see a sharp contrast between naturalized epistemology and traditional epistemology. This is because it is this aspect of Quine's naturalistic approach, i.e. the casting of empiricism in scientific terms, that leads to the worries about circularity that I discussed in §3.3.

Now, the naturalized epistemologist does not aim to justify science on the basis of sense experience, nor do they aim to reduce science to experience. Quine views both of these traditional epistemological projects as requiring a perspective that is epistemologically prior to science, and such a perspective, as I explained in §1.4, is rejected by the naturalist as illegitimate. This means that Quine is able to embrace this circularity as a naturalist. That is, Quine is able to accept the circular nature of his naturalistic epistemological project without worrying about it being problematically circular since he rejects the idea that there is a perspective that is epistemologically prior to science.[558] This perspective allows him to accept empiricism because it is a truth of science, and it allows him to carry out his epistemological project internally within science.

Moreover, to illustrate the significance of this development, consider the way in which Quine describes the naturalized epistemologist as having newly found freedoms and responsibilities when compared to more traditional forms of epistemological theorising. Quine writes:

> Our dissociation from the old epistemologists has brought both freedom and responsibility. We gain access to the resources of natural science and we accept the methodological restraints of natural science. In our account of how science might be acquired we do not try to justify science by some prior and firmer philosophy, but neither are we to maintain less than scientific standards.[559]

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[557] 'Quine Speaks His Mind', p.24. We can see Quine explaining this relationship fairly early into his naturalistic development. See 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.228-30
[558] Some philosophers have argued that Quine's naturalism is viciously circular. See Siegel, H. 1995. pp.56-7
[559] *The Roots of Reference*, p.34

So, on the one hand, the naturalized epistemologist is liberated from the more traditional epistemologist in that they "gain access to the resources of natural science" since they accept that their epistemological inquiry must take place within science. In other words, in order to provide an understanding of how humans go from sensory input to scientific output, the naturalist is able to carry out this investigation while appealing to the results of science. On the other hand, in conducting this inquiry within science, the naturalized epistemologist's inquiry is constrained by the standards of science. On both of these points, Quine's naturalistic perspective is distinctive when compared with the more traditional forms of epistemology that he is detaching himself from.

Quine often likens the naturalist's lack of a problem with respect to circularity to the Neurathian metaphor. Recall that, in Chapter 1, we saw that this metaphor was a helpful illustration for shedding light on the nature of naturalism. Here, Quine also utilises it in order to illuminate the specific approach of the naturalized epistemologist. He writes:

> This interplay [between science and epistemology] is reminiscent again of the old threat of circularity, but it is all right now that we have stopped dreaming of deducing science from sense data. We are after an understanding of science as an institution or process in the world, and we do not intend that understanding to be any better than the science which is its object. This attitude is indeed one that Neurath was already urging in Vienna Circle days, with his parable of the mariner who has to rebuild his boat while staying afloat in it.[560]

The naturalized epistemologist, then, is presented as someone who fully accepts that there is no level of understanding that they can provide which is "any better than the science" that they are concerned with. They are, like other scientists, workers engaged in the enterprise of keeping the ship of science sailing while always working on it from within.

To summarise, I've established that a notable contrast between traditional forms of empiricism and Quine's naturalistic empiricism is that, as a naturalist, Quine *embraces* the idea that epistemology has a circular structure. This picture is rejected by the more traditional epistemologist for the reasons outlined in §3.3. In embracing this circularity, Quine locates

[560] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.84. See also 'On Mental Entities', pp.223-25

epistemology within science. A natural question to ask, then, concerns where precisely Quine thinks that naturalized epistemology ends up within science. Moreover, we might wonder how this relocation of epistemology bears on the question of naturalized epistemology's relationship to the more traditional forms of epistemology that Quine is reacting to. I will address this in the following section.

3.5 The Location of Epistemology

Let's begin by locating Quine's naturalized epistemology within the broad purview of scientific inquiry. Now, perhaps the main way in which Quine's naturalized epistemology is viewed as being radically different from the more traditional approaches is through the idea that it is located specifically in psychology. In other words, Quine is viewed as shifting the subject of epistemology from philosophy to a scientific subject, namely, one that belongs narrowly (and problematically) within psychology. We see this view clearly, for example, in Kornblith's interpretation of Quine. Kornblith claims that for Quine, "psychological questions hold all the content there is in epistemological questions. On this view psychology replaces epistemology in much the same way that chemistry has replaced alchemy".[561]

There is certainly plenty of evidence to be found in Quine's remarks that provide support for this idea. For example, Quine writes that while his naturalization of epistemology doesn't "repudiate epistemology", it instead "assimilates it to empirical psychology."[562] Elsewhere, Quine writes that naturalizing epistemology amounts to "a surrender of the epistemological burden to psychology".[563] Indeed, in 'Epistemology Naturalized', the paper where Quine baptises his epistemology as naturalistic, he continually describes epistemology as finding itself in a different setting, and that setting is psychology. Similarly, he describes the naturalized epistemologist as ending up "as an empirical

[561] Kornblith, H. 1994. p.7. See also Kim, J. 1988. Creath, R. 1990b. p.21. Similarly, Murphey has emphasised that philosophers criticising *Word and Object* often claimed that "it was psychology rather than philosophy." Murphey, M. 2012. P.126
[562] 'Five Milestones of Empiricism', p.72
[563] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.75

psychologist, scientifically investigating man's acquisition of science."[564] Given remarks like these, it's no wonder that this reading is common.

Indeed, Quine certainly seems to have become more sensitive to the idea that psychology is relevant to his epistemological views as time progresses. For example, Quine spent a considerable amount of time discussing his work with linguists and psychologists while writing *Word and Object*.[565] Moreover, 'Epistemology Naturalized' was originally titled 'Epistemology Naturalized; or, the Case for Psychologism', and hence it seems clear that Quine is aiming to stress the relevance of psychology for issues like meaning and justification within his naturalistic outlook. The fact that Quine does not think that it is problematically circular to view epistemology as a part of science, then, appears to be what makes this psychologistic view viable. That is, the epistemologist is finally allowed to appeal to science, psychology included.[566] We see evidence for this when Quine writes:

> …a surrender of the epistemological burden to psychology is a move that was disallowed in earlier times as circular reasoning. If the epistemologist's goal is validation of the grounds of empirical science, he defeats his purpose by using psychology or other empirical science in the validation.[567]

Having provided evidence in favour of the idea that Quine intends naturalized epistemology to be included narrowly within psychology, let me explain why this idea must be understood in a very careful way. First, let me highlight the fact that Quine also presents the location of naturalized epistemology as being more scattered within science. In *Pursuit of Truth*, for example, Quine places naturalized epistemology more generally in science as "a chapter of theoretical science".[568] Additionally, Quine suggests a broader location for his view when he stresses that something notable about it in *Word and Object*

