

SOME PROBLEMS CONCERNING EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

Abstract: In recent years Experimental Philosophy has gained a lot of attention, both positive and negative. Proponents of that philosophical movement insist that contemporary philosophical arguments are often committed to various empirical claims and therefore that arguments should be assessed by adequate empirical methods. In this paper, I am going to offer reasons to support this heavily criticised thesis. In order to do that I will analyse the method of counter example, as one of the finest examples of our argumentative practice. I will argue, based on this analysis, that in many philosophical disciplines those counterexamples, and more generally, arguments and theories, do invoke some empirical claims. After that I will examine the prospect of interdisciplinary inquiry in those fields that seem to have appealed to some contingent and empirical matters, as well as some results experimental philosophers have already achieved. Finally, I will raise some concerns related to the limitations of the methodology of experimental philosophy. Although it offers an effective tool which can enhance many traditional philosophical inquires, especially in conceptual analysis framework, I will argue that the methodology of experimental philosophy commits us to non-revisionary positions in those inquires.

Key Words: experimental philosophy, counterexamples, empirical study, epistemology, causation.

0. Introduction

It is difficult to overstate the significance of the role counterexamples play in contemporary analytic philosophy. A vast amount of philosophical literature is devoted to many influential counterexamples, or to the problems closely related to them. For almost every contemporary philosophical discipline there is at least one famous counterexample that has become a classic one. Those famous counterexamples act as hotspots, as main issues that a debate in the given discipline is focused on.

But there is a problem I will argue that the method of counterexamples points out quite well how heavily philosophical theories rely on intuitions. Many authors think that this consequence, if true, gives a rise to experimental philosophy. My point is, contrary to many radical critics of the experimental philosophy movement,

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that this conclusion is unavoidable as long as we regard philosophy to be essentially a conceptual analysis. Nevertheless, within the conceptual analysis framework in philosophy, as I will try to maintain, we can also find some important problems and limitations regarding the experimental philosophy method.

In order to see how philosophy relies on intuitions, let us first examine how counterexamples work in philosophy.

1. Counterexamples and Intuitions

In objecting to some philosophical theory (or a position, policy, principle, definition etc.), probably the most powerful tool one can use is the method of counter example (CE). As a form of argumentation, CE is formally valid, so (if its premises are true) it is conclusive with respect to the proposed theory. The list of honourable mentions from the history of analytic philosophy would certainly include: Gettier's CE to the traditional definition of knowledge, Jackson's CE to physicalism (i.e. the knowledge argument), Frankfurt's CE to the principle of alternative possibilities, Kripke's modal argument against descriptivism, various CEs to the transitivity of causation, various CEs to the utilitarianism in ethics, and so on.

All these, and many others, CEs share (or can be formulated in such way to share) the common structure. Namely, I consider them to be the instances of *Modus Tollens* (MT). In those CEs the first premise is the claim that some proposition (p) is the logical consequence of the given theory (T). The second premise states that proposition p is false. If both these claims are granted, it follows that the theory T is false. So, in short the structure of CEs can be presented like this:²

1. $T \supset p$
2. $\sim p$
3. $\therefore \sim T$

A careful reader could notice and object that the use of the word "false" (made in the passage above) is controversial since we are talking about philosophical theories and propositions. Indeed, in which sense philosophical claims are true or false is itself a difficult and controversial question. Luckily, that objection, although sensible has no bearing on the question of the form of CE or its conclusiveness. The reason why is that whatever standard we philosophers establish for adopting a theory (or a proposition), *that very standard* can be put instead of the *truth*. So if we settle for (say) acceptability, then a CE conclusively shows (if a given theory implies a given proposition and that proposition is *unacceptable*) that given theory is *unacceptable*. As I have already stated, we could, of course, do the same with "assertability", "plausibility" or whatever standard we adopt.

Nevertheless, this does not mean the second premise is without problems whatsoever. We only maintained that MT (as the form of argumentation) is general

² For a different characterization of counterexamples see Weatherson, 2003. He offered a form of the CEs in the language of predicate logic. My characterization was in terms of propositional logic, and I deemed it to be more general and more easily applicable to the reach variety of CEs, mentioned before.

enough not to care about the actual meaning of the “~” in the presented structure. However, what the status of the second premise is and what we philosopher count as a counterevidence (in the most general sense) are completely different questions.

