

Chapter 1 : Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mathematics (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

1. Biographical Sketch. Wittgenstein was born on April 26, in Vienna, Austria, to a wealthy industrial family, well-situated in intellectual and cultural Viennese circles.

He did, however, say the following in section of *On Certainty*: One stands with it in front of a tree and says "Lovely tree! But can the child be said to know: And doubting means thinking. Wittgenstein contends that doubting is a language-game; it is one that is acquired like other language-games; and, there are such things that cannot be doubted: Imagine a language-game "When I call you, come in through the door. What I need to show is that a doubt is not necessary even when it is possible. This is connected with the role of contradiction in mathematics. It must, for example, be able to attach the name of its colour to white, black, red or blue object without the occurrence of any doubt. And indeed no one misses doubt here; no one is surprised that we do not merely surmise the meaning of our words. There are cases where doubt is unreasonable, but others where it seems logically impossible. And there seems to be no clear boundary between them. If, therefore, I doubt or am uncertain about this being my hand in whatever sense, why not in that case about the meaning of these words as well? Do I want to say, then, that certainty resides in the nature of the language-game? One doubts on specific grounds. And the fact that a word means such-and-such, is used in such-and-such a way, is in turn an empirical fact, like the fact that what you see over there is a book. Therefore, in order for you to be able to carry out an order there must be some empirical fact about which you are not in doubt. Doubt itself rests only on what is beyond doubt. Even though doubt only arises in circumstances where doubting is possible, such a formulation is not tautologous. These riders are superfluous: In other words, someone who doubts everything would not know what his words mean; he would not know what it means to doubt: Wittgenstein ponders if such a man is not more certain of the meaning of his words than he is of certain judgments: Doubt stands in need of grounds; doubting and the grounds for doubting make up a system that is part of a world-picture: The grounds for doubt are interwoven in our world picture: It does not strike me as if this system were more certain than a certainty within it. That is, the man who doubted the existence of Napoleon, or the moon landings, doubts the particular certainties that lie within his world-picture. But the man who doubts the existence of the world years ago doubts all the evidence, all the facts, that encompass our world: This example is also similar to, say, a tribe or society that has an entirely different world-picture. It is easier to convince, or persuade, them to accept our system than it is to convince someone who learned our system, and yet, is uncertain of, or think he can doubt, what is fundamental. It is this latter claim that helps illuminate how people come to doubt what many people hold as indubitable; or, on the contrary, how people come to believe what others hold to be unbelievable. All the evidence—“all experience”—shows that all human beings have two parents. But then again, these beliefs, like the evidence against them, are facts of human life. People do believe that a wafer becomes the flesh and wine the body of Jesus, and yet, also believe that there is no empirical evidence to support these beliefs. We feel that if someone could believe the contrary he could believe everything that we say is untrue, and could question everything that we hold to be sure. But how does this one belief hang together with all the rest? We should like to say that someone who could believe that does not accept our whole system of verification. This system is something that a human being acquires by means of observation and instruction. And this system is not a more or less arbitrary and doubtful point of departure for all our arguments: The system is not so much the point of departure, as the element in which arguments have their life. How does this frame of reference impress itself upon people? The game proves its worth. People learn this-or-that language-game because its function is its value. And, people learn the ordinary use of language, as they learn their ordinary motor functions, and it is unnecessary and unrealistic to imagine that different language-games prove their values because they are logically sound and have grounds. As a creature in a primitive state. Any logic good enough for a primitive means of communication needs no apology from us. Language did not emerge from some kind of ratiocination. That is not to say that logic is unnecessary—it is what gives life to arguments. In other words, the purpose of language-games is to accommodate human life-needs and everything that they entail. An obsolete language-game is one that no longer serves a function.

Also, Wittgenstein is highly critical of Descartes and the idea that anyone can doubt everything. Throughout *On Certainty* Wittgenstein attacks the armchair philosophers like Moore, Descartes, and others who lay claim to theories of "knowledge," "certainty," and so on. And for the pain question. The ability to differentiate between different sensations relies upon using different—but regular—signs to indicate these different sensations. However, the signs people use to differentiate the sensations are, as other words are, taught and learned through training. Human beings learn sensations—for example, the perception of colors—through training. For further reading on color-perception, see *Progress in Colour Studies*:

Chapter 2 : Wittgenstein's Philosophical Method | Thinking Philosophically

Wittgenstein's Method by Gordon P. Baker, , available at Book Depository with free delivery worldwide.

The text [edit] Editions and referencing [edit] Philosophical Investigations was not ready for publication when Wittgenstein died in 1951. There are multiple editions of Philosophical Investigations with the popular third edition and 50th anniversary edition having been edited by Anscombe: Macmillan Publishing Company. This edition includes the original German text in addition to the English translation. The text is divided into two parts, consisting of what Wittgenstein calls, in the preface, Bemerkungen, translated by Anscombe as "remarks". In the second part, the remarks are longer and numbered using Roman numerals. In the index, remarks from the first part are referenced by their number rather than page; however, references from the second part are cited by page number. The comparatively unusual nature of the second part is due to the fact that it comprises notes that Wittgenstein may have intended to re-incorporate into the first part. Subsequent to his death it was published as a "Part II" in the first, second and third editions. Rather than presenting a philosophical problem and its solution, Wittgenstein engages in a dialogue, where he provides a language-game a more or less ordinary use of the words in question, that describes how one might be inclined to think about it, and then shows why that inclination suffers from conceptual confusion. The following is an excerpt from the first entry in the book that exemplifies this method: I send someone shopping. Explanations come to an end somewhere. The reader is presented with a use of language: Wittgenstein supplies the response of one or more imagined interlocutors. He may put these statements in quotes to distinguish them from his own: Wittgenstein shows why the reaction was misguided, but not unnatural: Through such language-games, Wittgenstein attempts to get the reader to come to certain difficult philosophical conclusions independently; he does not merely argue in favor of theories. Wittgenstein viewed the tools of language as being fundamentally simple, [7] [non-primary source needed] and he believed that philosophers had obscured this simplicity by misusing language and by asking meaningless questions. He attempted in the Investigations to make things clear: Picture theory of language A common summary of his argument is that meaning is use. According to the use theory of meaning, the words are not defined by reference to the objects they designate, nor by the mental representations one might associate with them, but by how they are used. For example, this means there is no need to postulate that there is something called good that exists independently of any good deed. Meaning and definition [edit] Wittgenstein rejects a variety of ways of thinking about what the meaning of a word is, or how meanings can be identified. He shows how, in each case, the meaning of the word presupposes our ability to use it. He first asks the reader to perform a thought experiment: Any definition that focuses on amusement leaves us unsatisfied since the feelings experienced by a world class chess player are very different from those of a circle of children playing Duck Duck Goose. Any definition that focuses on competition will fail to explain the game of catch, or the game of solitaire. And a definition of the word "game" that focuses on rules will fall on similar difficulties. The essential point of this exercise is often missed. Wittgenstein argues that definitions emerge from what he termed "forms of life", roughly the culture and society in which they are used. Wittgenstein stresses the social aspects of cognition; to see how language works for most cases, we have to see how it functions in a specific social situation. In short, it is essential that a language is shareable, but this does not imply that for a language to function that it is in fact already shared. For Wittgenstein, the thing that the word stands for does not give the meaning of the word. Wittgenstein argues for this making a series of moves to show that to understand an ostensive definition presupposes an understanding of the way the word being defined is used. Family resemblances [edit] Why is it that we are sure a particular activity is a game while a similar activity is not? Olympic target shooting is a game while a similar activity is not. How do we recognize that two people we know are related to one another? We may see similar height, weight, eye color, hair, nose, mouth, patterns of speech, social or political views, mannerisms, body structure, last names, etc. Wittgenstein suggests that the same is true of language. We are all familiar with it. He suggests that an attempt to untangle these knots requires more than simple deductive arguments pointing out the problems with some particular position. Language-games [edit] Wittgenstein develops this discussion of games into the key notion of a

