Sinnott-Armstrong on Intuitionism

By

Jamie Hebert

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Philosophy

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Abstract

In his paper "Framing Moral Intuitions" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008), Sinnott-Armstrong argues that three studies which he cites provide evidence of unreliability in all moral intuitions in all circumstances. Therefore, he argues that all of one's moral intuitions require inferential confirmation for justification. I argue that the studies do not strike me as evidence for this conclusion. Thus, anyone who reads the studies and is not struck that they are evidence for this conclusion can have justified moral intuitions without inferential confirmation. Further, arguments are given for why Sinnott-Armstrong's arguments fail to show that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Finally an argument is given which shows that even if one accepts the master argument, it need not lead to moral scepticism.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the members of my advisory committee for all of their help. I would like to thank my outside thesis advisor Prof. Jason Lebow-McGowan. I would like to thank my secondary thesis advisor Prof. Chris Tillman. I would especially like to thank my primary thesis advisor Prof. Robert Shaver.

Table of Content

List of Tables

Chapter 1.   Exposition of Sinnott-Armstrong's Argument

Brief Introduction

In this essay I will argue that Walter Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument is unsound. First I will present Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument and the arguments he provides to support his premises. Roughly, Sinnott-Armstrong argues as follows; a belief's justification comes in the form of premises supporting the belief. For the premises to successfully justify the belief, they themselves must be justified and for them to be justified they need premises to justify them. A regress threatens and the proponent of the regress argument argues that this regress leads to scepticism. Sinnott-Armstrong claims that intuitionists, who hold that there are non-inferential moral intuitions, hold that there are non-inferential moral intuitions in order to block the regress argument. Sinnott-Armstrong cites three studies which show unreliability in people's moral intuitions and argues that this is evidence that people's moral intuitions are unreliable in many circumstances. He argues further that if people's intuitions are unreliable in many circumstances, then inferential confirmation is needed for justification.   Therefore Sinnott-Armstrong concludes that our moral intuitions are not justified without inferential confirmation. Moreover, if every moral intuition would need inferential confirmation for justification then there would be no non-inferentially justified moral intuitions and thus intuitionism would be false. What is more, every moral belief would only be justified by means of an inference, which would result in a regress, which Sinnott-Armstrong argues would result in moral scepticism.

Very roughly, after presenting Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument I will object along the lines that the evidence which Sinnott-Armstrong provides does not even strike

me as evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Then I will present a further objection that Sinnott-Armstrong's evidence is not representative and thus can not justifiably be generalized to all moral intuitions in all circumstances. I will provide the response on Sinnott-Armstrong's behalf that one must infer the argument which shows that Sinnott-Armstrong's evidence is not representative in order for one's moral intuitions to be justified. Therefore, ultimately one's moral intuition will be inferentially justified. I will then propose Sinnott-Armstrong's argument commits him to some implausible results. Lastly I will object that even if one accepts the master argument it need not lead to moral scepticism.

1.1 Sinnott-Armstrong: Regress

I will start by presenting a short exposition of Sinnott-Armstrong's argument for the conclusion that our moral intuitions are not justified without inferential confirmation from his paper "Framing Moral Intuitions" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008). First I will explain the regress argument Sinnott-Armstrong presented. The regress argument is a sceptical argument, and can be used to argue for moral scepticism. Many versions of the argument have been given and the argument traces back to one that may have been first given by Sextus Empiricus (Feldman 2003, 49). For any subject S to know any proposition P, S needs to have justification for P. This justification will come in the form of premises in an argument for P. For any premise to successfully justify its conclusion, it must itself be justified. And for the premise to be justified it would need justified premises supporting it and so forth. This regression can either go on infinitely or eventually circle back in on itself (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 48-49). The sceptic argues that both alternatives lead to scepticism. In the case of the regression going on infinitely it is impossible for any

person to have an infinite chain of beliefs, and thus impossible for any person to have a justified belief. In the alternative where the regression circles back in on itself, if one were to follow a belief's chain of reasoning, eventually one will come back to that very belief. The original belief cannot be justified since it will serve as justification for itself, and no belief can serve as justification for itself.

1.2 Sinnott-Armstrong: Moral Intuitions

Now I will present moral intuition as Sinnott-Armstrong defines it. Sinnott-Armstrong defines a moral intuition as a strong immediate moral belief. He defines moral beliefs as "beliefs that something is morally right or wrong, good or bad, virtuous or vicious, and so on for other moral predicates" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 47). For Sinnott-Armstrong a moral belief is strong if the belief is firm and not easily given up (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 47). He deems a belief to be immediate if the believer forms and holds the belief independently of any process of inferring it from any other belief either when the belief was formed or at a later time when the belief is sustained (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 47). Sinnott-Armstrong notes that moral intuitions still can be inferential. What makes them moral intuitions is that the believer does not need to base them on an inference; they are considered inferential if their justification is dependent on the believer's ability to infer it from another belief (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 49). Though Sinnott-Armstrong never specifies, it is pretty standard for intuitionists such as Sidgwick, (Sidgwick 1907) Moore (Moore 1903), and Ross (Ross 1930) to think of moral intuitions as beliefs that can be known without inference from any other propositions.

1.3 Sinnott-Armstrong: Intuitionism

Sinnott-Armstrong explains that for a belief to be justified the believer must have epistemic grounds so that the believer ought to hold the belief as opposed to not hold it or withhold judgment. Intuitionism is a meta-ethical view that holds that moral intuitions can serve as evidence for beliefs. Absent a defeater, the intuitionist hold that intuitions serve as strong enough evidence to warrant justification. The intuitionist also holds that there are non-inferentially justified moral intuitions. Therefore, the intuitionist's moral beliefs are not in danger of a regress if they are justified non-inferentially or inferred from a non-inferentially justified moral belief.

1.4 Master Argument and Premise 1

Now I will present Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument for the conclusion that there are no non-inferential moral intuitions (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 52).

(1) If our moral intuitions are formed in circumstances where they are unreliable, and if we ought to know this, then our moral intuitions are not justified without inferential confirmation.
(2) If moral intuitions are subject to framing effects, then they are not reliable in those circumstances.
(3) Moral intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances.
(4) We ought to know (3).
(5) Therefore, our moral intuitions in those circumstances are not justified without inferential confirmation.

I will now explicate each of Sinnott-Armstrong's premises of his master argument. Sinnott-Armstrong bases the first premise on a general principle: "A need for confirmation and, hence, inference is created by evidence of unreliability." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 51) He begins by pointing out that while it is unlikely that psychological research on its own can establish positive claims about what beliefs are justified, psychological research can provide evidence for negative claims about how some beliefs may not be justified (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 50). Suppose one believes that one is in the presence of a pink elephant, but one also knows that she

believes this only because she consumed a hallucinogenic drug. Given this fact regarding the origin of her belief, the original belief that there is a pink elephant present is not justified. Further, it may be the case that the elephant actually is present; however, one would not be justified in this belief unless there is some alternative way to confirm the pachyderm's presence, and such methods corroborate the belief. Sinnott-Armstrong arrives at the following general principle which he bases premise 1 on: "[i]f the process that produced a belief is not reliable in the circumstances, and if the believer ought to know this, then the believer is not justified in forming or holding the belief without inferential confirmation." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 51)

1.5 Premise 2: Word Framing

Next Sinnott-Armstrong argues for premise (2), which says that if moral intuitions are subject to framing effects, then they are not reliable in those circumstances. The types of framing effect that he is concerned with are wording and context framing effects. Word framing occurs when one's belief is affected by the words used to describe the content of the belief. Sinnott-Armstrong uses the example of Joseph who believes that Marion is fast if he is told that she ran one hundred meters in ten seconds, but would believe that Marion is not fast if he was told that it took her ten seconds to run one hundred meters. In this case Joseph's belief is affected by the words: 'ran' as opposed to 'took her to run'. Surely the fact of whether Marion is fast (relative to the same contrast class) cannot depend on the words used to describe the proposition. At least one of these responses must be false. Sinnott-Armstrong argues that "[i]n this situation on this topic, then, he cannot be reliable in the sense of having a high probability of true beliefs" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 52).

1.5.1 Context framing

Sinnott-Armstrong uses an example to explain context framing. Suppose Josephine sees a man standing 500 yards away, next to a Giant Sequoia tree, and forms the belief that the man is short, but would have formed the belief that the man is tall if she would have seen him in a different context such as standing next to a Bonsai tree. Undoubtedly the truth of whether the man is tall (for a man) is not affected by the context in which it is presented. Thus Josephine's belief is subject to a context framing effect.

Sinnott-Armstrong goes on to explain a more specific kind of context framing, namely order context faming. Order framing effect occurs when one's belief is affected by a context due to the order in which things are presented. Sinnott-Armstrong asserts that "[f]irst impressions rule." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 53) By this it is meant that whatever is first in the order of what is presented will affect one's belief and will continue to affect it throughout the order of what is presented. Suppose Josephine forms the belief that the man is short after seeing him next to the Giant Sequoia and continues to believe he is short even after seeing him next to the Bonsai, but would have formed the belief that the man is tall if she would have first seen the man next to the Bonsai and then maintained the belief even then after seeing him next beside the Giant Sequoia. Since the order in which things are presented undoubtedly does not affect the truth of whether the man is tall (for a man), Josephine's beliefs are subject to order context framing. Furthermore, since the man cannot be both short and tall at the same time one of these beliefs must be wrong. Sinnott-Armstrong concludes that "Josephine's beliefs on this topic cannot be reliable, since she uses a process that is inaccurate at least half the time. Thus, context framing effects also introduce unreliability." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 53)

Sinnott-Armstrong goes on to point out that the same goes for moral beliefs that are affected by word and context framing effects. Since the truth of a moral proposition cannot be affected by the words used to describe the content of the proposition, or the context of a belief, beliefs which are affected by such factors will often be false, and "cannot reliably track the truth. Unreliability comes in degrees, but the point still holds: Moral beliefs are unreliable to the extent that they are subject to framing effects." [1] (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 54)

1.6 Premise 3: Tversky and Kahnemen

Sinnott-Armstrong next argues that moral intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances. To do this he cites and explains three empirical studies that show their subjects framed by context and word framing (Tversky and Kahneman 1981, Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, Haidt and Baron 1996).

