

Counting Concepts, by Mark Sainsbury and Michael Tye. Abstract

The paper continues a dialog with Paul Boghossian, who objects to Sainsbury and Tye's originalism about concepts on the ground that it cannot give an adequate account of rationality. Originalism does not accept that rational thinkers can always tell whether or not two concept tokens are tokens of the same concept. Peter, in the Paderewski example, wrongly takes it that he has two public concepts PADEREWSKI, when in fact just one public concept is in play. Peter, switched to twin earth, takes it that he has just one public concept WATER, when in fact two concepts are in play (WATER and TWATER). Both thinkers are rational because, in their very unusual circumstances, they lacked the information required to detect these conceptual facts. They make mistakes, but have rationality-preserving excuses.