language-game. Wittgenstein introduces the term using simple examples, [17] but intends it to be used for the many ways in which we use language. For example, in one language-game, a word might be used to stand for or refer to an object, but in another the same word might be used for giving orders, or for asking questions, and so on. The famous example is the meaning of the word "game". We speak of various kinds of games: These are all different uses of the word "games". Wittgenstein also gives the example of "Water! The meaning of the word depends on the language-game within which it is being used. Another way Wittgenstein puts the point is that the word "water" has no meaning apart from its use within a language-game. One might use the word as an order to have someone else bring you a glass of water. But it can also be used to warn someone that the water has been poisoned. One might even use the word as code by members of a secret society. Wittgenstein does not limit the application of his concept of language games to word-meaning. He also applies it to sentence-meaning. It only acquires significance if we fix it within some context of use. Thus, it fails to say anything because the sentence as such does not yet determine some particular use. The sentence is only meaningful when it is used to say something. For instance, it can be used so as to say that no person or historical figure fits the set of descriptions attributed to the person that goes by the name of "Moses". But it can also mean that the leader of the Israelites was not called Moses. Or that there cannot have been anyone who accomplished all that the Bible relates of Moses, etc. What the sentence means thus depends on its context of use.

Rules[edit] One general characteristic of games that Wittgenstein considers in detail is the way in which they consist in following rules. Rules constitute a family, rather than a class that can be explicitly defined. Indeed, he argues that any course of action can be made out to accord with some particular rule, and that therefore a rule cannot be used to explain an action. Following a rule is a social activity. Private language argument Wittgenstein also ponders the possibility of a language that talks about those things that are known only to the user, whose content is inherently private. Wittgenstein presents several perspectives on the topic. One point he makes is that it is incoherent to talk of knowing that one is in some particular mental state. For Wittgenstein, this is a grammatical point, part of the way in which the language-game involving the word "pain" is played. First, he argues that a private language is not really a language at all. This point is intimately connected with a variety of other themes in his later works, especially his investigations of "meaning". For Wittgenstein, there is no single, coherent "sample" or "object" that we can call "meaning". Rather, the supposition that there are such things is the source of many philosophical confusions. Meaning is a complicated phenomenon that is woven into the fabric of our lives. As a consequence, it makes no sense to talk about a private language, with words that mean something in the absence of other users of the language. Again, several examples are considered. One is that perhaps using S involves mentally consulting a table of sensations, to check that one has associated S correctly; but in this case, how could the mental table be checked for its correctness? It is "[a]s if someone were to buy several copies of the morning paper to assure himself that what it said was true", as Wittgenstein puts it. That is, the only way to check to see if one has applied the symbol S correctly to a certain mental state is to introspect and determine whether the current sensation is identical to the sensation previously associated with S. Thus, for a language to be used at all it must have some public criterion of identity. Often, what is widely regarded as a deep philosophical problem will vanish, argues Wittgenstein, and eventually be seen as a confusion about the significance of the words that philosophers use to frame such problems and questions. It is only in this way that it is interesting to talk about something like a "private language" i. Wittgenstein asserts that, if something is a language, it cannot be logically private; and if something is private, it is not and cannot be a language. Wittgenstein suggests that, in such a situation, the word "beetle" could not be the name of a thing, because supposing that each person has something completely different in their boxes or nothing at all does not change the meaning of the word; the beetle as a private object "drops out of consideration as irrelevant". And, contrapositively, if we consider something to be indeed private, it follows that we cannot talk about it. According to Wittgenstein, those who insist that consciousness or any other apparently subjective mental state is conceptually unconnected to the external world are mistaken. Wittgenstein explicitly criticizes so-called conceivability arguments: And if anyone can do soâ€”why should that not merely prove that such image-mongery is of no interest to us? It is as if I were to say: Arguments that claim otherwise are misguided. Wittgenstein has also said that "language is

inherent and transcendental", which is also not difficult to understand, since we can only comprehend and explain transcendental affairs through language. Wittgenstein and behaviorism[edit] From his remarks on the importance of public, observable behavior as opposed to private experiences , it may seem that Wittgenstein is simply a behaviorist –one who thinks that mental states are nothing over and above certain behavior. However, Wittgenstein resists such a characterization; he writes considering what an objector might say: He is, of course, primarily concerned with facts of linguistic usage. However, some argue that Wittgenstein is basically a behaviorist because he considers facts about language use as all there is. Such a claim is controversial, since it is not explicitly endorsed in the Investigations. Often one can see something in a straightforward way – seeing that it is a rabbit, perhaps.

Chapter 3 : Wittgenstein's Method: Neglected Aspects: Essays On Wittgenstein by Gordon P. Baker

Wittgenstein's Method in §§ of the Philosophical Investigations There are many Wittgensteins. In fact, the trend in recent literature seems to be to.