First he presents the study "The Framing of Decisions and the Psychology of Choice" by Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, who were the first to explore framing effects. For the study students from Stanford University and the University of British Colombia answered brief questionnaires in a classroom setting. This study is a between-subject design, as opposed to a within-subject design. In within-subject design, unlike between-subject design, every subject is given every instance of the variable which is being tested. In between-subject design, a portion of the subjects are given one instance of the variable and other subjects other instances of the variables. The variable which is being tested for in this study is wording. Half of the subjects are being asked to choose between two options of outcomes with one wording and the other half are asked the same

---

[1] There are those who hold that moral expressions are context sensitive. By "sensitive" it is meant that the moral expression's content changes with the context. See G. Harman (1975) or P. Unger (1995). I will be setting aside considerations of this nature.

question with an alternative wording. If the study were within-subject design all subjects would be asked to choose between the two options with one wording then the other. The subjects were not asked to give any justification for their answers at any time. Half of the subjects were asked the following question:

> Imagine that the U.S. is preparing for an outbreak of an unusual Asian disease which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to fight the disease, A and B, have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows: If program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved. If program B is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that 600 people will be saved, and a 2/3 probability that no people will be saved. Which program would you choose?

The other half of the subjects were presented with the same scenario but were asked to choose between programme C and D.

> If program C is adopted, 400 people will die. If program D is adopted, there is a 1/3 probability that nobody will die and a 2/3 probability that 600 will die.

Program A is equivalent to program C. Program B is equivalent to program D. The only thing that differs between the programs is the wording. Programs A and B are worded in "save" wording while C and D are worded in a "die" wording. However, 72% of subjects chose program A over B (28%) while only 22% of subjects chose program C over program D (78%). Sinnott-Armstrong explains that "[d]escriptions cannot affect what is really morally right or wrong in this situation. Hence, these results suggest that such moral beliefs are unreliable." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 55) Sinnott-Armstrong notes that the experiment was not asking for a moral intuition but rather what one would choose; however, Sinnott-Armstrong argues that since it was not explained how the outcome of the programs would affect the subjects personally, what they chose must have been based on what program they believed to be morally right or wrong.

Sinnott-Armstrong considers the widely held doctrine of doing and allowing (DDA) which claims that a stronger moral justification is needed for an act causing harm than for merely allowing harm to occur. DDA is commonly believed to capture the intuition that it is morally worse to kill than to let die. Following Horowitz (Horowitz 1998), Sinnott-Armstrong argues that prospect theory explains people's intuitions in certain circumstances where DDA was commonly held to explain people's intuitions. Prospect theory from Kahneman and Tversky (Kahneman and Tversky 1979) is a theory which provides an explanation of people's intuitions in certain circumstances. Sinnott-Armstrong quotes Horowitz :

> In deciding whether to kill the person or leave the person alone, one thinks of the person's being alive as the *status quo* and chooses this as the neutral outcome. Killing the person is regarded as a negative deviation…. But in deciding to save a person who would otherwise die, the person being dead is the *status quo* and is selected as the neutral outcome. So saving the person is a positive deviation…. (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 56)

Sinnott-Armstrong explains that according to prospect theory people in general are more inclined to reject options that cause certain negative deviations from the status quo. Thus if this is explaining one's intuition in a circumstance, then what one takes to be the status quo, or baseline, will affect one's intuition and Sinnott-Armstrong argues that this can be affected by wording. Therefore a framing effect may result in circumstances where one is faced with a choice between possible outcomes where the wording of the baseline of the options can be affected such that the outcomes can be viewed as a loss with some wording and a no-gain with another. Tversky and Kahneman state that in their aforementioned study "[t]he demonstrated effects are large and systematic, although by no means universal." (Tversky and Kahneman 1981)

Sinnott-Armstrong considers a response from Kamm. (Kamm 1998) Kamm argues that DDA's distinction between doing and allowing harms is actually what people's intuitions are based on and not prospect theory's distinction between gains and losses. Kamm notes that in most instances both theories seem to do a good job of predicting and explaining people's intuitions; however, Kamm argues that we can pull them apart in cases where causing a harm prevents a greater loss. Kamm considers a case by Quinn (Quinn 1993) where five people are drowning and the only way to reach the five to save them would involve driving over another person caught in the road, thereby killing him. Kamm supposes that we change that case so that the five are in excellent shape but need a shot of a drug in order to prevent their dying of a disease that is coming into town in a few hours. (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 57) The drug is only available at the hospital and they must drive over one person to get there (I'm supposing that the one will be fine and will not die of the disease that is coming if they don't run her over). In the first case it could be argued that people's intuitions to not kill the one stems from their intuition that it is worse to kill than to let die. Conversely a proponent of prospect theory could argue that the intuition that it is wrong to drive over the one stems from bias to reject options which cause negative deviations from the baseline. In this case the person trapped in the road is thought as alive and killing him would be a negative deviation, where as the people drowning are viewed as dead and saving them would be a positive deviation. Kamm argues that in the new case where the five are viewed as alive and well, not saving them would involve losses rather than no-gains. However, in this case one still ought not prevent these five losses of life by causing one loss. Kamm concludes that

even when there is a case where there is no contrast between a loss and a no-gain, it is not permitted to do what harms in order prevent a harm.

Sinnott-Armstrong explains that in the disease case Kamm believes that the baseline for the five people would be that of healthy life since they are currently alive and in excellent shape, as opposed to the five who are drowning who are doomed. Sinnott-Armstrong argues that the baseline could be viewed in different ways. One may view the five as doomed, since the disease is headed for town and if they do not get the drug they will die. Thus, if the baseline is viewed in this way, not saving the five would result in no-gains rather than losses. Sinnott-Armstrong rightly points out that Kamm could protest that that is not how the baseline is viewed in the Asian disease case where there is a disease coming to town. Sinnott-Armstrong responded by arguing that "prospect theory need not claim that the baseline is always drawn in the same way." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 57) People's intuitions about where to draw the baseline may differ from case to case even if they have no consistent reason for it.

Next Sinnott-Armstrong notes that psychologists may argue that framing effects in choices between risks do not invariably carry over into choices between certain effects; moreover, they get weaker in cases with smaller groups, such as a case involving six people in lieu of six hundred people. This suggests that there are special features of the Asian disease case which cause the framing effects which are not present in other cases such as the Quinn case. This casts doubt on an attempt to explain people's intuitions in Quinn's case in the same manner as the Asian disease case. Sinnott-Armstrong does not provide a response to this worry. Doubt is also cast on attempting to explain people's intuitions in any case which does not involve probabilities and large numbers. Sinnott-

Armstrong does not provide any response to this worry; instead he presents one study of word framing (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996), which could potentially be explained by prospect theory, which does not involve large numbers and probabilities.

Sinnott-Armstrong finally considers the objection that Horowitz's claim only applies to the doctrine of doing and allowing and not other moral intuitions. Sinnott-Armstrong argues that the doctrine of doing and allowing is not trivial or rare. Further he argues that prospect theory also applies to "cases involving fairness in prices and tax rates (Kahneman et al 1986) and future generations (Sunstein 2004, 2005) and other public policies (Baron 1998)" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 58). Even though Sinnott-Armstrong concedes that there are many other areas in morality, in light of studies showing that prospect theory applies to three different areas of morality, Sinnott-Armstrong claims that doubts should arise about many other moral intuitions as well (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 58). He does not specify which moral intuitions doubt should arise about.

1.61 Haidt and Baron

Sinnott-Armstrong presents the study "Influence of Wording and Framing Effects on Moral Intuitions" by Jonathan Haidt and Jonathan Baron. The framing effects demonstrated in this study were context order framing. One group of the subjects was given a hypothetical scenario then asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the given alternatives. Subsequently they were given a new scenario and asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the given alternatives. Another group of the subjects were given the same scenarios and questions respectively, in reverse order. The mean responses of each group were recorded and compared. In cases in which the subjects

were framed the two groups' means were significantly different from one another. The first study presented the following scenario to half the subjects:

> Nick is moving to Australia in two weeks, so he needs to sell his 1984 Mazda MPV. The car has only 40,000 miles on it, but Nick knows that 1984 was a bad year for the MPV. Due to a manufacturing defect particular to that year, many of the MPV engines fall apart at about 50,000 miles. Nevertheless, Nick has decided to ask for $5000, on the grounds that only one-third of the 1984 MPV's are defective. The odds are two out of three that his car will be reliable, in which case it would certainly be worth $5000. Kathy, one of Nick's best friends, has come over to see the car. Kathy says to Nick: "I thought I read something about one year of the MPV being defective. Which year was that?" Nick gets a little nervous, for he had been hoping that she wouldn't ask. Nick is usually an honest person, but he knows that if he tells the truth, he will blow the deal, and he really needs the money to pay for his trip to Australia. He thinks for a moment about whether or not to tell the truth. Finally, Nick says, "That was 1983. By 1984 they got it all straightened out." Kathy believes him. She likes the car, and they close the deal for $4700. Nick leaves the country and never finds out whether or not his car was defective. (Haidt and Baron 1996, 205-6)

The other half of the subjects received the following alternative ending:

> Nick is trying to decide whether or not to respond truthfully to Kathy's question, but before he can decide, Kathy says, "Oh, never mind, that was 1983. I remember now. By 1984, they got it all straightened out." Nick does not correct her, and they close the deal as before.

In the first case, which is named "act", Nick actively lies while in the second case named "omission", he does not actively lie; he withholds information. Nick and Kathy's relationship is also modified. The first case presented is named "personal". In the second case which is named "intermediate", Nick and Kathy are acquaintances from the neighbourhood and the third case named "anonymous", Kathy is a woman that answered

an add in the newspaper. Each of the role versions were divided into act and omission versions.

Subjects were "asked to 'rate Nick's goodness, or virtue, in this situation on a scale from - 100 to + 100, where - 100 means "extremely bad", as reprehensible as a person could ever be; 0 means "neutral", neither good nor bad; and + 100 means "extremely good", as commendable as a person could ever be'." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 206) Subjects answered questions on either the "personal" case, the "intermediate" case or the "anonymous" case. Half of the subjects answered "act" version of the question first then the "omission" version second. The other half of the subjects answered their questions in reverse order.

Haidt and Baron use the between-subject design for all the experiments in this study, since no subjects were presented both orders of any question. The first experiment's subjects were undergraduates in an introductory psychology class at the University of Pennsylvania. Subjects were given the questionnaire upon entering class and took no more than ten minutes to complete it. All subjects were asked to read and then answer the first version presented before reading and considering the next version (likely for all of the experiments, though the other studies did not specify). (Haidt and Baron 1996, 206) Subjects were asked for justification for their responses. However, subjects were only asked after they provided their responses and had no knowledge they were to be asked for justification until after they responded to all questions.

Haidt and Baron recorded the following framing effect for the first experiment: "Eighty per cent of subjects in the omission-first condition rated the act worse than the

omission, while only 50 per cent of subjects in the act-first condition made such a distinction." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 210)

In a second experiment Haidt and Baron gave subjects all three role versions. Half were given the "personal" version first, then "intermediate", then "anonymous" versions. The others half of the subjects were given them in reverse order. Within each of these groups of subjects, half were asked about the "act" versions first, then the "omission" ones. The other half of the subjects were asked about the "omission" versions first, then the "act" ones.