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[564] *The Roots of Reference*, p.3. See also 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.230
[565] See Verhaegh, S. 2018. pp.148-49
[566] Indeed, a strong motivation for the separation of epistemology from science was a sort of anti-psychologism, that is, the view that psychological facts are not relevant for studying epistemological and semantic facts. According to this view, certain scientific facts, i.e. psychological ones, should be isolated from philosophy. That being said, a rejection of psychologism and avoiding the sort of circularity discussed in §3.3 are separate points. See Ibid. p.5
[567] 'Epistemology Naturalized', pp.75-6. See also 'Posits and Reality', p.254
[568] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19

is that "[o]ther logical semanticists put no such weight as I do upon natural linguistics and psychology".[569] Indeed, in a few places, Quine emphasises that naturalized epistemology is located in linguistics.[570] More strongly still, Quine stresses that the question of how evidence relates to theory requires little investigation from fields like psychology. He writes:

> Within this baffling tangle of relations between our sensory stimulation and our scientific theory of the world, there is a segment that we can gratefully separate out and clarify without pursuing neurology, psychology, psycho-linguistics, genetics, or history. It is the part where theory is tested by prediction. It is the relation of evidential support, and its essentials can be schematized by means of little more than logical analysis.[571]

So, we appear to have found ourselves at a crossroads. That is, in the pursuit of understanding the scientific location of naturalized epistemology, we are torn in two directions. On the one hand, Quine plainly claims that naturalized epistemology finds its home in psychology. Yet, on the other, Quine appears to stress that such an inquiry can be conducted independently of psychology. In order to make progress in the task of identifying the proper relation of naturalized epistemology to psychology, we need to consider the project that the naturalized epistemologist is concerned with in more detail. Doing so will also be beneficial for furthering our understanding of how the nature of naturalized epistemology relates to the natures of the other forms of epistemology that Quine is engaging with.

Quine characterises the central question that the naturalized epistemologist is concerned with as follows:

> From impacts on our sensory surfaces, we in our collective and cumulative creativity down the generations have projected our systematic theory of the external world. Our

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[569] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.149
[570] See, for example, 'Epistemology Naturalized', pp.89-90
[571] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.2

> system is proving successful in predicting subsequent sensory input. How have we done it?[572]

Here, we see that naturalized epistemology focusses on providing a scientific account of scientific knowledge. That is, it attempts to provide an account, from within science, of how human organisms are able to go from the stimulation that they receive to producing scientific theorising. Not only is this project to be conducted within science, the facts that it concerns are also facts that are established through the process of scientific discovery. Namely, it is a scientific fact that we receive input from the external world through "impacts on our sense organs", and it is a scientific fact that we end up projecting "our systematic theory of the external world", i.e. that we produce science as an output. To put it another way, not only is this project presented as taking place within science, it is also characterised purely in scientific terms. We see this clearly when Quine writes the following:

> We…find ourselves engaged in an internal question within the framework of natural science. There are these impacts of molecules and light rays upon our sensory surfaces, and there is all this output on our part of scientific discourse…we pose the problem of linking that input causally and logically to that output.[573]

At each side of the relation, i.e. the input and the output, are natural scientific phenomena, and the naturalist's task is to provide a causal and logical story about how we could go from the input to the output.

This is the main task that the naturalized epistemologist is concerned with. But it's worth pointing out that there are other tasks that are relevant to this perspective. For example, naturalized epistemology is also concerned with the heuristics of developing scientific hypotheses. This will include looking at how norms like conservatism figure in scientific theorising. Quine doesn't say all that much in this direction.[574] The reason for this,

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[572] Ibid, p.1
[573] 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.328
[574] See *Pursuit of Truth*, p.20. *From Stimulus to Science*, pp.49-50. For something slightly more substantial, see *The Web of Belief*, §5.

plausibly, is that such processes cannot be schematized properly. As Quine explains: "[c]reating good hypotheses is an imaginative art, not a science. It is the art of science."[575]

Now that we have a better appreciation of the task that the naturalized epistemologist undertakes, let me relate this to the traditional forms of epistemology that Quine is reacting to in order to further illuminate the relationship between the forms of empiricism that concern us. Following this, I will make sense of the location of naturalized epistemology in relation to psychology.

Quine acknowledges that the project of naturalized epistemology involves a fairly substantial departure from the form of traditional epistemology that attempts to support science by founding it on something more stable than science, e.g. on something certain like pure experience or ideas. Quine describes such an aim as "the Cartesian dream" (he intends this to also include rationalistic approaches to providing a justificatory foundation for science).[576] In relation to this aim, Quine admits that naturalized epistemology might fairly be viewed as too different from the epistemological projects of old to be fruitfully called 'epistemology'. After all, naturalized epistemology rejects the aim of the traditional purist as illegitimate. Quine writes:

> I call the pursuit naturalized epistemology, but I have no quarrel with traditionalists who protest my retention of the latter word. I agree with them that repudiation of the Cartesian dream is no minor deviation.[577]

However, at the same time, Quine stresses that "it may be more useful to say…that epistemology still goes on, though in a new setting and a clarified status".[578] Quine says this because he thinks that the naturalized epistemologist remains focussed on "what has been central to traditional epistemology".[579] By this, Quine means that the naturalized epistemologist is focussed on "the relation of science to its sensory data."[580] Here, then,

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[575] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.49
[576] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19
[577] Ibid. Similarly, in 'Epistemology Naturalized', Quine writes: "Epistemology, *or something like it*, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology…" p.82. My emphasis.
[578] Ibid, p.83
[579] *Pursuit of Truth*, p.19
[580] Ibid. See also 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.83

we find at least some commonality between the endeavour of naturalized epistemology and the endeavour of the doctrinal form of epistemology that Quine reacts to (in addition to their shared commitment to the empiricist creed, as explained in §3.2). In being focussed on the issue of scientific evidence, naturalized epistemology, like the epistemology of old, could still be characterised, roughly, as "concerned with the foundations of science".[581] However, for the reasons given above, one must understand this commonality carefully, since the naturalist denies that one can provide a foundation *for* science. The perspective required for providing such a foundation would need to be distinctly philosophical, that is, distinct from science. The naturalist, of course, denies that there is such a perspective.

So, Quine, as a naturalist, is still concerned with investigating the sensory evidence of science. This much he also shares with the reductive form of phenomenalism. However, where his naturalistic view differs from this reductive view is that, as I argued in §1.4.2, it rejects the idea that we can separate this sensory evidence into its own autonomous domain and then attempt to reduce the statements of our scientific theory to statements in a phenomenalistic language. In doing so, Quine also rejects the stricter reductive phenomenalistic idea that the epistemologist can aspire to show how our scientific worldview is, ultimately, superfluous to that experiential domain. Quine makes this clear when he writes:

> There is every reason to inquire into the sensory or stimulatory background of ordinary talk of physical things. The mistake comes only in seeking an implicit sub-basement of conceptualization, or of language. Conceptualization on any considerable scale is inseparable from language, and our ordinary language of physical things is about as basic as language gets.[582]

The naturalized epistemologist's goal, like that of the reductive phenomenalist, may be to *relate* knowledge to its empirical evidence, and so to investigate the relationship between science and its evidence. However, in rejecting the coherence of an attempt to *reduce*

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[581] Ibid, p.69
[582] *Word and Object*, p.3

science to something prior to science, the naturalized epistemologist is able to conduct their investigation within science and make use of its findings.