To address this issue, we need to take a closer look at some actual CEs. But we have to be careful as it matters which CE we choose. It is simply due to the fact that in different fields of philosophy the status of the second premise may vary. It should not come as a surprise that the standard for adopting a theory (or a proposition) is relative to the specific character of the given inquiry. That is not to say that what counts as evidence is specific to every subject of inquiry, or to every discipline. On the contrary, that is probably not the case. It is rather specific to some broader characteristic, shared among familiar disciplines.

In what follows, I will focus on CEs in contemporary epistemology and the philosophy of causation. Although I think many of the conclusions of our forthcoming analysis can be true for the CEs in other philosophical disciplines, for the reasons mentioned above we should be careful not to generalize without valid grounds.

Let us take the probably most famous CE in the contemporary epistemology – Gettier’s CE to traditional definition of knowledge (Gettier, 1963). In his well-known paper, Gettier tried to show that the so-called JTB definition of knowledge (according to which knowledge is justified as true belief) is not adequate. More precisely, he offered the cases (now called – Gettier cases) in which (he claimed) the JTB condition is satisfied, but yet that cases are not cases of knowledge. Putting this CE into the form proposed above, it would look like this:

1. If knowledge is JTB, then Gettier cases are cases of knowledge.
2. However, the Gettier cases are not the cases of knowledge,
3. Therefore, knowledge is not JTB.

The big question is: How do we know premise 2? Is that an empirical claim? If not, what is the epistemic status of the given proposition? All these questions are deeply related to the issue of the methodology of philosophy – the issue, traditionally, rather left unresolved and even unexamined.

As interesting (or even suspicious) as premise 2 may look from this perspective, it has never received much attention in extensive and still alive debates regarding Gettier’s CEs. Since the publishing of the paper, philosophers have most frequently responded to it in one of the following two ways: a) the first premise is wrong, Gettier cases are not cases of knowledge *according to* the JTB definition, (i.e. they don’t satisfied that definition) and hence it is not the case that Gettier’s CEs work; or b) Gettier’s CEs work, but we need to add more requirement(s) to the JTB definition of knowledge so that Gettier cases cannot satisfy it, and as a consequence the first premise would not be true and that updated definition would be immune to Gettier’s CEs.

Simply, the second premise has never been seriously questioned. And that is not something specific for Gettier’s CEs. That second premises, in all of the mentioned CEs have the same fortune. It is always the case that the truth of that second premise is widely accepted among philosophers. Why is that the case?

The reason is simple. It is because that second premise is *intuitive*. It is the consequence of the way CEs are found and employed. The CEs are construed in such a way that the hard part is to find a case in which the theory gives an *unintuitive* answer (i.e. case for which the theory delivers an answer that is *intuitively wrong*). That is the first premise whereas the second premise is just stating the intuitive thesis that contradicts the thesis entailed by the theory.

In the famous CEs to the transitivity of causation³ the same scenario holds. Some authors have found (or claimed they have found) cases in which regarding the causation as a transitive relation commits us to accept that there is a causal relation between the two given events. But intuitively, there is no causal relation between them. So, the starting principle must be wrong. (And again, the debate is mainly focused on the first claim, on the issue whether or not transitivity commits us to that unintuitive answer.)

Absolutely the same goes for many other CEs in epistemology, the philosophy of causation, contemporary metaphysics, philosophy of language as well as other disciplines.⁴ *On the basis of certain intuitions*, besides the fact that given theories disagree with it, we formulate objections which we take to be conclusive and which in effect cause the raging and long lasting debates focusing on that CEs alone.

So, if *intuition* plays such an important role in CEs, as I insisted above, then it better be the case that it is *reliable*. In order to validate the practice of CEs, which is so highly regarded within argumentative philosophical inquiry, we have to show why these intuitions are trustworthy.

But philosophers used to be sceptical about intuition. First of all, it is not at all clear what is meant by that term. It is ambiguous, it can mean a lot of different things. It can mean a method, or a propositional content gained by that method. Further, it can be a special kind of judgement (as Williams suggests) or the content of that judgement (as Deutch claims). It is exactly the issue of the role of intuition in contemporary philosophy that has brought the problem of intuition back into the set of philosophically hot themes.⁵ Nevertheless, that problem is too complex to be discussed here, so I will not pursue that issue further. Luckily, what I have to say does not depend on this matter.

The crucial thesis I have stated in this section is: CEs in many cases rest upon intuition. Moreover, I have also claimed that it is not because of some peculiar fact about CEs, but rather because of the method of some philosophical inquiries. CEs are merely the symptoms for that general methodological diagnosis.