Similar to the first experiment, Haidt and Baron noted the following framing effect: "[i]n the Mazda story, 88 per cent of subjects lowered their ratings as Nick changed from stranger to friend, yet only 66 percent of subjects raised their ratings as Nick changed from friend to stranger."

Haidt and Baron conducted another experiment with a very similar scenario. Subjects were presented the following "omission" scenario:

> Jack is sitting 30 yards away from the crane eating his lunch. He is watching
> Ted move the bricks, and he thinks to himself: "This looks dangerous. I am
> not sure if the crane can make it all the way. Should I tell him to stop?" But
> then he thinks "No, why bother? He probably knows what he is doing." Jack
> continues to eat his lunch. A few yards short of its destination, the main arm of
> the crane collapses, and the crane falls over. One of Ted's legs is broken.
> (Haidt and Baron 1996, 208-9)

In the "omission" version Jack's actions were not –as Haidt and Baron put it— "part of the causal chain that led to the accident." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 209) In the "act" version Jack is calling out signals to guide Ted, making him physically involved in the causal chain which causes the accident.

Jack is standing 30 yards away from the crane, helping Ted by calling out signals to guide the bricks to their destination. Jack thinks to himself: "[same thoughts]." Jack motions to Ted to continue on the same course. [same ending] (Haidt and Baron 1996, 209)

The relation between Jack and Ted also varies. In one version Jack is Ted's boss, in the next version Jack is Ted's peer and in the last version Jack is Ted's employee. The structure of the questionnaire is the same as the Mazda questionnaire. Half of the subjects were first asked to rate Jack as Ted's boss, then as his peer, then as his employee. The other half of the subjects are given the versions in reverse order. All subjects are given each role with an "act" version and an "omission" version. Half of these subjects receive the "act" version first and half receive the "omission" version first.

Again, similar framing effects were found. Haidt and Baron write that "78 per cent of those who first rated Jack as a subordinate lowered their ratings when Jack became the foreman, while only 56 percent of those who first rated Jack as the foreman raised their ratings when he became a subordinate." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211) Also they state that "[i]n the Crane story, 66 per cent of subjects in the omission-first condition gave the act a lower rating in at least one version of the story, while only 39 per cent of subjects in the act-first condition made such a distinction." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211)

Haidt and Baron conducted a third experiment. This experiment had eight different scenarios. Each scenario had two different versions where the relation of the protagonist and the victim varied. Also each version had an act and an omission version. However, framing effects where not relevant to this experiment, since the versions which were presented to each subject were not in an order which would produce order framing effects.

Haidt and Baron conclude that subjects displayed a bias towards increasing blame. (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211) After judging a protagonist once, subjects found it easier to judge the protagonist worse in a second scenario where the protagonist's action may be viewed as more blameworthy than to partially excuse the protagonist in a second scenario where the protagonist could be viewed as less culpable. Haidt and Baron write:

> [S]ubjects who rated the omission first had no difficulty giving the act an even lower rating. But subjects who rated the act first found it more difficult to 'pull back', and partially excuse the omission. Likewise on the role manipulation, subjects found it easy to increase blame as solidarity or hierarchy increased, yet they were reluctant to decrease blame when solidarity or hierarchy were decreased. (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211)

Haidt and Baron expressed some caution to generalize a bias which was only found in questionnaire studies of moral judgments to a general bias in which blaming is easier than excusing. (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211)

1.62 Petrinovich and O'Neill

Another study which Sinnott-Armstrong presents is "Influence of Wording and Framing Effects on Moral Intuitions" by Lewis Petrinovich and Patricia O'Neill. In their first experiment Petrinovich and O'Neill's subjects demonstrated word framing effects. Subjects were presented with a variety of trolley problems first developed by Judith Thomson. (Thomson 1976) The following is Petrinovich and O'Neill's version of the classic trolley scenario:

> A trolley is hurtling down the tracks. There are five innocent people on the track ahead of the trolley, and they will be killed if the trolley continues going straight ahead. There is a spur of track leading off to the side. There is one innocent person on that spur of track. The brakes of the trolley have failed and there is a switch that can be activated to cause the trolley to go to the side track. You are an innocent bystander (that is, not an employee of the railroad, etc.).

17

You can throw the switch, saving five innocent people, which will result in the

death of the one innocent person on the side track. What would you do?

Half of the subjects were presented the trolley case with "save" wording. The other half

of the subjects were presented the case with a different "kill" wording. In the "save"

wording the scenario is described such that your options are that "you can throw the

switch which will result in the five innocent people on the main track being saved, or you

can do nothing which will result in the one innocent person being saved." (Petrinovich

and O'Neill 1996, 149) For the "kill" wording the scenario is described such that your

options are that "you can throw the switch, which will result in the death of the one

innocent person on the side track, or you can do nothing which will result in the death of

the five innocent people." (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 149) Subjects were asked how

strongly they agreed or disagreed with the options provided on twenty-one variations of

the trolley problem on the following "6-point scale: "strongly agree" (+5), "moderately

agree" (+3), "slightly agree" (+1), "slightly disagree" (-1), "moderately disagree" (-3),

"strongly disagree" (-5)." (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 150-1)

The following mean was recorded for both wordings in table 1, named "Trolley

Wording Dilemma: Mean Level of Agreement":

Table 1. Trolley Wording Dilemma: Mean Level of Argeement.

	Save Wording	Kill Wording
Action	0.65	-0.78
Inaction	0.1	-1.35

Subjects tended to agree more strongly to question presented in the "save" wording.

Petrinovich and O'Neill concluded that questions presented in the "save" wording

"resulted in a greater likelihood that people would absolutely agree, and the level of

agreement was stronger. The manner in which the questions were worded, therefore, had a considerable systematic influence on the decision of most of the individuals in this sample." (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 152)

Subjects were all students of introductory psychology classes at the University of California, Riverside. Subjects were administered the questionnaires in a classroom setting. Once again the study was between-subject design. Subjects were not asked for justification for their responses at any time.

Petrinovich and O'Neill's second experiment was on context order framing (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 153-161). The experiment was organized into three pairs of forms. Form 1 posed three moral dilemmas and form 1R posed the same three moral dilemmas in reverse order (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 153-6). Each dilemma for form 1 and 1R first asked subjects how strongly they agreed or disagreed –on the same 6-point scale— with a given action, then how strongly they agree or disagree with inaction. The first dilemma for form 1 and the last for form 1R is the classic trolley problem. The second problem for both forms asks subjects how strongly they agree with performing a scan on the brain of an innocent, healthy individual, which will kill the individual, in order to gather information that will save five dying persons. Then they were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with doing nothing which will result in the death of the five and preserve the life of the one. The third dilemma for form 1 and the first dilemma for form 1R ask how strongly they agree with taking the organs of an innocent visitor, thereby killing the individual, in order to save five individuals in need of organ transplants. All of the dilemmas and questions were phrased in a "save" wording.

Responses from subjects who received form 1 did not vary significantly from subjects' responses who received form 1R. Responses did not differ significantly regardless of the order of the questions. Responses to questions regarding the second dilemma for form 1 and 1R did not differ significantly regardless of what dilemmas preceded it. Therefore, no significant framing effects were found in this experiment.

A second experiment regarding order framing was conducted by Petrinovich and O'Neill (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 156-8). The experiment used two new pairs of forms, form 2 and form 2R. The first dilemma for form 2 and the third dilemma for form 2R were the same classic trolley problem used for form 1 and 1R respectively. The second dilemma for both forms asks subjects how strongly they agree or disagree –using the same 6-point scale— with pushing a button which would cause a ramp to go underneath the train, causing the train to jump onto tracks on a bridge and continue, saving the five, but running over one on the bridge. Then, subjects are asked how strongly they agree or disagree with doing nothing, causing the death of the five but preserving the life of the one on the bridge. The third dilemma for form 2 and the first of form 2R asks subjects how strongly they agree or disagree with pushing a very large man in front of the trolley, killing the man, but saving the five. Again, all dilemmas and question are phrased in a "save" wording.

The results of the experiment are summarized in table 2 named "Table 3" (named "Table 3" since it was Petrinovich and O'Neill's third table). (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 157):

Table 2.

Table 3. **Means and Standard Deviations of Ratings for Forms 2 and 2R of Participants' Level of Agreement with Action and Inaction in Each of the Dilemmas as a Function of the Order in Which the Dilemma Appeared**

Dilemma	Order	Action/Inaction	Mean	SD
Trolley	First	Action	3.1	2.6
	Third	Action	1.0	2.9
	First	Inaction	−1.9	2.7
	Third	Inaction	−1.1	3.1
Person	First	Action	−.86	3.4
	Third	Action	−1.7	4.1
	First	Inaction	−.10	3.5
	Third	Inaction	0.0	3.6
Button[a]	Trolley	Action	2.7	2.8
	Person	Action	.65	3.3
	Trolley	Inaction	−.65	3.3
	Person	Inaction	−2.0	2.8

Positive values indicate agreement, and negative values indicate disagreement.
[a]For the Button dilemma, Order refers to the preceding Dilemma.

 Subject's responses to questions in this experiment were significantly affected by the order in which the dilemmas were presented in. Subjects more strongly agreed with any action when it appeared first in the sequence than when it appeared third in the sequence. Additionally, subject's responses to questions regarding the second dilemma were also affected by what dilemma preceded it. Subjects more strongly agreed with questions regarding the second dilemma when it was preceded by the trolley dilemma than when it was preceded by the large man dilemma.

Petrinovich and O'Neill conducted a third experiment on order framing (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 158-161). The first experiment had five pairs of forms. Same as the previous forms, form 3 has dilemmas in one order and form 3R has the same dilemmas in reverse order. Also following the same format, after every dilemma which is presented, subjects are asked how strongly they agree or disagree –on the same 6-point scale— with a given action, then with inaction. The first dilemma for form 3 supposes you have a boat in which you can save 5 people in one area, or one person in another

area. The second dilemma for form 3 is the classic trolley problem. The third dilemma supposes there is an evil person who is about to shoot five people. You have a shield which could shield the five from the bullets thereby saving them but redirecting the bullets into another innocent person, which will result in the death of the one. The fourth dilemma supposes that an evil person tells you that if you do not shoot one innocent person, five innocent people will be shot, and if you do shoot one the five will be freed. The last dilemma supposes that there is a shark heading toward five innocent people who will be eaten unless you shoot a nearby fisherman who will fall in the shark's path. Subsequently the shark will eat the fisherman, saving the five.

Sinnott-Armstrong notes that "[p]articipants' responses to action and inaction in the outside dilemmas did not vary with order" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 62) for Petrinovich and O'Neill's third order experiment. However, he also notes that framing effects were found on the middle dilemma for action. Subject tended to approve of action more strongly when the middle dilemma was preceded by the boat and trolley dilemmas than when it was preceded by the shoot and shark dilemmas. It should be noted that subject's mean response for inaction for the middle dilemma was the same (-2.1) regardless of which set of dilemmas preceded it.