To summarise so far, the naturalized epistemologist is still concerned with the relation of science to its evidence. This much they share with the traditional epistemologist, and hence it seems reasonable to view naturalized epistemology as still undertaking an *epistemological* project. However, the more specific we are about the concerns of these forms of epistemological theorising, the more apparent it becomes that their aims, and, consequently, the projects that they conduct to meet these aims, are very different. Now that we have a better understanding of the project that the naturalized epistemologist undertakes and the relationship that this project bears to traditional epistemology, let's return to the question of how naturalized epistemology relates to psychology. Recall that the issue concerns the conflict between Quine's insistence that naturalized epistemology takes place within psychology and his claim that we can conduct important aspects of the naturalized epistemologist's project without considering psychology.

Now, I contend that we can make sense of this tension, and so resolve the puzzle concerning the location of naturalized epistemology, by reflecting on the sort of project that the naturalized epistemologist aims to undertake. As I've explained, the naturalized epistemologist may be carrying out an epistemological challenge that is undertaken within science, but, at the same time, they are also undertaking the challenge which preoccupied the traditional epistemologist (at least in some minimal but fundamental sense). That is, they are still concerned with the issue of how science relates to its evidence. In this way, the naturalized epistemologist is occupied both with carrying out a scientific project and with addressing a distinctively philosophical challenge.

To clarify, Quine's naturalistic outlook denies that there is a perspective that is *distinct* from science which the philosopher can occupy, and from which they could address issues such as the question of how science relates to its evidence. But, at the same time, the naturalist accepts that within science there are *distinctive* issues which the philosopher is well-equipped for dealing with, and which an inquirer that we're more likely to identify as a scientist (including a psychologist) is unlikely to have any direct interest in. Such issues will concern a very general and abstract level of understanding about the nature of the world. Crucially, the question of the relationship between scientific theorising and its

evidence, in concerning a very general and abstract aspect of the nature of reality, belongs at this level of inquiry.

Now, to relate these points to psychology, it is true that the issue that the naturalized epistemologist is directly concerned with is distinctively philosophical, since it concerns things like the question of how science relates to its evidence, and the question as to what extent humans transcend that evidence when developing their theory of the world. These concerns are fairly general and abstract in their nature, especially when compared with the more typical questions that are dealt with within psychology. Now, it is these concerns that are the primary focus of naturalized epistemology, but such issues have to be approached as matters of psychology because of the nature of their subject matter, i.e. because they concern the psychological development of human organisms. It is human beings, after all, that go from stimulus to science. It is for this reason that it seems accurate to characterise the location of naturalized epistemology as being in the more philosophical domain of science, and, in particular, as being in the philosophical periphery of psychology.[583] Appreciating that this is the proper location of naturalized epistemology makes sense of claims that Quine makes like the following: "[t]his [i.e. the question of how we go from stimulus to science] is a question of empirical psychology, but it may be pursued at one or more removes from the laboratory, one or another level of speculativity."[584] The naturalized epistemologist, then, attempts to provide, as Quine puts it, "a psychologically grounded theory of evidence".[585] That is, they attempt to provide a theory of evidence that belongs within the more psychological reaches of science, and, more particularly, within the more speculative and philosophical periphery of psychological theorising.

Strictly, we should bear in mind the fact that, as I discussed in §1.3.3, Quine does not think that subject boundaries mark out substantially different fields of inquiry. This is no less the case when considering the location of naturalized epistemology. Quine writes that "the inquiry [i.e. naturalized epistemology] proceeds in disregard of disciplinary

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[583] See also Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.149
[584] *The Roots of Reference*, p.3. See also Quine's claim in 'The Sensory Support of Science': "It smacks of psychology, yes; but it embraces the logic of science too, the whole problem of scientific evidence, the relation of observation to theory." p.328
[585] 'Posits and Reality', p.252

boundaries but with respect for the disciplines themselves and appetite for their input."[586] Viewing naturalized epistemology as being located in psychology, then, can also be viewed as a pragmatic decision that is made because of the similarity that its problems have with other problems that are dealt with in this field. The fact that naturalized epistemology deals with an especially general topic, though, makes the potential relevance of the input from other fields of science likely.

Having established the proper relation of naturalized epistemology to psychology, let me highlight the sharp contrast between this location and the location of a form of empiricism that Quine was open to in his earlier work, i.e. phenomenalistic reductionism. We see strong evidence of this in 1946, when Quine stresses the separation of the tasks of epistemology and psychology. Recall the following note of Quine's that was discussed in Chapter 1:

> Clarification of the notion of epistemological priority is needed to know what the task of epistemology (as distinct e.g. of psychology) is; for, epistemological priority is the direction in which epistemological reduction of knowledge to more fundamental or immediate knowledge seeks to progress.[587]

From this perspective, then, the very task of epistemology is being presented in ways that make it distinctly philosophical, i.e. as separate from the rest of science, psychology (explicitly) included. As the note makes clear, Quine's openness to epistemological priority is what leads to this tolerance of this position. This is because that which is epistemologically prior is epistemologically prior *to science*, and hence epistemological theorising is carried out from a perspective independent and autonomous from science. The idea of such a project would be to reduce our scientific knowledge into knowledge that is epistemologically prior to it. This thereby attempts to provide us with an outlook on the nature of reality that is more fundamental than the outlook that is found in science. We saw this in §1.4.1 in the way that experience is characterised in Quine's early view. Namely, something like sense-data was viewed as real in some special sense when compared to the other things that we think of as real. In this way, experience is not merely

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[586] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.16
[587] Sourced in Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.96

a posit within our scientific theory. Accordingly, such epistemological theorising occurs autonomously outside of the experimental method that governs our overall scientific theory. Indeed, as I've explained above, this means that such epistemological theorising *cannot* be carried out from within our ongoing scientific theory because, if it was, the reduction simply wouldn't work. More precisely, it would not allow one to think that our scientific apparatus is merely a convenient adjunct to the pure experience that we receive. There is a principled reason, then, against viewing this project as part of our ongoing scientific theory.

The legitimacy of this perspective, of course, is ruled out by naturalism. Quine illustrates this point by relating it to the Neurathian metaphor. He writes:

> Neurath has likened science to a boat which, if we are to rebuild it, we must rebuild it plank by plank while staying afloat in it. The philosopher and the scientist are in the same boat. If we improve our understanding of ordinary talk of physical things, it will not be by reducing that talk to a more familiar idiom; there is none. It will be by clarifying the connections, causal or otherwise, between ordinary talk of physical things and various further matters which in turn we grasp with help of ordinary talk of physical things.[588]

Here, then, we can appreciate the sharp contrast between the location of the naturalized epistemologist's theorising and the location of the reductive phenomenalist's theorising. That is, while both view epistemology as a distinctively philosophical subject, it is only the naturalist that attempts to keep this philosophical inquiry within the boundaries of science. The reductive phenomenalist, in contrast to the naturalist, conducts epistemological inquiry in a distinctly philosophical locale.[589]

So, in this section, we've seen that the specific location of naturalized epistemology is best identified within the philosophical periphery of psychological theorising, and that this is in

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[588] *Word and Object*, p.3

[589] Moreover, the science of psychology is not going to be of help to a strict reductive phenomenalist because it is not a psychological fact about human beings that they acquire the apparatus of physical objects through first acquiring the apparatus of the phenomenalist language, set theory, and logic and then, via definition, acquire the language of science. See 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.76

contrast to the distinctly philosophical location of both phenomenalistic reductionism and the form of empiricism which strives to justify science on the basis of experience. Let me end by offering some explanatory reasons as to why Quine's presentation of the fact that naturalized epistemology is included within psychology can be misleading. Recall that the beginning of this section introduced a host of evidence for the idea that, for Quine, naturalized epistemology is a matter of brute psychological theorising, rather than being located at the philosophical periphery of psychological theorising that I've argued for above. Foley claims that part of Quine's reason for introducing his view in the way that he does is that he is fond of "shocking aphorisms" which end up presenting his position in an unclear way.[590] This seems to explain part of the problem, as Quine occasionally explains the contrast between his view and the more traditional epistemological views that he's reacting to in misleading and hyperbolic terms. The fact that Quine is presenting his naturalistic view in contrast to traditional forms of empiricism through the fact that the naturalist accepts that epistemology takes place within science may have caused him to emphasise this contrast too strongly.