If that diagnosis is true, then (and that is what I am going to argue for in the

³ Probably the most prominent formulation is in: Hall, 2000.

⁴ But perhaps not all of the philosophical disciplines. I will come back to this issue later on.

⁵ There are really so many recent papers and books concerning this question, deeply related to philosophical methodology. And almost all of these authors insist these questions are fundamental and of great importance for all philosophical practice. Indispensable literature, within the new way of investigating the significance of intuition in philosophy, certainly includes: Cappelen, 2012, Deutch, 2010, 2015, Hoffman, 2010, Horvath & Wiegmann, 2016, Williamson, 2007.

next section) experimental philosophers have probably won the case in the ongoing debate about the significance of experimental philosophy (X-Phi).

2. Conceptual Analysis and Experimental Philosophy

In order to see in what way this intuition-issue is in favour of X-Phi, let us once again take a closer look at the second premise in the universal form of CE I have presented above. I have claimed that in many contemporary philosophical disciplines CEs are such that their second premise has the same status as the second premise in the offered formulation of Gettier's CE. Here are the reasons why I think so.

When we say that Gettier cases are not cases of knowledge, what we are saying precisely is that agents in Gettier cases are not the agents we can truthfully ascribe knowledge to. It is not true that person *A* knows that *p* in the given scenario – that is the claim in the second premise.

Obviously this claim is contingent, it is not absurd to believe in the opposite claim. Neither does the opposite claim represent any sort of contradiction. Hence, conceding the contingency of this claim (i.e. the second premise) is unavoidable. Does this mean that it is an empirical claim?

When we think of an empirical proposition we expect it to be a contingent thesis about the world, some worldly fact, an assertion of some states of the affairs. It is usually the proposition of the sort: "There is a glass on the table", "John is at home" or "The gravitational force is proportional to the mass of an object". Obviously, it is odd to say that the claim in the second premise has the same epistemic status as these propositions do. After all, what state of affairs (or other kind of truth-maker) would make that proposition true? That should be (at least in principle) doable for an empirical proposition (and it is surely doable in the case of the examples given above).

This oddity we have faced is due to the special type of contingency in the second premise. The claim in the second premise is not about some worldly states of affairs in a regular sense. Nevertheless, it is empirical about some language facts. It can be adequately rephrased as: *We wouldn't say /are not inclined to say* that person *A* knows that *p* in the given scenario. It is the empirical claim about the standard language practice, about linguistic and semantic standards.

The same holds for the transitivity CE, which I have mentioned earlier. What we are counting as counterevidence there is the fact that, although the theory (describing what *causation* is) commits us to the claim that there is causal relation between the two events, we are not inclined to say that. It is against our *linguistic intuitions* to say that the given two events are causally related. (So we count that as an evidence against the theory).

Again, the alleged status of premise 2, I propose, is the same for the many CEs and surely for those that were mentioned above, or could be found in the disciplines I have mentioned. Again, this should not come as a surprise. The reason why is that all contemporary disciplines are predominantly conceived as *a conceptual analysis*.

Those disciplines are primarily concerned with bold concepts, their meaning, semantics, pragmatics, their relation with some other concepts and so on. In contemporary epistemology we are trying to understand what *knowledge* (or belief, justification, evidence, etc.) is. In fact, our goal is to analyse and grasp that notion. The same goes for the notions of causation, causal structure, over-determination, pre-emption, prevention (in the philosophy of causation), as well as for the notions of object, part, whole, persistence, possible world (in metaphysics), etc.

To practise these disciplines, we analyse the language. Those notions, covered by adequate terms, are embedded in everyday conversations. They are employed there and their meaning is tightly connected to their usage. We seem to use language as the main evidence in all these inquires that are essentially a conceptual analysis.

Therefore, we can settle this debate about the status of the second premise. It is an empirical and contingent claim about our language intuitions concerning the meaning and/or use of a certain notion. By admitting this, we have made yet another step closer to acknowledging the significance of X-Phi. Here are the reasons why.