For all of the order framing studies, subjects were all introductory psychology students, who were administered the questionnaire in a classroom setting. The designs for all the experiments were between-subject design. All the designs were such that the first question would elicit a high level of agreement while the last would elicit a high level of disagreement and the reverse form would give the questions in reverse order. The middle question was designed such that it would elicit agreement that would range in

between the first and last. For form 3 the middle three questions ranged from more agreement to less agreement and form 3R were given in reverse order. Subjects were not asked for any justification at any time.

Petrinovich and O'Neill considered all three order framing experiments and noted that for forms such as forms 2 and 2R which utilized the same fantasy dilemmas like the trolley, strong agreement or disagreement formed from the first dilemma would influence subjects' strength of agreement or disagreement of the subsequent dilemmas. Conversely, no order framing was found when forms utilized different fantasy dilemmas, such as forms 1, 1R and 3 and 3R. The middle dilemma did not seem to follow this principle however, since form 3 and 3R's utilized different fantasy dilemmas and framing was found on action for the middle dilemma. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 160)

Petrinovich and O'Neill examined research on framing effects and what their data and other research on framing effects means for philosophers. They considered what they call the philosopher's dilemma, which is the possibility of moral decisions being based on biases and not fundamental moral principles and what this means for philosophers. Petrinovich and O'Neill specifically considered Tversky and Kahneman's study which Sinnott-Armstrong used. Petrinovich and O'Neill suggest that the framing found in Tversky and Kahneman's study was not as strong as proposed, and stated that "Miller and Fagley (1991) included a replication of the Asian disease problem used by Tversky and Kahneman and found a phi coefficient of only 0.22, compared to the 0.5 reported by Tversky and Kahnemann (1981)." (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163) Further, Petrinovich and O'Neill argue against generalizing Tversky and Kahneman's and others's findings in the following passage:

Sweeping conclusions and a great deal of discussion have been based on this and related studies, both within and outside psychology. Such conclusions appear to be based on unfounded generalizations drawn from a nonrepresentative array of instances. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163)

Petrinovich and O'Neill cite multiple studies which attempt to judge the strength and pervasiveness of framing effects. (Fagley and Kruger 1986, Fagley and Miller 1990, Neale and Bazerman 1985) They go on to state the following passage of these studies:

The results of these studies, as well as that of Fagley and Miller (1987), led Miller and Fagley (1991) to suggest that framing effects may be found only in contexts where the subject is not asked to provide a rationale for the decision and where the probability of success in the risky option is less than two-thirds. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163)

Petrinovich and O'Neill argue further against generalizing any findings found in these studies to any other circumstances in the following passage:

Biases can occur, but rather than being general, they seem to be specific to the substantive and formal content and are influenced by the homogeneity of the problems. Before conclusions are drawn regarding the importance of biases in human judgment, a broad and representative sample of situations should be drawn from the universe of materials and events to which the generalizations refer (Petrinovich 1989). Relying on data generated from a limited site of problems phrased in a limited way simply will not do. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 166)

Clearly Petrinovich and O'Neill feel that there is not a representative enough sample to make generalizations about any of the biases found in any studies on framing.

1.7 Premise 4

I will now present Sinnott-Armstrong's arguments for premise 4, that we ought to know moral intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances. He starts by conceding that perhaps there are children and isolated or uneducated adults who may be ignorant of all of the studies which provide evidence for how prominent framing effects

are, but he points out that all this research "gives more detailed arguments for a claim that educated people ought to have known anyway." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 67) Then he goes on to make the following claim: "Anyone who has been exposed to moral disagreements and to the ways in which people argue for their moral positions has had experiences that, if considered carefully, would support the premise that moral intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances." He therefore concludes that anyone exposed to moral disagreement ought to know that intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances. He goes on to call attention to the fact that if you or any moral intuitionist have read his arguments for premise 3 you are both aware of the empirical evidence and thus ought to know that moral intuitions are subject to framing effects in many circumstances.

Sinnott-Armstrong notes that for any of the population who are ignorant of premise 3 the master argument cannot be used against them; however, Sinnott-Armstrong argues in the following passage that if these are the only people exempt from the argument then intuitionism is an untenable theory. He writes "[t]hey would be claiming that the only people who are non-inferentially justified in trusting their moral intuitions are people who do not know much, and they are justified in this way only because they are ignorant of relevant facts. If they knew more, then they would cease to be justified non-inferentially." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 68)

Chapter 2. Objection 1 to Sinnott-Armstrong's Master Argument

Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know the evidence provided in the studies he cites in his paper. As explained earlier this includes studies by Tversky and Kahneman, Haidt and Baron and Petrinovich and O'Neill showing evidence of word and

context framing effects in elaborate and particular circumstances. Tversky and Kahneman present an experiment showing word framing effects resulting in circumstances where subjects are faced with a choice between possible outcomes where the wording of the baseline of the options can be affected such that the outcomes can be viewed as a loss with some wording and a no-gain with another. Petrinovich and O'Neill found order framing in circumstances where homogenous fantasy dilemmas were used, where the first question would elicit a high level of agreement, while the last would elicit a high level of disagreement and the reverse for the reverse form. Haidt and Baron also found order framing in circumstances where after judging a protagonist once, subjects found it easier to judge the protagonist worse in a second scenario where the protagonist's action may be viewed as more blameworthy than to partially excuse the protagonist in a second scenario where the protagonist could be viewed as less culpable. Haidt and Baron also used homogenous dilemmas which where designed to elicit a higher and higher level of disagreement in subjects in one order and a lower and lower level of agreement in other subjects in the other order. All of the designs for these experiments were between-subject design given to introductory psychology students in a classroom setting. Subjects were not asked to justify any of their responses.

Further, the studies include Tversky and Kahneman arguing of their finding that "[t]he demonstrated effects are large and systematic, although by no means universal." (Tversky and Kahneman 1981) Haidt and Baron are also cautious to generalize anything found in the specific circumstances of their study in the following passage: "It may reflect the operation of a general bias in which blaming is easier than excusing. But, even if this bias exists only on questionnaire studies of moral judgement, it may be of interest

to psychologists working in this area." (Haidt and Baron 1996, 211) Petrinovich and O'Neill argue repeatedly against generalizing evidence of biases found in studies. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 162-6) They argue that though biases may occur, they appear to be specific to particular content and are affected by the homogeneity of the dilemmas rather than being general to all circumstances. They conclude that generalizations should not be made with respect to the strength and pervasiveness of framing until studies are performed on a representative sample of circumstances at large and with respect to the circumstances of any specific generalization being made. They also insist that basing generalizations on a narrow sample of dilemmas phrased in a limited sort of way is inadequate. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 166) The evidence we ought to know includes Petrinovich and O'Neill disputing the strength of framing found in Tversky and Kahneman's study (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163) and arguing that many of the conclusions which have been made on the basis of this and other studies are based on unjustified generalizations made from a nonrepresentational selection of circumstances. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163)

The studies which Sinnott-Armstrong cited show non-philosophers being subject to framing in specific and particular circumstances. The studies he cited argue against generalizing any specific finding to other circumstances. Does it strike you that these studies are evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances? It does not strike me that the studies are evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in every circumstance. I will return to this point soon.

First I would like to reformulate Sinnott-Armstrong's argument to make a valid argument which better captures the facts. The studies Sinnott-Armstrong believes we

ought to know show people subject to framing effects in very specific, particular circumstances. Furthermore, all of the subjects of the studies were introductory psychology students. There is no reason to believe that any of the subjects where philosophers.

Sinnott-Armstrong would like to argue that any person, who has a moral intuition, must have inferential confirmation in order for her moral intuitions to be justified. Sinott-Armstrong argues that this is so, since the literature on framing effects which he believes we ought to know is evidence against the reliability of one's moral intuitions since it is evidence against the reliability of all moral intuitions produced in all circumstances. The evidence which Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know provides reason for anyone to doubt the reliability of her moral intuitions produced in all circumstances. Therefore, everyone must have inferential confirmation in order for their moral intuitions to be justified in any circumstance.

The idea here is that the circumstances where framing effects in moral intuitions are produced are so prevalent that they call the reliability of the whole class of moral intuitions into question. The studies presented provide different circumstances where subject's moral intuitions are subject to framing. Sinnott-Armstrong may argue that the circumstances which have been shown to produce unreliable moral intuitions are so numerous and are indistinguishable from other circumstances which people form their moral intuitions that one cannot know that any of her intuitions are reliable without checking them first.

Sinnott-Armstrong believes that the evidence from the three studies he cites provides reason to believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.

However, Sinnott-Armstrong's argument cannot be made against all moral intuitions. Sinnott-Armstrong concedes this in the following passage about people who are unaware of the studies he feels we should know: "[T]his argument cannot be used to show that *they* are not justified non-inferentially in trusting their moral intuitions." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 67-8) This did not seem to be a worry for Sinnott-Armstrong, since what Sinnott-Armstrong was most concerned with showing was that educated people in the know were not justified in their moral intuitions without inferential confirmation (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 67-8). Therefore, for any persons who are aware of the studies Sinnott-Armstrong thought we ought to know, their moral intuitions are not justified without them inferentially confirming that they are reliable. And for any persons who are aware of these studies, none of their moral intuitions are justified without them inferentially confirming that they are reliable; this means any moral intuition formed in any circumstance must be inferentially confirmed. In light of this and the considerations mentioned above I will reformulate Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument accordingly.

 1* The moral intuitions of the non-philosophers used as subjects in the three studies presented by Sinnott-Armstrong are subject to framing in the specific, particular circumstances of the three studies and all the information of the studies.
 2* If 1* and one knows 1*, then one has reason to believe that all of one's moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.
 3* If one knows that all one's moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, then all of one's moral intuitions need inferential confirmation in all circumstances in order to be justified.
 4* Therefore, if one who knows 1* then all of one's moral intuitions need inferential confirmation in all circumstances in order to be justified.

  I will now object to premise 2* which states that the evidence that Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know provides reason to believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. The objection I will provide is that the evidence

which Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know does not even strike me as support for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.