Moreover, it's important to note that, in the paper where Quine presents his idea that epistemological inquiry takes place narrowly within psychology most strongly (i.e. 'Epistemology Naturalized'), he is also at pains to make the distinctiveness of his own view apparent. This is the paper in which Quine first explicitly describes his view as naturalistic, and he is especially conscious of presenting the distinctiveness of his own view after the problems he had in communicating his perspective without a label like 'naturalism' in *Word and Object*, as I explained in §1.2. In attempting to push the contrast between his naturalistic view and the views of traditional epistemologists, Quine presents the contrast between these views more strongly there than he does in most of his other works.

In his other works, Quine highlights commonalities between the inquiries involved in naturalized epistemology and traditional epistemological projects, like Carnap's use of rational reconstruction, and he describes his own approach as "a naturalistic analogue or counterpart of the traditional epistemologist's phenomenalistic foundation in sense

[590] Foley, R. 1994. pp.249-50

data".[591] But, in 'Epistemology Naturalized', Quine writes as if he's aiming to provide something very different from a rational reconstruction. Quine claims that from the perspective of naturalism, it is "[b]etter to discover how science is in fact developed and learned than to fabricate a fictitious structure to similar effect."[592] Quine even suggests that while something like a rational reconstruction could be carried out within naturalized epistemology, one would only do this for pragmatic reasons to help hint at the "actual psychological processes" involved in how humans go from stimulus to science.[593] In this way, Quine presents his naturalistic view as if it is aiming to answer the question of how we *actually* go from sensory input to scientific output. Now, this is a question that belongs more to the experimental and rigorous part of psychology rather than to psychology's philosophical periphery. Quine's focus in naturalized epistemology, however, is on the slightly weaker question of how we *could* go from such input to our scientific output. In relation to this question, a more speculative and philosophical approach to providing an answer is appropriate. Let me end this chapter, then, by explaining this important aspect of naturalized epistemology.

3.6 The Speculative Nature of Naturalized Epistemology

I've established that naturalized epistemology belongs within the philosophical periphery of psychology. This locates philosophy within the broad domain of science. Now, as I explained above, this perspective is liberating in the sense that it allows one to appeal to the results of science in order to understand how theory relates to evidence, but it is also restrictive in the sense that one has to abide by scientific standards when conducting epistemology. However, as I mentioned in the previous section, naturalized epistemology has a notably speculative appearance. In this section, I argue that to make better sense of the nature of the naturalized epistemologist's inquiry, we have to understand its speculative nature. Understanding its speculative nature, I contend, will help us better understand the distinctive nature of naturalized epistemology and, moreover, will

[591] 'Naturalism; Or, Living within One's Means', p.464. See also *From Stimulus to Science*, Chapters 1-2. 'Two Dogmas in Retrospect', p.399
[592] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.78
[593] Ibid. p.83

contribute towards a more nuanced appreciation of the relationship between the forms of empiricism Quine engages with throughout his career.

Now, philosophers have claimed to find problems with Quine's naturalized epistemology because of its speculative appearance. The general worry is that Quine's view is too speculative and so the naturalistic edge that Quine's work putatively exemplifies is dulled. For example, Fogelin has stressed that, because of the speculative nature of Quine's project, his view is often too theoretical and distanced from empirical checkpoints to qualify as scientific.[594] In epistemology specifically, Fogelin stresses that it's unclear as to why Quine should formulate the epistemological challenge first before carrying out the empirical work. In other words, Quine, in the spirit of Dewey and Pierce, should see the relevant epistemological questions themselves as emerging during ongoing empirical research. Such an approach would appear to be a more scientific option. Now, if an interpretation like this is correct, it might weaken the contrast between Quine's naturalistic approach to epistemology and the more traditional forms of epistemology that he is reacting to. This is because it would make the character of naturalized epistemology much more philosophical rather than scientific.

Indeed, Quine's naturalistic work often involves descriptions of his view as being speculative. For example, Quine sums up his general approach as follows: "[i]n *Word and Object* and *The Roots of Reference* I have speculated on how we learn individuative terms, predication, and various further essentials of our language."[595] Additionally, Quine describes his explanation of how we introduce talk of objects into language as "speculative psychology".[596] In one of his earliest discussions of naturalized epistemology, after noting that the question of the roots of referential language properly belongs to psychology, Quine claims that "[a]ctually we can proceed to answer this twofold question plausibly enough, in a general sort of way, without any very elaborate psychologizing."[597]

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[594] Fogelin, R.J. 2004. See esp. pp.43-4. See also Foley, R. 1994. pp.253-56. Fogelin admits that Quine sometimes gives a "Peircean response" where he dismisses philosophical issues in the context of empirical inquiry. As I explain below, this is a response that Quine gives to classical examples of sceptical hypotheses.
[595] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.5. See *Pursuit of Truth*, pp.34-5
[596] 'Identity, Ostension, and Hypostasis', p.74
[597] 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.230-31

Later in the same paper, he describes his claims as "speculations".[598] Moreover, in *The Roots of Reference*, plausibly Quine's most extended and detailed work on epistemology, Quine's descriptions of his view as speculative are abundant. There, Quine describes his view as speculative three times in one paragraph.[599] He also describes it as "psychogenetic speculations", "suppositious psychogenesis" and a "caricature".[600] Crucially, these are not fine-grained claims about the nature of specific parts of Quine's view being speculative, rather, they are general claims about the nature of his approach to epistemology being speculative.

What perhaps makes this situation worse is that admission that Quine's view is speculative is also often accompanied by a further admission, that is, that the claims that he makes aren't true of the precise details about what happens when humans acquire cognitive language. For example, Quine describes his speculations as "inaccurate"; as providing a "construction of a fictitious learning process"; as "crude"; and as "imaginary".[601] Moreover, Quine's views are also presented as being inadequate in important ways. For example, we see this when he writes: "[t]rue, there are scarcely the beginnings here of a full theory of evidence and scientific method; much more to that purpose can be gleaned from works by others."[602]

To take stock, while the naturalized epistemologist embraces the fact that epistemology is located in science, there is an abundance of evidence which shows that they intend their naturalistic approach to epistemology to be deeply speculative, and even distanced from the literal truth. That Quine's naturalistic approach to epistemology has this deeply speculative aura, then, is a fact that needs to be explained.