She counts the squares, and reports the result: We protest, and the child gets confused. Her puzzlement originates in her belief that she generated arrangement c by doing the same thing we did initially – she considered three batches of three objects, and then counted the objects! This simple example signals a more serious problem. This is easy to see: See Goodman [], Kripke []. In essence, here Wittgenstein would urge that it is just a brute fact of nature that we are indeed able to avoid this situation, and sort out our confusion, especially after the teachers intervene and signal the mistake we made. Were we not able to act this way, were the confusions such as the ones described above overwhelmingly prevalent, then the arithmetical practice would not exist to begin with. But see also Fogelin [] for more on these matters. While this might be distressing, there is no guarantee that the child will reach this stage in understanding. Moreover, the process is gradual: The arithmetical training consists in inculcating in children a certain technique to deploy when presented with situations of the kind discussed here: The arithmetical identities are not reducible to mere manipulations of symbols, but come embedded into, and govern the relations of, arrangement practices. The arithmetical training consists not only in having the pupils learn the allowed strings of symbols the multiplication table by heart, but also, more importantly, in inculcating in them a certain reaction when presented with arrangements of the kind discussed above. At this point, two aspects of the issue should be distinguished. The first is purely descriptive. This is an empirical regularity: The second aspect is normative: When discussing multiplication in LFM X, p. Now do the same sort of thing for these two numbers. This is an experiment – and one which we may later adopt as a calculation. What does that mean? Well, suppose that 90 per cent do it all one way. Now everybody is taught to do it – and now there is a right and wrong. Before there was not. To indicate the change of status, Wittgenstein uses several suggestive metaphors. The first is the road building process: It is like finding the best place to build a road across the moors. We may first send people across, and see which is the most natural way for them to go, and then build the road that way. It is this one that gradually emerges as the most suited for crossing, and the one which the lasting road will follow. The second metaphor is legalistic: On the other hand, what is in the archives is protected, withdrawn from circulation – that is, not open to change and dispute. The relations between the archived items are frozen, solidified. Note the normative role of archives as well: A related metaphor we already encountered above is that of the physical process of condensation: It is as if we had hardened the empirical proposition into a rule. And now we have, not an hypothesis that gets tested by experience, but a paradigm with which experience is compared and judged. And so a new kind of judgment. RFM VI The elevation to a new status performed because of the robust, natural agreement is indicated by archiving: Because they all agree in what they do, we lay it down as a rule, and put it in the archives. Not until we do that have we got to mathematics. Thus, interestingly, there is a sense in which Wittgenstein actually agrees with the line taken by Hardy, Frege and other Platonists insisting on the objectivity of mathematics. The alternative account he proposes is that arithmetical identities emerge as a special codification of these contingent but extremely robust, objectively verifiable behavioral regularities. Yet, recall that although the arithmetical propositions owe their origin and relevance to the existence of such regularities, they belong to a different order. This situation would only show that pebbles are not good for demonstrating and teaching addition. The mathematical identity is untouchable as it were, and the only option left to us is to suspect that maybe the empirical context is abnormal. Thus, the next step is to ask whether we face the same anomalies when we use other objects, such as fruits, pencils, books, bottles, fingers, and so forth. So, let us explore, for a moment, for the sake of the argument, the scenario in which a large variety of ordinary items is subject to this strange variation. Under this assumption, the conclusion to draw is a radical one: This would be the situation defining the supreme pointlessness of arithmetic, which would thus become a mere game of symbols. As Wittgenstein puts it, I want to say: It is the use outside mathematics, and so the meaning of the signs that make the sign game into mathematics. It is a

contingent, brute natural fact again! Moreover, it is precisely the existence of such regularities " together with, as we will see in a moment, regularities of human behaviour " that makes possible the arithmetical practice in the first place. Wittgenstein, however, realized this rather late, as Steiner [] documents. A closer look at the contingent regularity relevant in this context " behavioural agreement " is now in order. Its existence is supported by the already discussed facts: There surely is a neuro-physiological basis for this; cats, unlike dogs, cannot be trained to fetch. Yet, as stressed above, it is crucial to note that speaking in terms of behavioural agreement when it comes to understanding the mathematical enterprise should not lead one to believe that Wittgenstein is in the business of undermining the objectivity of mathematics. According to him, Wittgenstein maintains that at any step in a calculation we could go any way we want " and the only reason that we go the way we usually go is an agreement between us, as the members of the community: Dummett [b, 67] writes: Thus, one should say that a mathematical identity is true by convention; that is, it is taken, accepted as true by all calculators because a convention binds them. However, textual evidence can be amassed against this reading. Convincing passages illustrating this point can be found virtually everywhere in his later works, and Gerrard [] collects several of them. Given certain principles and laws of deduction, you can say certain things and not others. Is this what I am saying? So, it is simply not the case that the truth-value of a mathematical identity is established by convention. There is no opinion at all; it is not a question of opinion. They are determined by a consensus of action: There is a consensus but it is not a consensus of opinion. We all act the same way, walk the same way, count the same way p. Steiner [, 12] explains: The only degree of freedom is to avoid laying down these rules, not to adopt alternative rules. It is only in this sense that the mathematician is an inventor, not a discoverer. While the behavioural agreement constitutes the background for the arithmetical practice, Wittgenstein takes great care to keep it separated from the content of this practice Gerrard [,]. As Gerrard observes, this distinction corresponds, roughly, to the one drawn in LFM, p. The very fact of the existence of this background is not amenable to philosophical analysis. This is a question that he, qua philosopher, does not take to be his concern. He sees himself as being in the business of only describing this background, with the avowed goal of drawing attention to its existence and overlooked function. But the task of philosophy is, and can be, only to describe, not explain, the fundamental role of the regularity of human mathematical behaviour. If we recall the black squares example, the guide must play the role of a regress-stopper, constituting the explanation as to how all possible interpretations and distractions are averted. The mind and this guide form an infallible mechanism delivering the result. Putnam [,] makes the point as follows: Thus there is ample room for further discussion of his views, and especially for clarifying how his philosophy of mathematics complements, or even augments, his relatively better understood philosophy of language and mind. The relation between his view of mathematics and that of the professional mathematicians is yet another interesting and potentially controversial matter worth of further study " for, if we are to believe him, A mathematician is bound to be horrified by my mathematical comments, since he has always been trained to avoid indulging in thoughts and doubts of the kind I develop. He has learned to regard them as something contemptible and he has acquired a revulsion from them as infantile. That is to say, I trot out all the problems that a child learning arithmetic, and so forth, finds difficult, the problems that education represses without solving. I say to those repressed doubts: PG , 7. References and Further Reading For comprehensive bibliographical sources, see Sluga and Stern [] and Floyd [], and, for material available online, see Rodych [] and Biletzki and Matar []. Routledge and Kegan Paul, ; translated by D. Philosophical Investigations, []. The German text, with a revised English translation by G. Cambridge Massachusetts and London, England paperback edition [] 1st ed. PG Philosophical Grammar, [], Oxford: Basil Blackwell; Rush Rhees, ed. PR Philosophical Remarks, [], Oxford: University of Chicago Press, G. LFM Diamond, Cora, ed.