When assessing whether a belief P is justified one must assess the evidence. One must weigh all one's evidence for P against all one's evidence for not P. Sinnott-Armstrong argues that these studies are evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions formed in all circumstances are unreliable. Therefore Sinnott-Armstrong believes that when one is assessing whether one's moral intuition is justified, one who is aware of these studies would have the studies in her base of evidence against the justification of the moral intuition is question. One may have other overriding evidence that one's moral intuitions are reliable, or that the moral intuition in question is reliable. This will go in one's base of evidence in favour of the moral intuition in question being justified. However, the studies which Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know which show non-philosophers being subject to framing in specific and particular circumstances and which argue against generalizing any specific finding to other circumstances do not even strike me as evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. If some evidence does not even strike one as support for P then it is not going to be in one's evidence base for P. Suppose an intuitionist reads the three studies and it does not even strike the intuitionist that this is evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable. If this is the case, then she would not enter this as evidence against her moral intuitions. If the intuitionist does not enter this into her base of evidence, then there is no need for any inferential confirmation that overrides or negates any evidence against the moral intuition. The intuitionist's justification in this case can be purely her intuition and include nothing regarding any of

the studies that Sinnott-Armstrong claims we ought to know. Therefore, in this case, since the intuitionist would be aware of the studies Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know, the antecedent of premise 2* would be true, and since it would not even strike the intuitionist that this is evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, the consequent of premise 2* would be false. Therefore premise 2* is false.

One may object that the strength of this reply depends on how the evidence is described. Suppose that a reliable source were to present the studies to an intuitionist. Suppose that the reliable source explains to the intuitionist very concisely that the studies show instances of people's intuitions being subject to framing effects. Suppose further that this reliable source is sure to omit the details of the studies and is sure to omit certain passages such as the passages where Petrinovich and O'Neill argue that generalizing these finding is unfounded when they explain the studies. If this were the case, then one may argue that it seems that that person would have reason to think that her moral intuitions are plausibly unreliable. However, Sinnott-Armstrong's argument does not extend to everyone. As argued earlier his argument does not extend to perfectly rational people if these people are not aware of the studies we ought to know (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 67-8). This is so since what Sinnott-Armstrong is most concern to show is that educated people who are in the know cannot be justified in their moral intuitions without inferential confirmation (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 67-8). People who are in the know according to Sinnott-Armstrong are people who know the studies he cites in his paper. It is not clear whether a short description omitting certain passages would count as knowing the studies. If being told a vague description of the studies would make one in the know,

then I suppose that many people in the know would be unjustified in trusting their moral intuitions without inferential confirmation after being given this concise description of the studies. However, I thoroughly studied the three studies Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know. I most definitely am considered in the know with respect to this subject. I am aware of all the details of the studies and all of the passages that could be omitted. If a reliable source were to tell me very concisely that these studies show instances of people's intuitions subject to framing effects while being sure to omit the details of the studies and certain passages, this would not plausibly strike me as reason to think that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable.

One may ask me why I do not find the studies to be evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. And after hearing my response this person may point out that I inferred the truth of the moral claim and that I have therefore made the consequent of premise 2* true in my case. The idea here is that whatever response I give to the question would be in my base of evidence in favour of the moral intuition in question and is necessary inferential confirmation for justification. A number of responses can be given to this objection. One could respond that this inference would not be necessary for justification; therefore the intuition in question would still be non-inferential. One could also object that if this line of argumentation is sound, it would lead to some bizarre consequences, namely that one could make any objection no matter how implausible and demand a response as to why it fails, then claim that the response infers the truth of the moral claim.

A few objections were offered on Sinnott-Armstrong's behalf. I offered the objection that it depends on how the evidence is described. I also offered the objection

that one could ask why I do not find the studies to be evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances and then claim that any response given to this question is an inference. However, these objections are moot since even if all my responses to these objections fail, it can still be the case that there is someone who reads the three studies and it does not even strike her that this is evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions formed in all circumstances are unreliable. If that is the case then premise 2* is false and that person would not be in need of inferential confirmation in order to be justified in her moral intuitions.

2.1 Response 1 to Objection 1

Sinnott-Armstrong may not find the objection that there can be someone who reads the three studies he cites in his paper and it not even strike one that this is evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances persuasive. Sinnott-Armstrong may feel as though he provided enough evidence of circumstances where subject's moral intuitions were unreliable to plausibly support the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable. He may feel that the quality of evidence which he provided is strong enough to cast doubt on all moral intuitions. Thus if one were to know this evidence one would certainly conclude that all moral intuitions are unreliable.

Sinnott-Armstrong may also argue that the method in which he provided evidence for the unreliability of moral intuitions is a very common and accepted method of assessing reliability. A good way to get an indication of the reliability of P in general is to find a good sample size which is representative, and test for the reliability of P within that sample and do the appropriate generalization. If one believes that Sinnott-Armstrong has shown a large enough representative sample of moral intuitions which are unreliable

and a large enough sample of circumstances which produce moral intuitions which are unreliable, then one should plausibly believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. This is a standard method in social sciences and if it is acceptable in social sciences one ought to plausibly believe it is acceptable here. Therefore Sinnott-Armstrong may claim that it is false that there can be someone who reads the three studies he cites in his paper and it not even strike one that this is evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Sinnott-Armstrong would have to claim that either it is impossible for one to read the three studies he cites in his paper and it not even strike one that this is evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, or he must claim that one is irrational or unjustified if the three studies do not even strike one as evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.

2.2 Objection 2 to Response 1

It was argued that a good way to get an indication of the reliability of P in general is to find a good sample size which is representative and test for the reliability of P within that sample and do the appropriate generalization. If you believe that Sinnott-Armstrong has done this then you have good reason to doubt the reliability of all moral intuitions. In this case what is being tested is the reliability of the entire set of people's moral intuitions produced in all circumstances. This means that if one wants to generalize findings of all moral intuitions produced in all circumstances from a sample of moral intuitions produced in a sample of circumstances, then the sample must be representative of all moral intuitions and all the circumstances which produce moral intuitions. For the sample to be representative, samples must be taken from a range of different kinds of

moral intuitions and different circumstances which produce moral intuitions. Each different kind of moral intuition and circumstance must comprise a similar proportion in the sample as it does in the actual population which it represents. Based on the sample given by Sinnott-Armstrong, which is comprised of the moral intuitions which were tested for framing in the particular circumstances of the three studies, it did not even strike me that this was a representative sample which should be generalized to all moral intuitions in all circumstances. Given that it did not strike me that this sample should be generalized, it did not strike me that there was reason to believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.

With respect to the response that Sinnott-Armstrong may not find my objection persuasive, I do not think that Sinnott-Armstrong is in a position to argue that his evidence is of a quality that makes it such that one would believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances and thus that all moral intuitions are in need of inferential confirmation in order to be justified. Sinnott-Armstrong devised the following principle for when inferential confirmation is needed for justification: "If the process that produced a belief is not reliable in the circumstances, and if the believer ought to know this, then the believer is not justified in forming or holding the belief without inferential confirmation." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 51) Clearly Sinnott-Armstrong has not produced evidence which shows that the processes which produces all beliefs in all circumstances to be unreliable and therefore inferential confirmation is not needed for all moral intuitions in all circumstances.

Based on the principle Sinnott-Armstrong stated and the limited evidence he provided, I believe inferential confirmation is not needed for justification for all moral

intuitions. However, in the spirit of charity we may formulate a new principle for when inferential confirmation is needed which may be more favorable to someone sympathetic to Sinnott-Armstrong's arguments. At the heart of it what is at issue is the quality of evidence. So basically, we must assess the quality of Sinnott-Armstrong's evidence. At this issue we may be at an impasse. Sinnott-Armstrong and I may disagree over the quality of evidence Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know. It is worth noting that Sinnott-Armstrong's conclusion is that there are no non-inferentially justified moral intuitions. Suppose there is an intuitionist who is aware of the evidence which Sinnott-Armstrong believes she ought to know. Suppose further that, like me, it does not strike her that this evidence plausibly supports the conclusion that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable. If this is the case, then it would seem that she can have a moral intuition which can be justified without inferential confirmation. If this is the case then Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument is unsound. However, if one does not agree with me I will present further arguments, though I believe they are superfluous.

Chapter 3. Objection 3

I argued earlier that the three studies Sinnott-Armstrong cites do not even strike me as evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. However, perhaps it does strike one that the studies are evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Perhaps it does strike one that the studies provide a representative sample of all moral intuitions and perhaps it strikes one that the studies provide a representative sample of circumstances which moral intuitions can be formed in. If this is the case, then I offer reasons to think that Sinnott-Armstrong's arguments for the conclusion that all moral intuitions in all

circumstances are unreliable fail and I offer reasons to believe that the findings in the studies should not be generalized. Therefore if one is aware of my arguments for why Sinnott-Armstrong's arguments fail and that Sinnott-Armstrong's sample is not representative and his generalizations are unfounded, one could be aware of the three studies Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know, but still not believe that all of one's moral intuitions formed in all circumstances are unreliable. Therefore premise 2* is false.

3.1 Sinnott-Armstrong's Sample not Representative

Earlier it was argued that if one knows the evidence Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know, then we ought to know that all of our moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, since Sinnott-Armstrong used an accepted method of assessing reliability. To this I objected that in considering the sample of moral intuitions and the sample of the circumstances which produced moral intuitions used in Sinnott-Armstrong's studies, I did not find any plausibility for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Now I will present an argument for why the sample provided by Sinnott-Armstrong is not representative and why what is true of the sample cannot be generalized to all moral intuitions in all circumstances. In arguing against premise 2*, I will argue that the moral intuitions of the non-philosophers used as subjects in the three studies presented by Sinnott-Armstrong being unreliable in the specific, particular circumstances of the three studies does not make it such that all moral intuitions are unreliable, since the moral intuitions formed by the non-philosophers used as subjects in the specific circumstances of those three studies are not representative of all moral intuitions formed by all people in all circumstances. Since the moral intuitions

elicited from those studies are formed in very exceptional and uncommon circumstances, there is only evidence that framing occurs in these specific circumstances and no evidence that framing occurs in moral intuitions when these elaborate circumstances are not present. Therefore, all moral intuitions are not unreliable in all circumstances. Further, since there is only evidence of framing occurring in very precise and elaborate circumstances, I will argue that the number of moral intuitions that are subject to framing is likely quite insignificant.

It has been explained that when generalizing an attribute from a sample to a population, the sample must be representative of that population for the generalization to be justified. It was also explained that for the sample of moral intuitions and circumstances where moral intuitions are produced to be representative, the samples must be taken from a range of different kinds of moral intuitions and different circumstances which produce moral intuitions. Additionally, presented above were the different moral intuitions and the circumstances used to produce these moral intuitions in the studies by Tversky and Kahneman, Haidt and Baron and Petrinovich and O'Neill. The sample of circumstances used to produce moral intuitions is not representative of the population of circumstances used to produce moral intuitions, since the sample is not taken from a range of different circumstances, but from a limited and specific set of circumstances. The sample of circumstances used to produce word framing are limited to circumstances using introductory psychology students, in a classroom setting, using a between-subject design, where no justification for responses is asked for at anytime, where one is faced with a moral dilemma, where one must choose from two options or morally judge two options, which can be explained in different wordings, which can change the baseline of

the given options from losses to no-gains. The sample of circumstances used to produce order framing is limited to the same circumstances used to produce word framing except the dilemmas were such that one must morally judge the given options, which must be presented with at least one other homogenous moral dilemma, the first of which would elicit a high level of agreement or disagreement to influence the subject's next response. These circumstances are very limited and particular. Only moral intuitions produced in these limited circumstances have been shown to be subject to framing. In addition, the sample even includes framing not occurring in instances where all but one of the conditions of the specific circumstances hold. An example of this is Petrinovich and O'Neill's form 1 and form 1R which showed no significant framing when the dilemmas were not homogenized. (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 154-56) There are many circumstances in which a moral intuition can be produced which were not represented in Sinnott-Armstrong's sample. Any circumstances which a moral intuition is produced with justification or any circumstance which is not regarding a dilemma are examples of circumstances which were not produced in Sinnott-Armstrong's sample. Any circumstance which is regarding a dilemma that is not preceded by an influential homogenous dilemma and which cannot be explained in different wordings which can change the baseline of the given options is an example of a circumstance which is absent from Sinnott-Armstrong's sample. There is no reason to believe that the moral intuitions produced in those circumstances would be subject to framing. Therefore there is no reason to believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances.