3.6.1 Naturalism and Scepticism

[598] Ibid. p.234
[599] *The Roots of Reference*, p.81
[600] Ibid. p.92, p.105
[601] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', pp.267-68. *The Roots of Reference*, p.121, p.123
[602] 'Replies', p.180

Now, to properly understand why Quine is content with providing a speculative approach, we first need to understand the naturalist's treatment of scepticism. Quine's naturalistic perspective on traditional scepticism is difficult to grasp in light of two different ways in which the naturalist can interpret, and consequently respond to, traditional sceptical worries.[603] More precisely, Verhaegh stresses that Quine's attitude towards scepticism is liable to confuse readers in light of the fact that Quine talks about scepticism as being incoherent at certain times, and coherent at others. For example, we see this when Quine, on the very same page, claims that radical scepticism "is not itself incoherent" and that within his naturalistic worldview "the transcendental question of the reality of the external world" disappears.[604]

Let's begin by looking at why Quine thinks that traditional scepticism, interpreted in a certain way, ends up being incoherent. Quine often presents traditional scepticism as if it is a form of first philosophical theorising. Recall from Chapter 1 that one way in which theorising can be first philosophical is if it aspires to provide a perspective on the nature of reality that transcends our ongoing scientific claims about it. Now, at times, Quine interprets traditional sceptical worries as attempting to aspire to such a perspective. For example, in one paper, Quine dismisses a transcendental notion of reality that science aspires to mirror as being first philosophical, and so as illegitimate. Quine then relates this idea to scepticism, writing: "[r]adical skepticism stems from the sort of confusion I have alluded to".[605] That is, a sceptical challenge could be interpreted as taking the form of an attempt to invoke standards or evidence concerning reality that are supposed to be external to science which can then be used to undermine our knowledge of the world. Obviously, such a sceptical approach has no credence from the perspective of the naturalist since they insist that there are no standards or evidence that transcend those found within science. Quine makes this clear when he writes:

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[603] Quine's naturalistic treatment of scepticism is also the source of many complaints. Namely, that scepticism is meant to challenge science, but Quine, in assuming science to answer these challenges, does something viciously circular to avoid scepticism. See Hookway, C. 1988. p.56. Stroud, B. 1984. Ch. 6

[604] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.21. See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.31 f28. His response, like mine, is to stress that one can interpret traditional scepticism as a scientifically immanent challenge, which Quine views as coherent but not motivated, and a transcendental or first philosophical challenge, which is rejected as illegitimate.

[605] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.22

> We cannot significantly question the reality of the external world, or deny that there is evidence of external objects in the testimony of our senses; for, to do so is simply to dissociate the terms 'reality' and 'evidence' from the very applications which originally did most to invest those terms with whatever intelligibility they may have for us.[606]

For these reasons, the naturalist rejects traditional scepticism, interpreted as first philosophical, as being illegitimate. In this way, the naturalist's perspective is, as Quine puts it, that "[w]hat evaporates is the transcendental question of the reality of the external world—the question of whether or in how far our science measures up to the *Ding an sich*."[607]

Now, alternatively, Quine could interpret traditional scepticism in another way. That is, he could view the doubts that the sceptic puts forward as doubts that take place immanently within science. Quine sometimes writes of this as being the only sense that he can make of transcendental worries about the reality of the external world. For example, Quine writes:

> Transcendental argument, or what purports to be first philosophy, tends generally to take on rather this status of immanent epistemology insofar as I succeed in making sense of it.[608]

The traditionalist will reject this reading of the sceptical challenge since they are aiming to challenge science from some independent perspective, but Quine insists that, in rejecting the coherence of such a perspective, the naturalist is "enlightened in recognizing that the sceptical challenge springs from science itself".[609] That is, the naturalist recognizes that "sceptical doubts are scientific doubts."[610]

To demonstrate this point, Quine considers the sort of evidence that the sceptic could appeal to. For example, if one wanted to show that the information provided by experience

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606 'The Scope and Language of Science', pp.229-30. See also *Word and* Object, p.3
607 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.22. See also 'Structure and Nature': "what reality is *really* like…is self-stultifying". p.405
608 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.22
609 *The Roots of Reference*, p.3
610 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.258

is unreliable, one might cite an optical illusion. This claim has to be understood as coming from within our ongoing scientific theory. Quine writes:

> Ancient skepticism, in its more primitive way, likewise challenged science from within. The skeptics cited familiar illusions to show the fallibility of the senses; but this concept of illusion itself rested on natural science, since the quality of illusion consisted simply in deviation from external scientific reality.[611]

That is, the type of phenomenon that a sceptic would cite in support of scepticism, e.g. an illusion where a stick appears bent when placed in water, requires that we make sense of a distinction between reality and illusion. Quine then stresses that such a distinction only makes sense within the context of our ongoing scientific theory. That is, illusions can only be seen to be illusions "relative to a prior acceptance of genuine bodies with which to contrast them."[612] The naturalist, of course, insists that our "acceptance of genuine bodies" involves an acceptance that such things are paradigmatically real. In this way, "common sense about bodies is thus needed as a springboard for scepticism."[613] Without this anchoring, we can't make sense of a distinction between reality and illusion, since illusions are meant to provide evidence of something that veers away from that which is taken as real within science. Moreover, the sceptic needs to appeal to things like the regularities of nature that sceptical phenomena are meant to go against, e.g. that sticks don't normally bend when placed in water. Such phenomena are also part of our scientific theory of the world.

With scepticism understood as an internal challenge to science, Quine insists that the sceptic has little scientific motivation for the plausibility of their challenge. That is, the challenge makes sense, but it's not a threat to science. Sceptical hypotheses like sticks appearing bent when placed in water or the brain-in-a-vat thought experiment, understood immanently, simply aren't empirically motivated given that they don't arise as concerns within scientific inquiry. In one place, for example, Quine describes the sceptic "merely as overreacting" to the idea that they have evidence which undermines science.[614]

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[611] *The Roots of Reference*, pp.2-3
[612] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.257
[613] Ibid, p.258
[614] 'Things and Their Place in Theories', p.22

So, traditional scepticism does not find itself in good standing in relation to the outlook of naturalized epistemology. Either the sceptic attempts to provide a first philosophical challenge to science, a view that the naturalist rejects as illegitimate, or, they concede that their challenge takes place within science, a position that the naturalist dismisses as unmotivated. Interestingly, though, this reveals that the naturalist does not rule out the position of scepticism completely. Quine suggests this when he writes the following:

> …the term 'reality', the term 'real', is a scientific term on a par with 'table', 'chair', 'electron', 'neutrino', 'class'…all these are part of our scientific apparatus, our terminology, so that the only sense I can make of scepticism is that somehow our theory is wrong…[615]

Quine notes that the worry that "somehow our theory is wrong" is, in itself, a reasonable one to have, however, his point is that the more weight that we place on doubts like these, the less plausible our doubt becomes.

3.6.2 Speculation and Naturalized Epistemology

Now that we have an understanding of the naturalized epistemologist's multifaceted attitude towards scepticism, let's return to the issue that prompted this detour, i.e. that of making sense of the speculative nature of the naturalist's epistemological inquiry. In this section, I make sense of this aspect of Quine's view by establishing that the project that the naturalized epistemologist undertakes can be viewed as addressing a naturalistically legitimate sceptical worry.