Who are “we” in the first sentence of the paragraph above (the one that states the second premise is about our language intuitions)? We philosophers? But why should *we* be the authority in weighing and judging language intuitions? Is our analysis meant only to serve some *philosophical notion* of knowledge, causation, object, etc.? How and why have philosophers’ intuitions become the representation of the usage of ordinary language (or its surrogate)? Is that *evidence* reliable when arguing about ordinary language concepts?⁶

It is difficult to avoid these and many similar questions. Conceptual analysts make philosophical inquiries about some notions which are philosophically relevant, but that is not to say that they make inquiries about philosophical notions (whatever those notions may be). So, it seems to me, there is little to say in defence of the methodology many philosophers have become accustomed to. So much (in conceptual analysis) depends on basic language judgements, but philosophers, nevertheless, chose to rely on their own for evidence (so called) *armchair* linguistic intuitions. And that is the punch line of the negative programme of X-Phi.

But what is X-Phi, and what could be its remedy for the problem we have faced? It is actually a recent philosophical movement, but it is already diverse in itself and it is not easy to give some general description of its program. It is the radical opposition of the “armchair philosophy”, the label X-philosopher use for their colleagues that think you can do philosophy from your armchair without any need for empirical research. One informative characterisation of X-Phi states that “the guiding principle of experimental philosophy is that when philosophical arguments invoke or make assumptions about empirical matters, those assumptions should be assessed according to the best natural and social scientific evidence available, and that if such evidence is not currently available it should where possible be acquired, either by seeking the help of specialists with the relevant scientific training or by

⁶ For extensive critic of this method of conceptual analysis see brilliant paper: „Are philosophers expert intuiters?“, (Weinberg *et al*, 2010).

having well-trained philosophers conduct the research themselves” (Alfano & Loeb, 2016).

In other words, if we are (in all those philosophical disciplines which are regarded as primarily conceptual analysis) so committed to the linguistic intuitions, then it is methodologically rational and it is required to rely on the best evidence that we can acquire. Typically psychological and sociological empirical methods, like polls, surveys, population studies and others, can be a more than helpful way to provide solid evidence upon which contingent empirical claims in philosophy can be judged. This could be the way around methodologically unjustified generalisations made from philosophers’ own intuitions, which at best presents narrow and really unreliable evidence.

There are strong reasons that suggest that linguistic intuitions of philosophers should not be trusted. Strictly methodologically speaking, it is not just the case that we philosophers easily generalize from our own intuitions (which do not constitute big enough sample for valid generalizations), but even worse, it is the very intuitions of the philosophers that can be wrong in the sense that they can stand in contradiction with linguistic intuitions of regular speakers. It can be argued that we are indoctrinated in a way, with all those philosophical theories, so our intuitions are not genuine linguistic intuitions, but they are always affected by our theoretical assumptions or expectations. In empirical researcher’s terms, we philosophers are a contaminated sample.

So, the point that experimental philosophers (X-philes) are trying to make is not that their methodological advice should be accepted only because it would validate various conclusions usually drawn in conceptual analysis. No, the point is much stronger. It suggests that once we base our reasoning in conceptual analysis on adequate empirical evidence, the conclusions and the results gained that way may differ substantially from those drawn in a methodologically suspicious way.

3. Some Results of X-Phi

To illustrate this, I would offer just the two examples (among many) from the short history of X-Phi. The first one is again related to the Gettier cases.

Some X-Philes dared to call into question the most clear-cut intuitions we have in contemporary epistemology – our intuitions about Gettier cases. It was Plato who first said that cases in which some agent’s belief is true thanks to the “epistemic luck”, are not to be count as cases where a given agent *knows*. In Gettier cases epistemic luck is a little more complex, but it again plays a central role. And again, Gettier and a vast majority of philosophers, even those who disagree with him about the traditional definition of knowledge, have accepted that, so-called, Gettier cases are not the cases of knowledge (let’s call that claim *the Gettier intuition*). But a group of authors (Weinberg *et al* 2001) have reported that, as the research showed, the *Gettier intuition* is not universally held among ordinary language speakers and the frequency of exceptions is statistically relevant. The agreement with the *Gettier*

intuition varies relative to sex, region, cultural background and other demographical characteristics of the participants in the inquiry.

It can be discussed (and it is discussed thoroughly in the literature) what can be inferred from this; nevertheless, it is really difficult to maintain that this evidence is not relevant and important for the given subject.

Another interesting example is related to the central dogma of epistemic contextualism. Since Dretske's paper "The Pragmatic Dimension of Knowledge" (Dretske, 1981) the idea that stakes affect knowledge attribution in a certain way (let us call this *the stake effect*), have been widely accepted among epistemologists (both contextualists and invariantists). It gained the status of some undoubtable linguistic intuition which all theories should account for; the difference between contextualists' and invariantists' theories is only in the way how they have incorporated and explained that (sort of) dogma.