Petrinovich and O'Neill argue for the same conclusion. They argue that framing seems to be specific to the circumstances of studies and that before generalizations are

made a "representative sample of situations should be drawn from the universe of materials and events to which the generalizations refer". (Petrinovich and O'Neill, 1996, 166) They argue further that making generalization from a limited sample with limited circumstances is unjustified. (Petrinovich and O'Neill, 1996, 166)

Since these circumstances are so particular and elaborate I will argue that their occurrence is quite infrequent and the circumstances are not present in the circumstances which produce simple ordinary moral intuitions. Let us suppose that an intuitionist is asked whether homosexuality is morally wrong and to justify the response. Or suppose she is asked whether equality is intrinsically valuable and to justify the response. Or suppose she is asked to justify why she agrees or disagrees with the proposition that one ought to aim at good generally,—so far as it is attainable—instead of any particular part of it. It would seem that whatever moral intuition the intuitionist has about these particular questions, in these circumstances, these moral intuitions would not be subject to framing, or at least there is no evidence that moral intuitions in these circumstances would be subject to framing. These moral intuitions would not be subject to framing since they are not presented in such a way that would cause framing effects (at least no study we have would suggest that this kind of presentation would cause framing effects). This is so since these questions are not moral dilemmas. All of the studies used found framing in circumstances where one must choose from two options or judge the actions of a protagonist who was faced with a moral dilemma. Any of these moral intuitions would not be subject to order framing since they are only one moral question. Order framing questions must have at least two questions so that the first question can influence the response of the second. Then only the second could be subject to framing. Also none

of these moral questions were preceded by a homogenous moral dilemma which would elicit a high level of agreement or disagreement to influence the intuitionist's response. Furthermore, these questions are not a dilemma asking one to choose between or judge two options, which can be explained in different wordings, which can change the baseline of the given options from losses to no-gains. Further, none of the particular design conditions are present which the studies used to elicit framing, such as not asking for justification, being between-subject design or asking one to answer one dilemma before considering a further dilemma.

3.2 Sinnott-Armstrong's Sample Relevantly Different than Population

I will now argue that another reason that Sinnott-Armstrong's sample is not representative is that the specific circumstances used to produce moral intuitions in the studies are relevantly different from other circumstances, since they make for worse epistemic conditions and are circumstances suited to produce framing. I will also argue that philosophers are relevantly different with respect to reasoning and thus less likely to be framed. Therefore, one cannot justifiably generalize Sinnott-Armstrong's sample of non-philosophers' moral intuitions to all moral intuitions since the subclass of philosophers' moral intuitions is relevantly different.

3.21 Relevantly Different Circumstances

I will now argue that the circumstances used to produce moral intuitions which Sinnott-Armstrong used make for worse epistemic conditions than other circumstances. Worse epistemic conditions are conditions that make one more likely to perform poorly epistemically and more likely to make mental errors or to form irrational beliefs. In all of the studies used by Sinnott-Armstrong, none of the subjects are ever asked to give

justification for any of the answers they provide.[2] (Tversky and Kahneman 1981, Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, Haidt and Baron 1996) Studies show that having subjects provide justification before giving their responses makes for better epistemic conditions than not having subjects give justification (Sieck and Yates 1997). Petrinovich and O'Neill (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996, 163) reference Fagley and Miller (Fagley and Miller 1991) who argue that framing effects are only produced in circumstances where subjects are not asked to provide a rationale for their decisions.[3]

In the first two studies by Haidt and Baron (Haidt and Baron, 1996) and the studies on order framing by Petrinovich and O'Neill (Petrinovich and O'Neill 1996) which gave multiple variations of a scenario, none told subjects to read and consider all the scenarios before responding to any. In Haidt and Baron's studies all subjects were given a hypothetical scenario, then asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the given alternatives. Only after subjects responded to the first scenario were they given a new scenario and asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the given alternatives. The subjects were not given an opportunity to go back and revise their answers to previous variations once they have considered the new variation, or given the chance to read all the variations of the scenario before giving their responses. All studies used by Sinnott-Armstrong were between-subject design. Studies have shown that letting subjects freely revise responses in a within-subject design provide better epistemic circumstances than not permitting revisions in a between-subject design (Hauser et al. 2006, Hauser et al. 2008, 127, Shafir 1998, 71, Kahneman 1994, 7).

---

[2] Haidt and Baron asked for justification; however, they asked for justification after subjects already gave their response. Giving justification after subjects' responses have been given cannot affect the response, which is what was shown to be framed

[3] This is in dispute. See LeBoef and Shafir 2003.

3.22 Philosophers Relevantly Different

I will now argue that philosophers' moral intuitions are relevantly different than the non-philosophers' moral intuitions with respect to reasoning. All of the subjects used in the three studies used by Sinnott-Armstrong were introductory psychology students. There is no reason to believe that any of the subjects were philosophers. The subjects used in these types of studies have nothing at stake in the outcome of the survey. There is no pressure to read or consider the questions carefully. There is no guarantee that the subjects have seriously contemplated the information or even understood it. There is no guarantee that the subjects have put deep effortful consideration in their responses. There is no assurance that the subjects' responses are based solely on the semantic content.

In training to become a philosopher and by doing actual philosophy, philosophers come to acquire certain skills in reasoning and have ingrained in them a disposition to engage in deep thought. Among the advanced skills in reasoning acquired include the ability to pick out, understand and judge scenarios based only on the actual content of the case, regardless of how it is presented, and the ability to decipher what content is relevant and what is not. Judging a case based on the facts alone and not something irrelevant such as the wording the case is phrased in, or the order it is presented in, will ensure that the philosopher will not be framed by the way a case is presented. Another skill a philosopher will gain is being consistent. A philosopher engaging in effortful thought about a scenario will make it likely that relevant aspects of different variations that could be presented will already have been considered. The ability to decipher what of different variations are relevant coupled with skills in being consistent will make it less likely that context framing will occur in philosophers.

Here are a few studies which show philosophers to reason exceptionally well. Jonathan Haidt, a psychologist from whom Sinnott-Armstrong took one of his studies as evidence for premise 3 of the master argument, admitted that philosophers are "one of the few groups that has been found to reason well" (Haidt 2001, 819; also Haidt and Bjorklund 2008, 188, 193, 196). Also in her informal reasoning tests, Kuhn found that philosophers exhibited "perfect performance," (Kuhn 1991, 258) drastically unlike all other groups tested. Pinillos et al. concluded that subjects being more intelligent and having better epistemic conditions made them give answers more like that of philosophers.[4]

I have provided evidence that philosophers are relevantly different from non-philosophers with respect to reasoning. Framing is an error in reasoning. Given these relevant differences concerning reasoning, there is reason to believe that perhaps things true of non-philosophers might not be true of philosophers with respect to reasoning. Therefore, there is evidence that generalize the results of the non-philosophers found in these studies to philosophers is unfounded.

3.23 Philosopher's Moral Intuitions in Better Epistemic Conditions Relevantly Different

I will now present a study which provides evidence that there is a relevant difference between philosophers and non-philosophers with respect to reasoning in some epistemic conditions. A study performed by Jason Christie testing 373 subjects for order framing showed that subjects that had formal training in philosophy and given better epistemic conditions were significantly less likely to be framed. Group 1 was composed

---

[4] Shaver makes many of these arguments and more arguing for the conclusion that the circumstances used in experimental philosophy studies are bad epistemic conditions and that philosophers reason exceptionally well in detail in his paper "Ethical Non-Naturalism & Experimental Philosophy".

of subjects with no formal philosophical training, and group 2 was composed of subjects with previous formal philosophical training. Five homogenous variations of the trolley problem were given to half the subjects from each group and the same variations were given to the rest of the subjects of each group in reverse order. The first group's instructions were designed to replicate most typical questionnaire studies. The subjects were specifically instructed to not revise their answers, to simply read the question, respond and move on to the next question and not to return to previous questions. The second group with formal philosophical training were exposed to the cases earlier. Subjects were told to carefully read all the questions before answering any. Next the subjects were instructed to take 30 seconds to consider the implications of each case, then to return to the first case and reread it and respond to each question in any order that best suits them. All subjects were timed and the extra time taken by the second group suggests that the instructions were followed. The questions ask how strongly they were in favour or opposed to action (0 being most strongly in favour of action, and 5 being most strongly opposed to action). Question 1 asked one to rate the action of redirecting the trolley into one, causing minor injury to save five from minor injuries, then the stakes are raised to major injuries in question 2 and to deaths in question 3. Question 4 asked subjects to rate the action of pushing one in front of the trolley to her death to save five, then asked to rate the action of pushing one to save a crowd of people for question 5. Some of the conditions which were used in the circumstances which Sinnott-Armstrong's studies showed to produce framing were still used for group 2 in this study. Subjects from group 2 were given multiple homogenous dilemmas presented in an order to elicit a very high or a very low level of agreement in the first dilemma presented. The following

results were recorded in table 3, named "Trolley Order Dilemma: Mean Level Agreement":

Table 3. Trolley Order Dilemma: Mean Level of Agreement.

| Question | Group 1 no philosophical training | | | Group 2 philosophical training | | |
	Question order: 1,2,3,4,5	Difference	Question order: 5,4,3,2,1	Question order: 1,2,3,4,5	Difference	Question order: 5,4,3,2,1
Q1	1.7	0.53	2.23	2.27	0.37	1.9
Q2	1.82	0.72	2.54	2.13	0.05	2.18
Q3	1.91	0.92	2.83	2.44	0.04	2.4
Q4	3.05	0.3	3.35	2.97	0.02	2.99
Q5	3.1	0.85	3.95	3.32	0.03	3.35

Red denotes the lower of the two subgroups.