Recall that the naturalized epistemologist's project is to provide a scientific account of the relationship between science and its evidence. That is, the naturalist aims to provides an account of how human organisms are able to go from the input that they receive to having a scientific theory about the nature of the universe. As I explained in §3.5, such a project

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[615] 'Exchange Between Donald Davidson and W.V. Quine Following Davidson's Lecture', p.152. See Verhaegh, S. 2018. p.31

belongs approximately within psychology, since it concerns the psychological development of human beings. More precisely, because the project is general and abstract in its nature, it belongs within the philosophical periphery of psychology.

With this in in mind, consider the following way in which Quine presents his project:

> Science itself teaches that there is no clairvoyance; that the only information that can reach our sensory surfaces from external objects must be limited to two-dimensional optical projections and various impacts of air waves on the eardrums and some gaseous reactions in the nasal passages and a few kindred odds and ends. How, the challenge proceeds, could one hope to find out about the external world from such meagre traces? In short, if our science were true, how could we know it?[616]

Here, then, Quine presents a "challenge". That is, science tells us that we have certain input which then eventually leads us to produce scientific theorising as an output, and the naturalized epistemologist is concerned with working out how this can be the case. This is a challenge because natural science, as it stands, does not have an answer to this problem.

Crucially, Quine does not present this as a challenge that one should attempt only for the light that it will shed on the nature of the relationship between science and its evidence. That is, he *also* stresses that addressing this problem is important in overcoming a challenge to science. We see this when, right before explaining the project that the naturalized epistemologist undertakes, he writes that "the epistemologist is confronting *a challenge to natural science* that arises from within natural science."[617]

To better understand this point, consider the way in which Quine explains the relationship between epistemology and scepticism generally. Quine thinks that doubt is *the* vital motivation in epistemology. We see this clearly when he writes:

> Doubt has oft been said to be the mother of philosophy. This has a true ring for those of us who look upon philosophy primarily as the theory of knowledge. For the theory of

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[616] *Roots of Reference*, p.2. See also *Pursuit of Truth*, p.1
[617] *Roots of Reference*, p.2. Emphasis added. See also 'Epistemology Naturalized'. p.76. pp.83-4

> knowledge has its origin in doubt, in scepticism. Doubt is what prompts us to try to develop a theory of knowledge.[618]

Doubt is what motivates epistemologists to search for something firmer than science. That is, they realise that scientific knowledge is fallible, and so they try to find something more secure than science. As I've explained, Quine rejects the coherence of this aspiration and insists that such doubts must spring from within science. However, it is exactly this point that Quine is making when he insists that the naturalist is dealing with a challenge to science. Expanding the quote given above, we see that he writes:

> This fear of circularity is a case of needless logical timidity, *even granted the project of substantiating our knowledge of the external world*. The crucial logical point is that the epistemologist is confronting a challenge to natural science that arises from within natural science.[619]

This shows that Quine thinks that there is a further important commonality between the project of naturalized epistemology and the traditional doctrinal approach to epistemology; a commonality beyond their more general concern with the issue of how science relates to its evidence. We see further evidence for this when Quine characterises naturalized epistemology in the following way:

> A far cry, this, from old epistemology. Yet it is no gratuitous change of subject matter, but an enlightened persistence rather in the original epistemological problem. It is enlightened in recognizing that in coping with it we are free to use scientific knowledge.[620]

Now, in emphasising that epistemology is focussed on "the original epistemological problem", Quine is emphasising that he is focussed on the problem of overcoming doubt. That is, the naturalized epistemologist is focussed on addressing a sceptical issue. All of these points, of course, have to be understood immanently within science. That is, Quine is

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[618] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge'. p.257. See also 'Lectures on Hume's Philosophy', pp.50-59
[619] *Roots of Reference*, p.2. Emphasis added.
[620] *The Roots of Reference*, p.3

not attempting to address a transcendental sceptical worry, nor is he attempting to justify science by providing a science-independent foundation for it. But Quine is stressing that the naturalist is still concerned with "the project of substantiating our knowledge of the external world". We see this focus when he writes:

> The epistemologist thus emerges as a defender or protector. He no longer dreams of a first philosophy, firmer than science, on which science can be based; he is out to defend science from within, against its self-doubts.[621]

In order to appreciate why there are scientific doubts which motivate the project that naturalized epistemology is concerned with, it is vital to appreciate the asymmetry between the input and the output that are relevant to this project. In Quine's characterisation of this challenge, he stresses that at either side of the relation between science and its evidence we have drastically different phenomena. The output, i.e. science, is impressive and "torrential".[622] That is, it is a force to be reckoned with. At the other side, Quine stresses that the input seems impoverished. For example, he writes about "our *meagre* contacts with [the world]; the "*mere* impacts of rays and particles on our surfaces"; "how *limited* the evidence is"; the "*meagre* traces" that experience provides us with.[623] Here, then, we have a problem that is especially challenging because of the picture of the input that science provides us with. This asymmetric picture shows that human beings have a long way to go from the input that they receive from the world to having a scientific theory. As Quine stresses: "[i]t was science itself…that demonstrated the limitedness of the evidence for science."[624] In this way, the scientific doubt that the naturalized epistemologist is protecting us from is a type of poverty of the stimulus problem. That is, given the quality of the input that science tells us that we have, there is a genuine challenge to account for how this input is sufficient to lead us to a scientific theory of the world.

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[621] Ibid
[622] 'Epistemology Naturalized', p.83
[623] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.16, 'The Scope and Language of Science', p.229, *Roots of Reference*, p.2. Emphasis added to all.
[624] Ibid, p.3

Moreover, with the project of naturalized epistemology understood in this way, we can appreciate Quine's view of what a legitimate sceptical challenge to naturalized epistemology would be. This would be the worry that the challenge that the naturalist addresses cannot be overcome. We see this when Quine writes the following in response to his acknowledgement that sceptical doubts are scientific doubts:

> I am not accusing the sceptic of begging the question. He is quite within his rights in assuming science in order to refute science; this, if carried out, would be a straightforward argument by *reduction ad absurdum*. I am only making the point that sceptical doubts are scientific doubts.[625]

This refutation of science, coming from within science, would show that we can't arrive at our theory of the world merely from the input that such a theory tells us we receive.[626] In other words, the stimulus is *too* impoverished.

To clarify, viewing naturalized epistemology as focussed on addressing this sceptical worry should not undermine the idea that naturalized epistemology is also focussed on addressing the issue of how science relates to its evidence. Indeed, carrying out the project of naturalized epistemology addresses both of these issues. We see clear evidence of this when Quine emphasises that:

> His [i.e. the naturalist's] project becomes one of major scientific and philosophical interest, moreover, even apart from protective motives — even apart from any thought of a skeptical challenge. For we can grant fully the truth of natural science and still raise the question, within natural science, how it is that man works up his command of that science from the limited impingements that are available to his sensory surfaces.[627]

The philosophical interest that Quine is referring to here is both the light that such an investigation would shine on the relationship between theory and evidence, and the extent

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[625] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', p.258

[626] Indeed, Van Fraassen appears to offer such a challenge. Namely, he claims that Quine's naturalized epistemology fails because empiricism is inadequate to account for science. In other words, that the stimulus is too impoverished. Van Fraassen, B. 1995. For a reply, see Roth, P. 1999. p.103 f27

[627] *The Roots of Reference*, p.3

to which it would show that humans go beyond that evidence. So, the central motive of the naturalized epistemologist may be to deal with the internal doubts that science has, but there are additional valuable motives for carrying out this project. To properly enjoy the gains associated with these latter motives, the epistemologist merely has to put any doubt to one side.