Chapter 4 : Philosophical Investigations - Wikipedia

Wittgensteins Method has 8 ratings and 0 reviews. This is a collection of the key articles written by renowned Wittgenstein scholar, G.P. Baker, on Wittge.

Ideas that make a difference Meaning is use: Wittgenstein made a major contribution to conversations on language, logic and metaphysics, but also ethics, the way that we should live in the world. He published two important books: These were major contributions to twenty century philosophy of language. Wittgenstein was a difficult character. Those who knew him assumed he was either a madman or a genius. He was known for working himself up into fits of frustration, pacing about the room decrying his own stupidity, and lambasting philosophers for their habit of tying themselves in semantic knots. In his favour, Wittgenstein was not afraid to admit his own mistakes. Students approached his classes at Cambridge University with due trepidation, never sure if they were about to witness a brilliant act of logical deconstruction or the implosion of a tortured mind. Sometimes a crisis can be productive. Wittgenstein, who was constantly in the grip of some kind of intellectual cataclysm, tended to advance his thinking by debunking what he had previous thought to be true. The goal of philosophy, for early Wittgenstein, was to pare language back to its logical form, the better to picture the logical form of the world. Logical positivism was a powerful movement that defined the shape of analytic philosophy well into the s. However, it was undercut by the work of the same man who was its founder. By the s, Wittgenstein had decided that the picture theory language was quite wrong. He devoted the rest of his life to explaining why. It is a shift from seeing language as a fixed structure imposed upon the world to seeing it as a fluid structure that is intimately bound up with our everyday practices and forms of life. For later Wittgenstein, creating meaningful statements is not a matter of mapping the logical form of the world. Words are how you use them. Communication, on this model, involves using conventional terms in a way that is recognised by a linguistic community. It involves playing a conventionally accepted language game. We are a long way from the formalistic view of language described in the Tractatus. We have left the Platonic realm of pure logic and rediscovered the world. Writers and communicators are always told to think about the audience that they are speaking to and to craft their communicues accordingly. In order to communicate with a social tribe, listen to how they play with language. A picture, they say, is worth a thousand words, but a well-timed joke can express a world-view. Jokes are not ephemera. They may be logically incoherent this is often what makes them funny , yet they play an important role in the language games that bind a community together. However, both parties to this debate unwittingly rely on a picture theory of language. On this theory, language represents facts about the world. What is says is either true or false. Never the twain shall meet. Perhaps the term expresses fidelity to a way of life, as Karen Armstrong argues. Perhaps it expresses wonder in the face of existence. The bottom line is that using a term does not necessarily imply a belief in an entity that corresponds to this term. The meaning of a word hinges on its usefulness in context, not its ideal referent outside of all possible contexts. Why waste time arguing over issues that will never be resolved when the whole thing could be deflated with a simple question: The more that we return words to their home, seeing them in terms of the ordinary language contexts that they work within, the easier it becomes to untie the knots in language and understand what is really being said.

Chapter 5 : Elizaphanian: WITTGENSTEIN'S MYSTICAL METHOD

Ludwig Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mathematics is undoubtedly the most unknown and under-appreciated part of his philosophical opus. Indeed, more than half of Wittgenstein's writings from through are devoted to mathematics, a fact that Wittgenstein himself emphasized in by writing that his "chief contribution has been in the philosophy of mathematics" (Monk).

It has led to a collection of a priori theories concerning how the world must be, but such theories are founded upon illusions brought about by misunderstandings of, and misrepresentations of, our forms of expression. The result has not been to create a body of philosophical knowledge but to generate a series of seemingly intractable problems – problems that trap us between what must be the case according to the theories and what is the case, so far as our everyday lives are concerned. Thus philosophy is left with the task of revealing the illusionary nature of these problems. They are not to be solved but dissolved: Obviously, the proper technique for achieving this cannot itself be theoretical – that would just repeat the process that caused the problem in the first place. Instead, Wittgenstein proposes an altogether different method: There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. All explanation must disappear, and description alone must take its place. And the results will not be new facts about the world but a clearer understanding of what we already know, in the same way that a map might give us a clearer understanding of our home town. It was a radical and controversial idea when the Investigations was published in , and it remains so today. For now, however, I want to address an obvious question raised by the rejection of theory, namely: It seems that such an approach would make it impossible to state any conclusions, because that surely involves stating a theory. The first thing to point out is that actually not every general statement can meaningfully be called theoretical. There is something to be tested here. It merely states an established truth. Such statements are not contentious and therefore not theoretical. There is, however, an important distinction between the above two examples. We could imagine a situation where this truth was still up for grabs, and there the statement would be theoretical. We would need more facts about giraffes or swans to settle the issue. It does not remind us of an established empirical truth, but a grammatical one. And that person would require linguistic instruction rather than new empirical facts. Since these grammatical observations are not theoretical, it is possible to derive general statements from them which are also not theoretical. Such statements are summaries. They do not rely on deduction and do not express hypotheses. They can be verified, not by experiment, but simply by looking and seeing whether they correctly reflect the established facts. This highlights the important distinction between TLP 3. Wittgenstein does not say it must be so indeed, he explicitly says it is not always so , merely that – most of the time – it is so. Here we might admit that we can draw non-theoretical conclusions, yet still wonder why theories must be ruled out altogether. The suggestion misunderstands the flaw at the heart of philosophical theories. Determinism, for example, flows from reflections on the fact that every event has a cause. This involves no illicit move because everything remains at an a priori level. It does not, however, save the theory by getting rid of its mistakes – it gets rid of the theory. That is because we are no longer deducing what must be the case, but consulting the rule-book to see how things are. Then we look up the rules and see that under certain circumstances it is perfectly legitimate. His argument is that they cannot yield results because they are conceptually incoherent. They attempt to deduce a priori truths about the world based on rules that provide no justification for such deductions. If those are accepted then ditching theory is mandatory, not optional. Finally and at the risk of stating the bleeding obvious it is also not itself a theory. It is a proposal offered as the only way of avoiding the endlessly repeated mistakes of the past and providing us with a way to see the world aright when we become entangled in conceptual confusion. Two and a half thousand years and still waiting. It would require patience and skill rather than god-like genius. For many that price is too high.

Chapter 6 : Wittgensteins Method by Gordon P. Baker

Wittgenstein's Method has 8 ratings and 0 reviews. This is a collection of the key articles written by renowned Wittgenstein scholar, G.P. Baker, on Witt.