The results show group 2 to be much less susceptible to order framing. The difference in average rating of action is significant between the two subgroups of group 1, and with the exception of question 1, the difference between the average rating of action between the two subgroups of group 2 is insignificant. What's more, subjects from group 1 which received question 1 first on average strongly favoured action in questions 2 and 3 and subjects of group 1 which saw question 5 first on average mildly opposed action in questions 2 and 3. Conversely, on average, subjects from group 2 were in favour of action in questions 1, 2 and 3 and were opposed to action in questions 4 and 5 regardless of the order the questions were presented. Also subjects of group 1 given the questions in order 1 to 5 favoured action more than the subjects of group 1 given the questions in reverse order for all five questions. Subjects from group 2 given the questions in order 1 to 5 favoured action more than the subjects of group 2 given the questions in reverse order in only 3 out of the five questions.

This study provides evidence that subjects with philosophical training put in more reflective circumstances are not susceptible to order framing. This is evidence that

philosophers' moral intuitions formed in better epistemic conditions are relevantly different than the moral intuitions produced in the circumstances used in the studies presented by Sinnott-Armstrong. Therefore, Sinnott-Armstrong's sample should not be generalized to all moral intuitions formed in all circumstances.

In this chapter I argued that premise 2* is false. I argued that it is false since the sample of moral intuitions and the sample of circumstances used to produce moral intuitions used in the three studies used by Sinnott-Armstrong are not representative of the entire set of all moral intuitions and all circumstances used to produce moral intuitions. I argued further that the samples used are relevantly different than the population Sinnott-Armstrong is generalizing to. Therefore, anything true of the sample cannot be justifiably generalized to the rest of the population. Therefore one could know the studies, and may have even found them to be some evidence for the belief that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable; however, if one reads my arguments then surely that person would no longer believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Thus one could know the three studies, which would make the antecedent of premise 2* true, and it could be the case that one does not believe that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances since this person has inferred seen my arguments, which makes the consequent of premise 2* false. Therefore premise 2* is false and Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument is unsound.

Chapter 4. Response 2 to Objection 3

A powerful response one could make on Sinnott-Armstrong's behalf is the following: It may be the case that the above arguments have shown premise 2* false, which therefore shows Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument to be unsound. However,

the arguments show Sinnott-Armstrong's meta-argument to be sound. Sinnott-Armstrong has this argument and one could argue that he also presented another sort of meta-argument. Roughly this argument would say that however one goes about it, whether one inferentially confirms that her moral intuition is reliable or one gives an argument for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are not unreliable, if one's moral intuitions are justified, an inference must be made.

Above all else the thing which Sinnott-Armstrong wants to show is that people who are aware of the studies Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know, and anyone who reads his paper, needs to make an inference in order to have justified moral intuitions. Ultimately Sinnott-Armstrong believes having no non-inferential moral intuitions will lead to a regress which will lead to moral scepticism. For those people who are aware of those studies or his paper, he believes that they will have reason to doubt the reliability of their moral intuitions. However, if they were to be aware of the arguments that I provided, or if they have read my paper, they would now have evidence that there is no evidence that their moral intuitions are unreliable. In these cases the person in question would need to assess her evidence to have justification for the moral intuition in question. The evidence includes Sinnott-Armstrong's evidence that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are not reliable and thus that her moral intuitions are not reliable. Also there is evidence which undercuts this evidence which says that there is no evidence that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable. Then there is also the intuition itself which provides evidence for the belief. The evidence for and against the reliability of moral intuitions does not really do any of the work, since they neutralize each other. However, they both are in one's base of evidence for the belief in question.

Therefore, an inference is being made. Therefore, while the above arguments may have shown the revised master argument to be unsound, making the above argument is an inference which is needed for justification, which is exactly what Sinnott-Armstrong wanted to show.

The inference which must be made in order for one to be justified in one's moral intuitions must always be made in order to be justified. This is so since the evidence for and against the reliability of moral intuitions will always be in one's evidence base. Also it does not matter what order one gets one's evidence in; it still will all go into one's evidence base and an inference will still have to be made every time one forms a moral intuition. Therefore, if one were to get evidence about how there is no evidence that all moral intuitions are unreliable first, then read Sinnott-Armstrong's paper, one would still need to infer the that one's intuitions are reliable in order for one to be justified in one's moral intuitions, since one would also have evidence against the reliability of moral intuitions in one's evidence base.

4.1 Objection 4 to Response 2

It was argued that the arguments against premise 2* needed to be inferred, so while it showed the reformulated master argument to be unsound, it proved Sinnott-Armstrong's meta-argument. However, once again I am not sure that this argument is open to Sinnott-Armstrong to make in view of the principle he advocates for when inferential confirmation is needed. To illustrate, suppose one reads Sinnott-Armstrong's paper and then forms a moral intuition and now questions whether she needs inferential confirmation to be justified in that intuition. She confers with Sinnott-Armstrong's principle for when inferential confirmation is needed, which is the following: "[i]f the

process that produced a belief is not reliable in the circumstances, and if the believer ought to know this, then the believer is not justified in forming or holding the belief without inferential confirmation." (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 51) She realizes that the process that produced her belief in question has not been shown to be unreliable in the circumstances it was formed (presumably she did not form her intuition in any of the specific circumstances used in the studies to produce intuitions which were subject to framing), and she knows it, therefore she does not need inferential confirmation for justification.

Once again in the interest of charity to anyone sympathetic to the rest of Sinnott-Armstrong's views, we will ignore Sinnott-Armstrong's principle for when inferential confirmation is needed. Instead we will assume that inferential confirmation is needed if one believes that the evidence Sinnott-Armstrong provided plausibly supports the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable. If the three studies which Sinnott-Armstrong believes we ought to know provide reason for thinking that moral intuitions are unreliable, then either one will have to infer that one's particular intuitions is reliable, or one will have to provide an argument for why all moral intuitions are not unreliable.

An objection one could make to Sinnott-Armstrong's meta-argument is that if showing premise 2* to be false does not show Sinnott-Armstrong's conclusion to be false, since an argument must be given for why premise 2* is false, then it would seem that Sinnott-Armstrong does not even need to have true premises. If he does not need true premises then premise 1* could be false. He could have merely made up a study and anyone who reads his paper would never have a justified moral intuition ever again, since it will always be in one's evidence base. As long as the study seems believable and

plausibly supports the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable, then either one will have to infer that one's particular intuition is reliable, or one will have to give an argument for why all moral intuitions are not unreliable.

One may take this to be an implausible consequence of the aforementioned objection provided on Sinnott-Armstrong's behalf. However, one could plausibly reply on Sinnott-Armstrong's behalf that misleading evidence is evidence nonetheless and that the misleading evidence would still need to be addressed in order for one to be justified. If I were to go to some effort to make you believe that my mom's name is 'Betty' by telling you that it is her name and then forever refer to her as 'Betty', you would have plausible evidence that my mom's name is 'Betty'. However, if my mom were then to meet you and explain to you that her name is 'Wilma' and proceed to show you her driver's licence confirming her name to be 'Wilma' and then present you with my birth certificate showing that she is my mom, you would then have plausible evidence that my mom's name in not 'Betty' but 'Wilma'. However, if one were to ask you for your justification in the belief that my mom's name is 'Wilma', surely you would need to cite the evidence that my mom told you her name is 'Wilma' and that she showed you her driver's licence confirming her name to be 'Wilma' and then present you with my birth certificate showing that she is my mom. Analogously, if Sinnott-Armstrong were to have written a paper with a completely made up but very plausible sounding study, one would still need inferential confirmation in order to justify one's moral intuitions.

I now will present more implausible consequences which the aforementioned view would be committed to. Suppose it is the case that misleading evidence is evidence nonetheless. Suppose further that evidence will always stay in one's evidence base,

making it such that one will always need to make an inference to have justified moral intuitions if presented the false but plausible sounding study. If we make all of these suppositions, then it would seem that there are some implausible consequences that would also need to be true. For instance, if all of the aforementioned conditions are true, then not only would it be true that if someone were presented Sinnott-Armstrong's false but plausible study, then that person would never have a non-inferentially justified moral intuition, but it would also be true that Sinnott-Armstrong could preface the study with "the following study is a fabrication". It would be the case that whoever reads the study would never have a non-inferentially justified moral intuition. I believe that this is a very implausible consequence which the aforementioned view is committed to.

One hoping to salvage the aforementioned view may argue that it matters what order one is presented evidence in. Clearly some evidence's content is such that if it preceded certain other evidence, the new evidence may not even plausibly strike one as evidence. This would be the case if Sinnott-Armstrong were to preface his plausible but fabricated study with 'the following study is fictional'. If told the following study is fictional, the study that follows would not plausibly strike one as evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable. Therefore one would not even enter it into one's base of evidence when assessing the evidence for any given moral intuition.

I will object here that the order in which one receives evidence is not what matters. If one realizes that certain evidence is not relevant or that it is not evidence at all, then it will drop out of one's evidence base. Suppose that it is the case that preceding some evidence with saying that the following evidence is fabricated or false makes it

such that the new evidence would not plausibly strike one as evidence and therefore would not be entered into one's base of evidence. If this is the case, then I fail to see why a statement stating that the preceding evidence was fabricated or false would not make it such that the preceding evidence would not plausibly strike one as evidence and thus not be put in one's base of evidence. If I no longer consider something evidence for P, when assessing evidence for P I would no longer have that evidence in my base of evidence for P. The argument Sinnott-Armstrong wanted to make is that if one is aware of the three studies that he believes everyone ought to know and one found that these studies plausibly provided evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, then plausibly one would have evidence against the reliability of her moral intuitions and thus would need to make an inference in order to be justified. However, if one now comes across evidence that Sinnott-Armstrong's evidence was not representative of all moral intuitions produced in all circumstances and was relevantly different than all moral intuitions produced in all circumstances, then it would seem that one would no longer take the three studies to be evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances and that therefore her moral intuitions are unreliable. Therefore, when assessing the evidence for a moral intuition, the three studies would no longer be put in one's base of evidence. This is not a case of competing evidence, where there is evidence R for P but also evidence S for not P. If this was the case then both the evidence R for P and evidence S against P would be in one's base of evidence when assessing the quality of evidence for P. This is a case where there is evidence X for P and evidence Y which shows X to not be evidence for P. Consequently, evidence X would not be in one's base of evidence when assessing the quality of

evidence for P. Therefore one would not have to make an inference in order to be justified.

One may argue here that there is something special that is going on in the case where one reveals that the studies are fabricated. One may argue that this case is not analogous to the case where one gets evidence which shows that Sinnott-Armstrong's studies are not evidence for the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. One may argue that the studies being fabricated is a special case since they would not be true, whereas the studies Sinnott-Armstrong uses are true. I, however, do not think that the two examples are all that different. They seem to be analogous in the pertinent respect, which is that there is one piece of evidence which makes it evident that another piece of evidence is not relevant to a certain conclusion. Since it becomes clear that one piece of evidence is not relevant to a particular conclusion it should be dropped out of one's base of evidence with respect to that conclusion. If one does not agree with this I could simply change the example to make it more analogous. Instead of having premise 1* a fabricated study I will change it to something true.