Now that I've explained the way in which naturalized epistemology can be viewed as addressing a naturalistically motivated sceptical challenge, let me finally use this finding to explain the speculative nature of Quine's approach to tackling this problem. Quine's speculative response is explainable by the very nature of the challenge that it is addressing. The challenge is to show, consistent with science and from within science, that what science tells us about our input from the world is sufficient to lead to our possession of science.[628] In other words, Quine is concerned with the question of how we *could* go from stimulus to science. That story, rather than the stricter story of how we *actually* go from stimulus to science, is sufficient to dissolve the sceptical worry, i.e. it is sufficient to solve the challenge at the heart of naturalized epistemology. This establishes that a speculative approach to this issue is entirely appropriate. A stricter scientific account of how humans actually psychologically develop from receiving stimulation to developing a scientific theory would also dissolve this worry, but such an account is not necessary.

In addressing this challenge, Quine is engaged in a project that is similar in important respects to the sort of rational reconstruction that Carnap attempted in the *Aufbau*. That is, all that the naturalized epistemologist has to do is provide an account of how human organisms could go from stimulus to science. We see this when Quine presents his view in the following terms:

> His [the naturalized epistemologist's] problem is that of finding ways, in keeping with natural science, whereby the human animal can have projected this same science from the sensory information that could reach him according to this science.[629]

[628] See also Kemp, G. 2012. p.28
[629] *The Roots of Reference*, p.2

In this way, the answer that Quine provides to this challenge does not, strictly, need to be true to the fine-grained details of what goes on when human beings acquire cognitive language. Such a level of specificity and depth is simply not required to meet the challenge, welcomed though it would be. In this way, Quine's approach is plainly speculative, but it is speculative for a good reason, i.e. because that is exactly the sort of approach the naturalized epistemologist should conduct, given the nature of their project. This makes sense of Quine's claim that "[s]peculation is allowable if recognized for what it is and conducted with a view to the possible access of evidence at some future stage."[630]

In this claim, we also see that Quine, unsurprisingly, sees the position that he puts forward as being sensitive to empirical evidence as well as suggestive of providing direction for further research. Quine accepts that his epistemological views are fallible (and, indeed, that they are likely to need correction, given that they are speculative) and, so, if it was the case that other claims within science conflict with his epistemological views, then they are open to be corrected. We see evidence for this in numerous places. For example, Quine writes:

> Such speculations [on the development of cognitive language] would gain, certainly, from experimental investigation of the child's actual learning of language. Experimental findings already available in the literature could perhaps be used to sustain or correct these conjectures at points, and further empirical investigation could be devised.[631]

And also:

> There is substantial literature on the child's mental and linguistic development, much of it from Jean Piaget's group in Geneva around 1960 and much of it later. The data recorded in these sources could perhaps be mined and reworked to account for the steps of development that are concerning us here. Such an inquiry would no doubt suggest further empirical studies directed at our present concerns.[632]

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[630] *The Roots of Reference*, p.34
[631] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', pp.267-68
[632] *From Stimulus to Science*, p.38

Moreover, in viewing epistemology as an internal affair of science, Quine does not think that his speculations originate from some source of pure philosophical insight, or from some other location that is disconnected from ongoing science. His views may be speculative, but they arise from reflecting on what science tells us is the case, i.e. they are put forward as claims that build upon scientific knowledge. We see this when Quine writes: "I have no experiments or excavations to report, but there has been room for insights by just raising new questions against existing knowledge."[633] This, Quine thinks, is just a common trait of an investigation that is scientific. He writes: "[it] is a matter, as always in science, of tackling one problem with the help of our answers to others."[634]

So, the naturalized epistemologist makes claims that are purposefully speculative, but, at the same time, these claims are not meant to be detached from ongoing science. Now, recall that the challenge that the naturalized epistemologist is facing is distinctively philosophical, that is, in concerning the question of how theory and evidence relate, it belongs to a notably general and abstract part of our scientific theorising. It is this more philosophical aspect of the project that explains why the naturalized epistemologist begins by considering claims that impinge on many fields of science, and then speculates about how these pieces could fit together. This has to occur before one can really identify what experimental tests would be needed in order to provide a more refined perspective on what happens when we go from stimulus to science. Quine makes this clear when he characterises the approach of the naturalized epistemologist in the following terms:

> …a speculative approach…seems required to begin with, in order to isolate just the factual questions that bear on our purposes. For our objective here is still philosophical – a better understanding of the relations between evidence and scientific theory. Moreover, the way to this objective requires consideration of linguistics and logic along with psychology. This is why the speculative phase has to precede, for the most part, the formulation of relevant questions to be posed to the experimental psychologist.[635]

The general and abstract nature of the challenge that the naturalized epistemologist is addressing also makes sense of the imprecise nature of Quine's claims. In addressing this

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[633] 'The Growth of Mind and Language', p.182
[634] *From Stimulus to Science* p.16
[635] 'The Nature of Natural Knowledge', pp.267-68

issue, Quine is only required to provide an account that is true in a general sense, rather than providing an account that aims at being true to the precise details of what goes on when we acquire cognitive language. Quine makes this clear when he writes:

> In any event the present speculations, however inaccurate, are presumably true to the general nature of language acquisition. And already they help us to understand how the logical links are forged that connect theoretical sentences with the reports of observation.[636]

That is, Quine's claims only need to be true to such an extent that they can afford us a picture, consistent with and internal to science, of how humans could go from stimulus to science. Nothing more precise than this is required. As Quine puts it, what he is offering is merely "a vague picture of how it has to be."[637]

Moreover, similar thoughts can explain why the naturalized epistemologist provides merely a caricature of how science relates to its evidence. The picture that Quine provides concerns, as he puts it, "the central logical structure of empirical evidence", or the question "of how our knowledge of the external world is possible."[638] Quine stresses that the "essentials" of this relation "can be schematized by means of little more than logical analysis."[639] In addressing this question, Quine explains the relation of the more theoretical reaches of science to naturalistic notions like observation categoricals, which he then relates to observation sentences, and, ultimately, to our sensory interface with the external world. Such a picture leaves a lot of the minute details of the process of scientific theorising unaccounted for. For example, it says little about how science is sensitive to its evidence, or how science is testable, when the part of our theory that we are concerned with is tested in highly indirect ways. However, given the nature of the project that Quine is undertaking, he is not required to burden himself with providing such precise details.