He has been something of a cult figure but shunned publicity and even built an isolated hut in Norway to live in complete seclusion. His sexuality was ambiguous but he was probably gay; how actively so is still a matter of controversy. The Duty of Genius. Wittgenstein himself was baptized in a Catholic church and was given a Catholic burial, although between baptism and burial he was neither a practicing nor a believing Catholic. The Wittgenstein family was large and wealthy. Karl Wittgenstein was one of the most successful businessmen in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, leading the iron and steel industry there. Music remained important to Wittgenstein throughout his life. So did darker matters. Ludwig was the youngest of eight children, and of his four brothers, three committed suicide. As for his career, Wittgenstein studied mechanical engineering in Berlin and in went to Manchester, England to do research in aeronautics, experimenting with kites. His interest in engineering led to an interest in mathematics which in turn got him thinking about philosophical questions about the foundations of mathematics. He visited the mathematician and philosopher Gottlob Frege , who recommended that he study with Bertrand Russell in Cambridge. At Cambridge Wittgenstein greatly impressed Russell and G. Moore , and began work on logic. When his father died in Wittgenstein inherited a fortune, which he quickly gave away. When war broke out the next year, he volunteered for the Austrian army. He continued his philosophical work and won several medals for bravery during the war. This was the only book Wittgenstein published during his lifetime. Having thus, in his opinion, solved all the problems of philosophy, Wittgenstein became an elementary school teacher in rural Austria, where his approach was strict and unpopular, but apparently effective. He spent meticulously designing and building an austere house in Vienna for his sister Gretl. In he returned to Cambridge to teach at Trinity College, recognizing that in fact he had more work to do in philosophy. He became professor of philosophy at Cambridge in After the war he returned to university teaching but resigned his professorship in to concentrate on writing. Much of this he did in Ireland, preferring isolated rural places for his work. By he had written all the material that was published after his death as Philosophical Investigations, arguably his most important work. He spent the last two years of his life in Vienna, Oxford and Cambridge and kept working until he died of prostate cancer in Cambridge in April His work from these last years has been published as On Certainty. In the preface to the book he says that its value consists in two things: At the end of the book Wittgenstein says "My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: What to make of the Tractatus, its author, and the propositions it contains, then, is no easy matter. The book certainly does not seem to be about ethics. It consists of numbered propositions in seven sets. The seventh set contains only one proposition, the famous "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence. Propositions show the logical form of reality. The general form of a proposition is: This is how things stand. Here and elsewhere in the Tractatus Wittgenstein seems to be saying that the essence of the world and of life is: This is how things are. One is tempted to add "--deal with it. What are we to make of this? Many commentators ignore or dismiss what Wittgenstein said about his work and its aims, and instead look for regular philosophical theories in his work. The most famous of these in the Tractatus is the "picture theory" of meaning. According to this theory propositions are meaningful insofar as they picture states of affairs or matters of empirical fact. Anything normative, supernatural or one might say metaphysical must, it therefore seems, be nonsense. This has been an influential reading of parts of the Tractatus. These concepts are purely formal or a priori. A statement such as "There are objects in the world" does not picture a state of affairs. Rather it is, as it were, presupposed by the notion of a state of affairs. The "picture theory" therefore denies sense to just the kind of statements of which the Tractatus is composed, to the framework supporting the picture theory itself. In this way the Tractatus pulls the rug out from under its own feet. If the propositions of the Tractatus are nonsensical then they surely cannot put forward the picture theory of meaning, or any other theory. However, this is not to say that the Tractatus itself is without value. Philosophical theories, he suggests, are attempts to answer questions that are not really questions at all they

are nonsense, or to solve problems that are not really problems. He says in proposition 4. Most of the propositions and questions of philosophers arise from our failure to understand the logic of our language. They belong to the same class as the question whether the good is more or less identical than the beautiful. And it is not surprising that the deepest problems are in fact not problems at all. Philosophers, then, have the task of presenting the logic of our language clearly. This will not solve important problems but it will show that some things that we take to be important problems are really not problems at all. The gain is not wisdom but an absence of confusion. This is not a rejection of philosophy or logic. Wittgenstein took philosophical puzzlement very seriously indeed, but he thought that it needed dissolving by analysis rather than solving by the production of theories. The *Tractatus* presents itself as a key for untying a series of knots both profound and highly technical. Ethics and Religion Wittgenstein had a lifelong interest in religion and claimed to see every problem from a religious point of view, but never committed himself to any formal religion. His various remarks on ethics also suggest a particular point of view, and Wittgenstein often spoke of ethics and religion together. Certainly Wittgenstein worried about being morally good or even perfect, and he had great respect for sincere religious conviction, but he also said, in his lecture on ethics, that "the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language," i. This gives support to the view that Wittgenstein believed in mystical truths that somehow cannot be expressed meaningfully but that are of the utmost importance. An alternative view is that Wittgenstein believed that there is really nothing to say about ethics. This would explain why he wrote less and less about ethics as his life wore on. His "accept and endure" attitude and belief in going "the bloody hard way" are evident in all his work, especially after the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein wants his reader not to think too much but to look at the "language games" any practices that involve language that give rise to philosophical personal, existential, spiritual problems. His approach to such problems is painstaking, thorough, open-eyed and receptive. His ethical attitude is an integral part of his method and shows itself as such. But there is little to say about such an attitude short of recommending it. In *Culture and Value* p. Rules of life are dressed up in pictures. And these pictures can only serve to describe what we are to do, not justify it. Because they could provide a justification only if they held good in other respects as well. But I cannot say: In a world of contingency one cannot prove that a particular attitude is the correct one to take. If this suggests relativism, it should be remembered that it too is just one more attitude or point of view, and one without the rich tradition and accumulated wisdom, philosophical reasoning and personal experience of, say, orthodox Christianity or Judaism. Indeed crude relativism, the universal judgement that one cannot make universal judgements, is self-contradictory. This assertion, however, should not be taken literally: Wittgenstein was no war-monger and even recommended letting oneself be massacred rather than taking part in hand-to-hand combat. With regard to religion, Wittgenstein is often considered a kind of Anti-Realist see below for more on this. He likened the ritual of religion to a great gesture, as when one kisses a photograph. This is not based on the false belief that the person in the photograph will feel the kiss or return it, nor is it based on any other belief. Neither is the kiss just a substitute for a particular phrase, like "I love you. There might be no substitute that would do. The same might be said of the whole language-game or games of religion, but this is a controversial point. If religious utterances, such as "God exists," are treated as gestures of a certain kind then this seems not to be treating them as literal statements. Many religious believers, including Wittgensteinian ones, would object strongly to this. There is room, though, for a good deal of sophisticated disagreement about what it means to take a statement literally. If we cannot reduce talk about God to anything else, or replace it, or prove it false, then perhaps God is as real as anything else. In the *Tractatus* he says at 4. Its aim is to clear up muddle and confusion. It follows that philosophers should not concern themselves so much with what is actual, keeping up with the latest popularizations of science, say, which Wittgenstein despised. This depends on our concepts and the ways they fit together as seen in language. What is conceivable and what is not, what makes sense and what does not, depends on the rules of language, of grammar.