1*` 2 + 2 = 4.

Premise 1*` is true, however, it is not relevant to the conclusion that all moral intuitions in all circumstances are unreliable, therefore one would not have 1*` in one's evidence base when considering this conclusion. Likewise, once one comes to know the arguments I have provided showing that Sinnott-Armstrong's sample is not representative of all moral intuitions in all circumstances, one sees that though the three studies Sinnott-Armstrong provides are true, they are not relevant to the conclusion that all moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances. Once one sees that the studies are not

relevant to this conclusion, one would drop them from one's base of evidence for this conclusion.

If one does not agree with this argument and believes that this evidence must always be included in the base of evidence when assessing the quality of evidence for a moral intuition, and Sinnott-Armstrong's three studies plausibly strike one as evidence for the conclusion that moral intuitions are unreliable in all circumstances, then I have one last argument.

<u>Chapter 5 Objection 5</u>

Sinnott-Armstrong writes that "[t]o avoid skepticism, *moral intuitionists* claim that some moral intuitions are justified non-inferentially" (Sinnott-Armstrong 2008, 49), and the master argument argues that there are no non-inferential moral intuitions. Therefore, Sinnott-Armstrong contends that if his master argument is sound, then a regress would result which leads to moral scepticism. However, I will object that even if one accepts the master argument, it need not lead to moral scepticism. Consider the moral intuition 'pain is bad'. No doubt the intuitionist would want to say that it is a non-inferential moral intuition. In virtue of the master argument, Sinnott-Armstrong would want to say that this moral intuition needs inferential confirmation from some further premises. These further premises would come in the form of some empirical study confirming the reliability of the intuition in question or in the form of arguments disputing any of the premises of the master argument. The empirical studies which provide support for the justification of intuitions can only successfully do so if all the propositions that support the study are justified and the arguments which dispute the premises of the master argument can only successfully do so if all the premises of the

argument are justified. One may be worried that this will lead to a regress. However, I will object that even if we accept Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument, it need not lead to a regress. Just like the moral intuitionist who contends that there are non-inferentially justified moral beliefs, one could argue that there can be non-inferentially justified non-moral beliefs. These non-inferential non-moral beliefs are not justified by means of any further proposition. One theory that holds that there are non-inferentially justified non-moral beliefs is modest foundationalism. (Audi 1993)

Modest foundationalism holds that some beliefs are justified, but not by means of any other belief. These beliefs are called 'justified basic beliefs'. For beliefs that are not justified basic beliefs to be justified, they must be inferred directly from a justified basic belief or inferred through a chain of inferences from a justified basic belief. These beliefs are called 'nonbasic justified beliefs'. Justified basic beliefs are perceptual beliefs about the external world or beliefs about one's mental states. One's experiences or mental states can provide evidence for a belief and, absent any defeater, experiences or mental states may provide direct justification for a belief. (Feldman 2003, 72-80) Consequently, these justified basic beliefs can provide justification for the arguments against any premise of Sinnott-Armstrong's master argument or can provide justification for the empirical studies used to show moral intuitions to be reliable. The argument's premises could all eventually be justified by justified non-moral basic beliefs. Or the empirical studies could be supported by justified non-moral basic beliefs. Therefore all moral intuitions can be justified and there is no danger of an infinite regress.

One drawback of having moral intuitions justified by means of inferences from justified non-moral basic beliefs is that all moral intuitions would be inferentially justified and thus there would be no non-inferential moral beliefs. One of the core beliefs of intuitionism is that there are non-inferential moral beliefs. However, perhaps the most important thing the intuitionist wants to defend is that moral intuitions provide evidence for a belief. Even if the belief cannot be justified by means of the intuition alone, the intuition still provides a level of positive epistemic status for a belief. This has not been contested by Sinnott-Armstrong or his master argument. Another thing worth noting is that most intuitionists likely do not have a problem with moral beliefs needing inference from non-moral justified basic beliefs. This is so since most intuitionists were not interested in blocking the regress. Intuitionists did not base their moral beliefs on moral intuitions which serve as evidence in themselves in an attempt to block the regress. An example of such an intuitionist is Henry Sidgwick. He devised four tests that a moral intuition needed to pass to be considered of the highest certainty and worthy of basing a moral theory on. (Sidwick 1907, 338-342) One such test was that the intuition in question must be agreed upon by a consensus of experts. Undoubtedly this is an empirical matter and it must be inferred that the intuition in question is agreed upon by a consensus of experts. In fact Sidgwick would have to infer that the intuition in question passes all of his tests whether they were empirical or not. This is a prime example of an intuitionist who is happy with moral intuitions not being non-inferential but still providing positive epistemic status for beliefs.

Sinnott-Armstrong is concerned with the regress argument. He believes that the intuitionists claim that there are non-inferentially justified moral intuitions in an attempt

to block the regress. One may object that anyone who is happy with moral intuitions being inferentially justified by non-moral justified basic beliefs is not an intuitionist as Sinnott-Armstrong defines it. This is not of great concern for me since the people which we all thought of as intuitionists are not affected by Sinnott-Armstrong's argument. These are the people I am most concerned with defending.

Bibliography

Audi, R. (1993). *The Struture of Justification*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University

      Press.

Fagley, N.S., and Kruger, L. (1986). Framing effects on the program choices of school

      psychologists. Paper presented at American Psychological Association

      Meetings., Washington, D.C., 1986.

Fagley, N.S., and Miller, P.M. (1987). The effects of decision framing on choice of risky

      vs certain options. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes,* 39,

      264-277.

Fagley, N.S., and Miller, P.M. (1990). The effect of framing on choice: Interactions with

      risk-taking propensity, cognitive style, and sex. *Personality and Social*

      Psychology Bulletin, 13, 496-510.

Fischer, J., and Ravizza, (1991). M. Thomson and the trolley. Unpublished manuscript.

      Department of Philosophy: University of California, Riverside.

Frisch, D. Reasons for framing effects. (1993). *Organizational Behavior and Human*

      Decision Processes, 54, 399-429.

Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to

      moral judgment. *Psychological Review,* 108, 814-34.

Haidt, J, and Baron, J. (1996). Social roles and the moral judgement of acts and omissions.

      European Journal of Social Psychology, 26, 201-18.

Haidt, J. and Fredrik Bjorklund. (2008). Social Intuitionists Answer Six Questions about

      Morality. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong (Ed.), *Moral psychology* (pp. 181-218.) (Vol.

      2). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Harman, G. (1975). Moral relativism defended. *Philosophical Review,* 84, 3-23.

Hauser, M., F. Cushman, L. Young, R. Jin, and J. Mikhail. (2006). A dissociation between moral judgment and justification. *Mind and Language*, 22, 1-21.

Hauser, M., L. Young, and F. Cushman. (2008). Reviving Rawls's linguistic analogy: Operative principles and the causal structure of moral actions. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong (Ed.), *Moral psychology: The cognitive science of morality: intuition and diversity* (pp. 107-144) (Vol. 2). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Horowitz, T. (1998). Philosophical intuitions and psychological theory. *Ethics,* 108, 367-85.

Kahneman, D, and Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk. *Econometrica,* 47, 263-91.

Kahneman, D. (1994). The cognitive psychology of consequences and moral intuition. Unpublished Tanner Lecture.

Kamm, F. (1999). Moral intuitions, cognitive psychology, and the harming-versus-not-aiding disctinction. *Ethics*, 108, 463-488.

Kauppinen, A. (2007). The Rise and Fall of Experimental Philosophy. *Philosophical Explorations,* 10, 95-118.

Kühberger, A. (1998) The influence of framing on risky decisions: a meta-analysis. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 75, 23-55.

Kuhn, D. (1991). *The Skills of Argument*. Cambridge: CUP.

LeBoeuf, R. A. and Shafir, E. (2003). Deep thoughts and shallow frames: on the susceptibility to framing effects. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 16, 77-92.

Levin, I. P., Johnson, R. D. and Davies, M. L. (1987). How information frame influences risky decisions. *Journal of Economic Psychology* 8, 43-54.

Loke, W. H. (1989). The effects of framing and incomplete information on judgments. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 10, 392-41.

Moore, G.E. (1903). *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Neale, M.A., and Bazerman, M.H. (1985). The effects of framing and negotiator overconfidence on bargaining behaviors and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal,* 28, 34-49.

Petrinovich, L., and P. O'Neill. (1996). Influence of wording and framing effects on moral intuitions. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 17, 145-71.

Pinillos, N., N. Smith, G. Nair, P. Marchetto, C. Mun. Philosophy's new challenge: Experiments and intentional action. *Mind & Language*, 26(1), 115–139.

Ross, W. D. (1930). *The Right and the Good*. Oxford: OUP.

Schwitzgebel, E., and Cushman, F. (2012). Order effects on moral judgment in professional philosophers and non-philosophers. *Mind & Language*, 27(2), 135-153.

Shafir, E. (1998). Philosophical intuitions and cognitive mechanisms. In M. Depaul and W. Ramsey (Eds.), *Rethinking Intuition* Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Shaver, R. (2011). Ethical non-naturalism and experimental philosophy. In S. Nuccetelli, G. Seay (Eds.), *Ethical Naturalism: Current Debates*. (pp. 194-210.) Cambridge University Press.

Sidgwick, H. (1907). *The Methods of Ethics.* Indianapolis: Hackett.

Sieck, W. and Yates, J. F. (1997). Exposition effects on decision maiking: choice and
confidence in choice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*
70, 207-19.

Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2008). Framing moral intuitions. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong
(Ed.), *Moral psychology: The cognitive science of morality: intuition and
diversity* (pp. 107-144) (Vol. 2). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2008). How to apply generalities: Reply to Tolhurst and
Shafer-Landau. In W. Sinnott-Armstrong (Ed.), *Moral psychology: The cognitive
science of morality: intuition and diversity* (pp. 107-144) (Vol. 2). Cambridge,
MA: MIT Press.

Stanovich, K., West, R. (1998). Individual differences in framing and conjunction
efforts. *Thinking and Reasoning* 4, 289-317.

Thomson, J. (1976). Killing, letting die, and the trolley problem. *The Monist,* 59, 204-
217.

Tversky, A, Kahneman, D. (1981). The framing of decisions and
the psychology of choice. *Science*, 211, 453-458.

Unger, P. (1995). Contextual analysis in ethics. *Philosophy and Phenomenological
Research,* 58, 1-26.

Weinberg, J, Gonnerman, C, Buckner, C, Alexander, J. (2010). Are philosophers expert
intuiters?. *Philosophy Psychology*, 23(3), 331-355