Again, some philosophers have decided to question this among the epistemologists universally accepted claim. First, Sripada, Stanley and Pinillos (Sripada & Stanley, 2012; Pinillos, 2012) and later Buckwalter and Schaffer as well (Buckwalter & Schaffer, 2015), have conducted extensive empirical studies concerning *the stake affect*. The results, again, were surprising (and interestingly enough, they differ between studies). Moreover, the results were so persuasive that some philosophers have used them to argue in favour or against some theories, based upon the degree they agree or disagree with those results.⁷

As I have said above, there are many examples similar to these two, although the X-Phi movement have received substantial support among philosophers only recently (no earlier than ten years ago). All those examples serve to show how much of a difference adequate empirical evidence could make in all those cases where philosophers propose claims about empirical matters.

4. Three Ways to Disagree

I will not proceed by offering some even remotely detailed account of the various critics that X-Phi has received since it appeared. Instead of that, I have intentionally chosen to present in details the main case in favour of X-Phi, which directly relates to the criticism. Namely, the case is that a substantial share of philosophical arguments involve some empirical claims. I have deliberately presented that point regarding some of the classic arguments (more precisely, some famous CEs) in order to be obvious. It is not some peculiar way of doing philosophy, but rather the standard, usual argumentative method of philosophical inquiry that invokes such claims.

⁷ In making different accounts of *stake effect*, various theories have made different commitments to the actual usage of the notion of knowledge, and hence have made different predictions about the way knowledge attribution would function in some contexts. Some of the mentioned surveys were precisely made to target and examine those predictions. For example, Schaffer claims his empirical study shows that Lewis' contextualism has more predicative success than Cohen's, and hence that the former theory is a better conceptual analysis of knowledge than the latter one (Buckwalter & Schaffer, 2015).

Because of that, I cannot see how critics of X-Phi could avoid that point. One way to disagree with the claims presented in this paper is to show that conceptual analysis is not committed to any empirical claims.

The second way to disagree with my claims about the significance of X-Phi methods for conceptual analysis would be to insist that, although there are some empirical claims involved in philosophical debates, gathering empirical evidence about those matters is not necessary (or is not helpful, relevant, important...). I have tried to show (in the most plausible way I could, in the few passages presented) that this line of argumentation is not easy to agree with. The two examples of X-Phi results I have offered above were intended to show how difficult it is to reject or diminish the relevance of X-Phi to contemporary philosophical issues.

The third line of disagreement which I can think of would be to stress that empirical evidence (of the sort we have already discussed) is simply not relevant for some philosophical fields. For example, in all normative disciplines. It sounds rather strange to conduct a survey about some moral issues and then to draw conclusions about it. It is against our basic understanding of normativity. We cannot derive normative claims (imperatives, obligations) from the descriptive empirical studies about what people do or say. Moral theory searches for the moral principles which could be corrective towards the actual practice. It could substantially disagree with the usual practice and the theories could insist that the practice is wrong (or even people's judgement about that issue is wrong) and needs to be changed.⁸ To be clear, this is not to object to the thesis presented in this paper since I restricted the conclusion to descriptive disciplines with focus on their conceptual analysis part. Besides that, I completely agree with this objection and I find it really important. The status of X-Phi in moral philosophy has to be different. This is particularly true if we are talking about the normative part of this philosophical discipline. With respect to the conceptual side, I reckon that the status of X-Phi would probably be more similar to the status we have discussed here, concerning some descriptive disciplines.

5. A Problem for X-Phi

The third objection I have considered above has already been taken into account, and served as a guideline what kind of philosophical inquiry most directly calls for the empirical methods? But the objection that sometimes theory can be revisionary regarding the very facts X-Phi takes to be empirical evidence would come back and hunt us. In this last section I will try to show why I think that is the case.

There is one non-trivial assumption, which I think has to be made while arguing in favour of X-Phi. The assumption is that the given conceptual analysis

⁸ Moral theorists do not understand (say) the theory of moral status of the animals by interrogating people on that topic. Once they have the theory, it could be highly revisionary, and even state that most of our behaviour towards animals is immoral.

has to agree with adequate empirical evidence. It is not some Hegelian notion of theory and evidence that should worry us here, but rather something very specific and related to the theories we focused on in this paper.