Chapter 7 : Wittgenstein's Method : Gordon P. Baker :

It seems clear to me that an acceptance of Wittgenstein's method throws open a new way of understanding the creeds which is both more devotionally fruitful, and more in tune with the Church Fathers, but in any case, a simple statement that 'the creed is true' seems impossible, after Wittgenstein.

The world is everything that is the case. The world is all that is the case. What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts. What is the case is a fact is the existence of states of affairs. The logical picture of the facts is the thought. A logical picture of facts is a thought. The thought is the significant proposition. A thought is a proposition with sense. Propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions. A proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions. An elementary proposition is a truth function of itself. This is the general form of proposition. This is the general form of a proposition. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence. The world is represented by thought, which is a proposition with sense, since they all "world, thought, and proposition" share the same logical form. Hence, the thought and the proposition can be pictures of the facts. Starting with a seeming metaphysics, Wittgenstein sees the world as consisting of facts 1, rather than the traditional, atomistic conception of a world made up of objects. Facts are existent states of affairs 2 and states of affairs, in turn, are combinations of objects. They may have various properties and may hold diverse relations to one another. Objects combine with one another according to their logical, internal properties. Thus, states of affairs, being comprised of objects in combination, are inherently complex. The states of affairs which do exist could have been otherwise. This means that states of affairs are either actual existent or possible. It is the totality of states of affairs "actual and possible" that makes up the whole of reality. The world is precisely those states of affairs which do exist. Pictures are made up of elements that together constitute the picture. Each element represents an object, and the combination of elements in the picture represents the combination of objects in a state of affairs. The logical structure of the picture, whether in thought or in language, is isomorphic with the logical structure of the state of affairs which it pictures. This leads to an understanding of what the picture can picture; but also what it cannot "its own pictorial form. Logical analysis, in the spirit of Frege and Russell, guides the work, with Wittgenstein using logical calculus to carry out the construction of his system. First, the structure of the proposition must conform to the constraints of logical form, and second, the elements of the proposition must have reference *bedeutung*. These conditions have far-reaching implications. The analysis must culminate with a name being a primitive symbol for a simple object. Moreover, logic itself gives us the structure and limits of what can be said at all. This bi-polarity of propositions enables the composition of more complex propositions from atomic ones by using truth-functional operators 5. He delves even deeper by then providing the general form of a truth-function 6. Having developed this analysis of world-thought-language, and relying on the one general form of the proposition, Wittgenstein can now assert that all meaningful propositions are of equal value. Subsequently, he ends the journey with the admonition concerning what can or cannot and what should or should not be said 7, leaving outside the realm of the sayable propositions of ethics, aesthetics, and metaphysics. It follows that only factual states of affairs which can be pictured can be represented by meaningful propositions. This means that what can be said are only propositions of natural science and leaves out of the realm of sense a daunting number of statements which are made and used in language. There are, first, the propositions of logic itself. These do not represent states of affairs, and the logical constants do not stand for objects. This is not a happenstance thought; it is fundamental precisely because the limits of sense rest on logic. Tautologies and contradictions, the propositions of logic, are the limits of language and thought, and thereby the limits of the world. Obviously, then, they do not picture anything and do not, therefore, have sense. Propositions which do have sense are bipolar; they range within the truth-conditions drawn by the truth-tables. The characteristic of being senseless applies not only to the propositions of logic but also to mathematics or the pictorial form itself of the pictures that do represent. These are, like tautologies and contradictions, literally sense-less, they have no sense. Beyond, or aside from, senseless propositions Wittgenstein identifies another group of statements which cannot carry sense:

Nonsense, as opposed to senselessness, is encountered when a proposition is even more radically devoid of meaning, when it transcends the bounds of sense. Under the label of unsinnig can be found various propositions: While some nonsensical propositions are blatantly so, others seem to be meaningful—and only analysis carried out in accordance with the picture theory can expose their nonsensicality. Wittgenstein does not, however, relegate all that is not inside the bounds of sense to oblivion. He makes a distinction between saying and showing which is made to do additional crucial work. This applies, for example, to the logical form of the world, the pictorial form, etc. They make themselves manifest. Is, then, philosophy doomed to be nonsense unsinnig, or, at best, senseless sinnlos when it does logic, but, in any case, meaningless? What is left for the philosopher to do, if traditional, or even revolutionary, propositions of metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics cannot be formulated in a sensical manner? It is an activity of clarification of thoughts, and more so, of critique of language. In other words, by showing them that some of their propositions are nonsense. For it employs a measure of the value of propositions that is done by logic and the notion of limits. It is here, however, with the constraints on the value of propositions, that the tension in the Tractatus is most strongly felt. It becomes clear that the notions used by the Tractatus—the logical-philosophical notions—do not belong to the world and hence cannot be used to express anything meaningful. Since language, thought and the world, are all isomorphic, any attempt to say in logic i. That is to say, the Tractatus has gone over its own limits, and stands in danger of being nonsensical. In the decades that have passed since its publication it has gone through several waves of general interpretations. These revolve around the realism of the Tractatus, the notion of nonsense and its role in reading the Tractatus itself, and the reading of the Tractatus as an ethical tract. There are interpretations that see the Tractatus as espousing realism, i. Such realism is also taken to be manifested in the essential bi-polarity of propositions; likewise, a straightforward reading of the picturing relation posits objects there to be represented by signs. As against these readings, more linguistically oriented interpretations give conceptual priority to the symbolism. In any case, the issue of realism vs. Subsequently, interpreters of the Tractatus have moved on to questioning the very presence of metaphysics within the book and the status of the propositions of the book themselves. Beyond the bounds of language lies nonsense—propositions which cannot picture anything—and Wittgenstein bans traditional metaphysics to that area. The traditional readings of the Tractatus accepted, with varying degrees of discomfort, the existence of that which is unsayable, that which cannot be put into words, the nonsensical. More recent readings tend to take nonsense more seriously as exactly that—nonsense. The Tractatus, on this stance, does not point at ineffable truths of, e. An accompanying discussion must then also deal with how this can be recognized, what this can possibly mean, and how it should be used, if at all. This discussion is closely related to what has come to be called the ethical reading of the Tractatus. And it is precisely this second part that is the important point. Obviously, such seemingly contradictory tensions within and about a text—written by its author—give rise to interpretative conundrums. There is another issue often debated by interpreters of Wittgenstein, which arises out of the questions above. This has to do with the continuity between the thought of the early and later Wittgenstein. And again, the more recent interpretations challenge this standard, emphasizing that the fundamental therapeutic motivation clearly found in the later Wittgenstein should also be attributed to the early. The Later Wittgenstein 3. Wittgenstein used this term to designate any conception which allows for a gap between question and answer, such that the answer to the question could be found at a later date. The complex edifice of the Tractatus is built on the assumption that the task of logical analysis was to discover the elementary propositions, whose form was not yet known. What marks the transition from early to later Wittgenstein can be summed up as the total rejection of dogmatism, i. It is in the Philosophical Investigations that the working out of the transitions comes to culmination. Other writings of the same period, though, manifest the same anti-dogmatic stance, as it is applied, e. It was edited by G. Anscombe and Rush Rhees and translated by Anscombe. It comprised two parts. Part I, consisting of numbered paragraphs, was ready for printing in , but rescinded from the publisher by Wittgenstein. Part II was added on by the editors, trustees of his Nachlass. In a new edited translation, by P. In the Preface to PI, Wittgenstein states that his new thoughts would be better understood by contrast with and against the background of his old thoughts, those in the Tractatus; and indeed, most of Part I of PI is essentially critical. Its new insights can be understood as