Indeed, this philosophical perspective is appreciable in many of the important notions that Quine makes use of within naturalized epistemology. Such notions, though crucial to

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[636] Ibid
[637] *The Roots of Reference*, p.84
[638] Ibid, p.2
[639] *Pursuit of Truth*. p.2

Quine's project, are at a considerable distance from the more fine-grained scientific details concerning what goes on when human beings acquire cognitive language. Observation sentences, the cornerstone of Quine's picture of how science relates to its evidence, are a good example of this. Quine writes:

> Among the myriad manifestations of these largely unfathomed processes [that take place when we acquire scientific theories], one outcome is a neat correlation between certain ranges of sensory stimulation and certain sentences. Exploiting these correlations, we can happily leave all the bewildering intervening processes to the neurologists, interested though we are bound to be in what they find out about them.[640]

That is, observation sentences are vital since they allow the naturalized epistemologist to put the more particular scientific details to the side while pursuing the epistemologically important ones, i.e. those relevant to the epistemological challenge that the naturalized epistemologist is dealing with.

In summary, then, this section has argued that understanding the speculative nature of naturalized epistemology requires appreciating that the central motivation for conducting the project that it undertakes is to address a naturalistically legitimate form of scepticism. Attaining this perspective allows us to explain why Quine gives an account that is speculative and not directly concerned with the fine-grained truths about the psychological development of human organisms. This perspective is speculative, but it is, I have argued, speculative in a purposeful way such that it does not threaten Quine's naturalistic integrity.

Finally, let me briefly summarise the findings of this chapter. Here, my aim has been to provide a detailed analysis of the subtle and complex relationship between Quine's naturalized epistemology and the traditional forms of empiricism that he engages with. I have established that there are minimal but fundamental similarities between these forms of empiricism. Namely, as I established in §3.2, these views share a minimal commitment to the basic creed of empiricism, and, as I argued in §3.5, they are also focussed on the relation of science to its evidence. For these reasons, it seems plausible to view them as forms of the same view, i.e. as forms of empiricism, and as forms of empiricism that

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640 'The Sensory Support of Science', p.339

undertake an epistemological project. However, close examination of these similarities in §3.3-§3.6 revealed that there are also crucial differences between the empiricist theories that are important to Quine. The naturalized epistemologist does not attempt to provide an empirical foundation for science, as the doctrinal epistemologist tries to, nor do they attempt to reduce science to sensory experience, as the reductive phenomenalist aspires to. Rather, the naturalized epistemologist stays anchored to science, with their inquiry being located within the philosophical periphery of psychology. They attempt to provide a scientific account of our scientific knowledge, embracing the circularity inherent in their view.

The upshot of this discussion is twofold. First, I take it that we now have a better contextualised understanding of naturalized epistemology with respect to the alternative empiricist views that Quine responds to. Second, appreciating the complex differences between naturalistic and traditional forms of empiricism makes it clear that, although Quine's commitment to empiricism appears to be sustained throughout his work, applying the generic label of 'empiricism' to Quine's *overall* philosophy is liable to suggest much too simplistic a picture of his development. Throughout the timeline of Quine's philosophical development, his commitment to empiricism may be unwavering, but this can only be true in a very minimal sense given these differences between traditional and naturalistic approaches to empiricism. That is, given that Quine is not a naturalist in his early work, and is at least tolerant of a more traditional approach at this time, it is clear that the way in which Quine engages with empiricism changes throughout his development, and this ought to be reflected in the way in which we understand Quine's place within the landscape of empiricism.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, we began with a worry about how we ought to understand the nature and development of Quine's naturalism. That is, we saw that Quine's naturalism, while commonly taken to be the systematic core of his philosophical views, can be difficult to elucidate. Here, I have endeavoured to clarify Quine's commitment to naturalism, and consequently utilise this analysis in order to provide a holistic and nuanced interpretation of various important aspects of Quine's work, including a variety of his key philosophical commitments and the development of his thought throughout his career. The fact that Quine is not committed to naturalism until shortly after 'Two Dogmas' reveals that Quine's philosophical worldview cannot be felicitously understood as revolving around a stable commitment to naturalism. Instead, we must recognize that Quine's early openness to first philosophical theorising and subsequent shift to naturalism influences the way in which we should understand vital aspects of his thought, such as the development of his attitude towards analyticity, and his longstanding commitment to empiricism. These findings, I propose, motivate and lay the foundations of a more nuanced and cautious understanding of Quine.

In Chapter 1, I established that Quine was not always a naturalist. To do this, §1.2 motivated the idea that Quine's naturalism is commonly thought to extend far into his early work. §1.3 then provided a thorough characterisation of Quine's naturalism. This showed naturalism to be a restrictive and nuanced perspective on philosophical inquiry which requires the philosopher to always be working within science. I then argued, in §1.4, that Quine's early work is not naturalistic by demonstrating that Quine was open to a form of first philosophical theorising until at least 1951. I concluded the chapter by investigating Quine's later argument against phenomenalism which found evidence for the idea that the emergence of Quine's naturalism takes place soon after 'Two Dogmas'.

In Chapter 2, I carefully analysed the development of Quine's evolving views on analyticity in order to better understand their nature and significance, including their relation to the development of naturalism. In §2.2.1, I started by motivating my investigation. To this end, I provided reasons for thinking that Quine's problems with analyticity in 'Two Dogmas' are vital for the development of naturalism. I then provided two considerations which undermine the idea that Quine's outlook undergoes an important development in that paper. Namely, the

fact that Quine's doubts about analyticity are often understood to have existed for a long time before 'Two Dogmas', and, the fact that Quine displays an unfavourable attitude towards the paper because he thinks it's substance is negative. I explained that these considerations, then, also undermine the idea that the paper could be important for Quine's development towards naturalism. To aide my investigation, in §2.2.2, I identified four vital features Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas'. My investigation, carried out in §2.3, found that Quine's views on analyticity develop in a complicated but fairly natural way from optimistic beginnings to dismal pessimism. Crucially, I maintained that Quine's perspective in 'Two Dogmas' represents a substantial step forward in his development because in the paper he first presents a holistic picture of inquiry against verificationism, and so, in turn, against the analytic/synthetic distinction. This showed that the idea that Quine had doubts about analyticity long before 'Two Dogmas' is misleading unless it's understood in a carefully qualified way. I then ended the chapter, in §2.4, by offering some thoughts about why 'Two Dogmas' is important for the development of naturalism.

Finally, in Chapter 3, I endeavoured to elucidate Quine's naturalistic empiricism. To this end, I conducted a detailed inquiry into the relationship between naturalistic and traditional forms of empiricism. I argued that these views share two vital features. Namely, as I demonstrated in §3.2, they are committed to the basic creed of empiricism, and, as I established in §3.5, they are focussed on the question of how science relates to its evidence. In these ways, these views all seem to be forms of empiricism that are occupied with an epistemological project. However, I argued that these similarities are fairly minimal, and that close examination (provided in §3.3-§3.6) reveals that there are also important differences between these views. Of particular note is the fact that Quine, as a naturalist, does not attempt to reduce science to its sensory evidence, nor does he attempt to conduct epistemological inquiry from a perspective that is independent of our ongoing scientific theory. On both of these points, Quine's naturalistic view contrasts with the traditional forms of empiricism that it is presented against. Instead, the naturalized epistemologist conducts epistemology from within science, located at the philosophical periphery of psychological theorising. I contend that these findings prompt a more nuanced understanding of Quine's empiricism.

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