It could, indeed, sound trivial that theory should agree with facts. It is a perfectly suitable motto for some natural science. But evidence, as well as the way it relates to the theory, is odd and peculiar in philosophy, as we know. In his interesting comment about the methodology of the conceptual analysis (of causation) Lewis said: “When common sense delivers a firm and uncontroversial answer about a not-too-far-fetched case, theory had better agree. If an analysis of causation does not deliver the common-sense answer, it is bad trouble. But when common sense falls into indecision or controversy, or when it is reasonable to suspect that farfetched cases are being judged by false analogy to commonplace ones, then theory may safely say what it likes. Such cases can be left as spoils to the victor, in D. M. Armstrong’s phrase”. (Lewis, 1987: 194)

Now, X-philosophers have urged us to give up on “common sense” and to use adequate empirical data as evidence. What would the empirical data be in the cases Lewis described as presented in the passage above? Can we know in advance that the evidence we gather by X-Phi methods would be coherent?

It is not naïve at all to presuppose that either philosophers’ intuitions, or linguistic intuitions of ordinary language speakers, are coherent and fully consistent. We have learnt better during the history of different philosophical disciplines. Even worse, history teaches us that it is almost always the case that some intuition contradicts each other. That is why it is so difficult to formulate an acceptable theory in those philosophical disciplines.

The conceptual analysis of causation proves how difficult it is to deal with the evidence we have in some philosophical disciplines (either informal, given by linguistic intuitions or common sense judgements, or formal, given by some adequate empirical evidence of that sort). Our linguistic intuitions in that field are so varied, complex and incoherent, that many theorists of causation have given up hope for a monistic, univocal definition of causation. There are more than a few philosophers who have offered a pluralistic account of causation in order not to rule out some of those intuitions in the favour of others. Some others choose to give a revisionary account and deliberately conflict with some of the linguistic intuitions.

6. Conclusion

All the points stated in the last section, indicate some important limitations of empirical methods employed by X-Phi. Although it is plausible that proposed empirical methods could improve some philosophical inquiries, by changing the usual intuitive input with adequate empirical data, it is highly problematic how that methodology should deal with the revisionary strategy within those inquiries. X-Phi methodology, it seems to me, commits us to a non-revisionary approach in any conceptual analysis. Or at least, X-Phi is more suitable and more important for those

approaches without revisionary and prescriptive aspirations.

As in the case of moral philosophy and other normative inquiries, we are now again faced with some serious limitations of the empirical method and its philosophical significance. Here again we would like to permit the possibility of a theory to act prescriptively, correctively, revisionary. That requirement, as I have claimed, stands even for non-normative disciplines. We have that in the philosophy of causation, but we have that in the philosophy of mind too as well as the philosophy of free will, and so on. Metaphysics admits revisionary positions as well.

In all these cases, for all the given reasons, the methodology of X-Phi has important restrictions and should be applied carefully.

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NEKI PROBLEMI U VEZI SA EMPIRIJSKIM ISTRAŽIVANJIMA U FILOZOFIJI

Apstrakt: Poslednjih godina eksperimentalna filozofija postaje sve zastupljenija, bilo da je reč o njenoj afirmaciji ili kritici. Zastupnici tog filozofskog pravca insistiraju na tome da se savremena filozofska argumentacija često poziva na razne empirijske tvrdnje, i da stoga filozofskoj argumentaciji treba pristupiti i uz pomoć odgovarajućih empirijskih metoda. U ovom radu ću ponuditi argumente u prilog ovoj veoma kritikovanoj tezi. To ću uraditi preko analize metode kontraprimera, kao jednog od najboljih vidova naše argumentativne prakse. Na osnovu te analize, tvrdiću da u mnogim filozofskim disciplinama protivprimeri, ali i šire: argumenti i teorije, zaista povlače neke empirijske pretpostavke. Nakon toga ću ispitati perspektive interdisciplinarnog istraživanja na tim poljima koja, izgleda, obuhvataju i kontingentna i empirijska pitanja, ali ću se osvrnuti i na neke rezultate do kojih su eksperimentalni filozofi već došli. Konačno, ukazaću na neke od potencijalnih problema u vezi sa ograničenjima metodologije koju eksperimentalna filozofija koristi. Iako predstavlja efikasno sredstvo kojim se može unaprediti tradicionalno filozofsko istraživanje, posebno kada je u pitanju pojmovna analiza, tvrdiću da nas metodologija koja se koristi u eksperimentalnoj filozofiji striktno obavezuju na nerevizionističke pozicije u tim istraživanjima.

Ključne reči: eksperimentalna filozofija, protivprimeri, empirijsko istraživanje, epistemologija, uzročnost.