primarily exposing fallacies in the traditional way of thinking about language, truth, thought, intentionality, and, perhaps mainly, philosophy. In this sense, it is conceived of as a therapeutic work, viewing philosophy itself as therapy.

Chapter 8 : Ludwig Wittgenstein (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

This is a collection of the key articles written by renowned Wittgenstein scholar, G.P. Baker, on Wittgenstein's later philosophy, published posthumously. Following Baker's death in , the volume has been edited by collaborator and partner, Katherine Morris.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein claims that a genuine proposition, which rests upon conventions, is used by us to assert that a state of affairs i . An elementary proposition is isomorphic to the possible state of affairs it is used to represent: An elementary proposition is true iff its possible state of affairs i . Wittgenstein clearly states this Correspondence Theory of Truth at 4. If an elementary proposition is true, the state of affairs exists; if an elementary proposition is false, the state of affairs does not exist. But propositions and their linguistic components are, in and of themselves, dead – a proposition only has sense because we human beings have endowed it with a conventional sense 5. Moreover, propositional signs may be used to do any number of things e . Stated boldly and bluntly, tautologies, contradictions and mathematical propositions i . Stated differently, tautologies and contradictions do not have sense, which means we cannot use them to make assertions, which means, in turn, that they cannot be either true or false. Analogously, mathematical pseudo-propositions are equations, which indicate or show that two expressions are equivalent in meaning and therefore are intersubstitutable. Thus, a second, closely related way of stating this demarcation is to say that mathematical propositions are decidable by purely formal means e . The Tractarian formal theory of mathematics is, specifically, a theory of formal operations. Very briefly stated, Wittgenstein presents: Similarly, truth-functional propositions can be generated, as Russell says in the Introduction to the *Tractatus* p . There are at least four reasons proffered for this interpretation. According to Wittgenstein, we ascertain the truth of both mathematical and logical propositions by the symbol alone i . Though at least three Logicist interpretations of the *Tractatus* have appeared within the last 20 years, the following considerations Rodych ; Wrigley indicate that none of these reasons is particularly cogent. Alternatively, Wittgenstein may mean that mathematical inferences i . In sum, critics of the Logicist interpretation of the *Tractatus* argue that 1 – 4 do not individually or collectively constitute cogent grounds for a Logicist interpretation of the *Tractatus*. Another crucial aspect of the Tractarian theory of mathematics is captured in 6. Indeed in real life a mathematical proposition is never what we want. Rather, we make use of mathematical propositions only in inferences from propositions that do not belong to mathematics to others that likewise do not belong to mathematics. Though mathematics and mathematical activity are purely formal and syntactical, in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein tacitly distinguishes between purely formal games with signs, which have no application in contingent propositions, and mathematical propositions, which are used to make inferences from contingent proposition s to contingent proposition s . Wittgenstein does not explicitly say, however, how mathematical equations, which are not genuine propositions, are used in inferences from genuine proposition s to genuine proposition s Floyd Though it is doubtful that, in , Wittgenstein would have thought these issues problematic, it certainly is true that the Tractarian theory of mathematics is essentially a sketch, especially in comparison with what Wittgenstein begins to develop six years later. After the completion of the *Tractatus* in , Wittgenstein did virtually no philosophical work until February 2, , eleven months after attending a lecture by the Dutch mathematician L. Though Wittgenstein seems not to have read any Hilbert or Brouwer prior to the completion of the *Tractatus*, by early Wittgenstein had certainly read work by Brouwer, Weyl, Skolem, Ramsey and possibly Hilbert and, apparently, he had had one or more private discussions with Brouwer in Finch Thus, the rudimentary treatment of mathematics in the *Tractatus*, whose principal influences were Russell and Frege, was succeeded by detailed work on mathematics in the middle period – , which was strongly influenced by the s work of Brouwer, Weyl, Hilbert, and Skolem. You could say arithmetic is a kind of geometry; i . When we prove a theorem or decide a proposition, we operate in a purely formal, syntactical manner. Hence, the only meaning i . PG , WVC As we shall shortly see, the middle Wittgenstein is also drawn to strong formalism by a new concern with questions of decidability. Undoubtedly influenced by the writings of Brouwer and David Hilbert, Wittgenstein uses strong formalism to forge a new connection between mathematical

meaningfulness and algorithmic decidability. An equation is a rule of syntax. Mathematics as Human Invention: According to the middle Wittgenstein, we invent mathematics, from which it follows that mathematics and so-called mathematical objects do not exist independently of our inventions. Whatever is mathematical is fundamentally a product of human activity. Given that we have invented only mathematical extensions *e*. Put succinctly, Wittgenstein thinks that the extension of this notion of concept-and-extension from the domain of existent *i*. See 1 just below. Rejection of Infinite Mathematical Extensions: An infinite mathematical extension *i*. Given that the mathematical infinite can only be a recursive rule, and given that a mathematical proposition must have sense, it follows that there cannot be an infinite mathematical proposition *i*. Moreover, since mathematics is essentially what we have and what we know, Wittgenstein restricts algorithmic decidability to knowing how to decide a proposition with a known decision procedure. Anti-Foundationalist Account of Real Numbers: Since there are no infinite mathematical extensions, irrational numbers are rules, not extensions. Rejection of Different Infinite Cardinalities: In examining mathematics as a purely human invention, Wittgenstein tries to determine what exactly we have invented and why exactly, in his opinion, we erroneously think that there are infinite mathematical extensions. If, first, we examine what we have invented, we see that we have invented formal calculi consisting of finite extensions and intensional rules. If, more importantly, we endeavour to determine why we believe that infinite mathematical extensions exist *e*. In sum, because a mathematical extension is necessarily a finite sequence of symbols, an infinite mathematical extension is a contradiction-in-terms. Thus, when we say, *e*. Since a mathematical set is a finite extension, we cannot meaningfully quantify over an infinite mathematical domain, simply because there is no such thing as an infinite mathematical domain *i*. AWL 6; and PG But then neither should one say a general proposition follows from a proposition about the nature of number. According to Wittgenstein, however, this is not a matter of human limitation. But the difference here is not one of degree but of kind: This applies, according to Wittgenstein, to human beings, but more importantly, it applies also to God *i*. As Wittgenstein says at PR ; cf. But what does that mean? I can understand a proposition with a beginning and an end. But can one also understand a proposition with no end? No, in this case I ought to express only the first equation. The crucial question why and in exactly what sense the Law of the Excluded Middle does not apply to such expressions will be answered in the next section. Mathematical propositions for which we know we have in hand an applicable and effective decision procedure *i*. Concatenations of symbols that are not part of any mathematical calculus and which, for that reason, are not mathematical propositions *i*. In his p. And yet, for all of the agreement, the disagreement in 4 is absolutely crucial. Brouwer admits it as a mathematical proposition, while Wittgenstein rejects it because we do not know how to algorithmically decide it. Like Brouwer [In particular, if there are undecidable mathematical propositions as Brouwer maintains , then at least some mathematical propositions are not propositions of any existent mathematical calculus. For Wittgenstein, however, it is a defining feature of a mathematical proposition that it is either decided or decidable by a known decision procedure in a mathematical calculus. Against Weyl and Brouwer. At PG , Wittgenstein emphasizes the importance of algorithmic decidability clearly and emphatically: Even these words are used to construct an algorithm. If a genuine mathematical proposition is undecided, the Law of the Excluded Middle holds in the sense that we know that we will prove or refute the proposition by applying an applicable decision procedure PG , For Wittgenstein, there simply is no distinction between syntax and semantics in mathematics: In this manner, Wittgenstein defines both a mathematical calculus and a mathematical proposition in epistemic terms. Thus, the middle Wittgenstein rejects undecidable mathematical propositions on two grounds. First, number-theoretic expressions that quantify over an infinite domain are not algorithmically decidable, and hence are not meaningful mathematical propositions. This radical position on decidability results in various radical and counter-intuitive statements about unrestricted mathematical quantification, mathematical induction, and, especially, the sense of a newly proved mathematical proposition. Meandering about in infinite space on the look-out for a gold ring is no kind of search. Not even in the sense of a proposition of arithmetic. Rather, it corresponds to an induction. What, if anything, does any number-theoretic proof by mathematical induction actually prove? On the standard view, a proof by mathematical induction has the following paradigmatic form.

Chapter 9 : Philosophical Investigations: Wittgenstein's New Philosophy: A "No Theory" Theory

This is a method, and it is with this method that Wittgenstein's true genius lies. In contrast to almost all philosophers within the Western tradition Wittgenstein was not concerned with providing answers to particular questions.

This is my MA thesis on Wittgenstein - the pinnacle of my academic career. So far ;- Having just re-read it, six years after production now ten years! My essay can be summarised as an argument for the following theses: Wittgenstein once famously observed: My thesis is that throughout his life Wittgenstein wished to enjoin upon philosophy a silence about questions of value " an apophatic, mystical silence. I should say at this point that I do not consider the main points of my argument to be original⁴, although I do not think that this point of view is well known, and therefore a summary of the evidence and relevant points may have some merit. In order to bring these theses out clearly, my argument will proceed in the following stages. Firstly, I argue that the Tractatus was a philosophical work directed by a religious concern, specifically, an outlook that can be described as mystical. Secondly I shall argue that the Investigations was governed by the same outlook, and can only be fully understood in that light, arguing that the Investigations can best be understood as advancing an apophatic method. A definition of the mystical ⁴. Furthermore, James states that these mystical experiences are foundational for religious life⁷, and that they are opposed to rationalism⁸. In this essay, when I use the word mystical, I am using it in this Jamesian sense. I am using James as my model for understanding mysticism, not because James has the best understanding of what mysticism is he does not but for two other reasons: There is a lack of clarity in dating when it was that Wittgenstein read James, but it was in the period before the First World War. In connection with this, it is worth pointing out that he once said to Drury that all his fundamental ideas came to him early in life¹⁰, and his fundamental concerns were always ethical and religious in character. The mystical motivation of the Tractatus ⁶. The Tractatus is considered by many to be one of the major achievements of twentieth century philosophy. The main thrust of its argument concerns the picture theory of language. According to this conception, language mirrors reality, and can be used with sense to talk about reality, because there is a direct correspondence between the formal relationships within our language and the formal relationship between objects in the world. Wittgenstein was apparently inspired to this conception by an account of a trial in France, following a car accident, which involved a scale model of the road, vehicles, and individuals concerned. In just the same way as there was a one on one correspondence between the models and the real objects being discussed, so too is there a correspondence between a word and the object denoted by that word in reality. Furthermore, not only is there a correspondence between objects and words, but there is a correspondence between the logical form of the language, and the relationship between the objects being represented. These facts are understood by us " ie we present facts to ourselves as pictures, models of reality¹³ - a picture is a fact For a picture to be able to represent a fact, it must have something in common with the world, or reality, which is its form This form cannot itself be represented, it can only be displayed¹⁶ it is therefore transcendent. This form is logical form, and the totality of facts exist within logical space A picture represents a possible situation, one that has a location within logical space and can therefore be either true or false , and this representation is the sense of the picture In order to establish the truth of a picture, it must be compared with reality, for there are no pictures which are true a priori A picture which is correctly formed, a logical picture, is a thought²⁰, and a thought is a proposition with a sense²¹ - that is, it is capable of representing a fact in logical space. The totality of propositions is language²², and propositions are the only forms of language which have sense This understanding of language was intended to be restrictive: The only propositions which are capable of bearing sense are the propositions of natural science The principal topic which Wittgenstein discusses, which is set apart from the realm of the natural sciences, is logic. Logic is completely separate from reality: They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical. Of course there are then no questions left, and this itself is the answer. The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of the problem. The overall argument of the work is therefore to enjoin upon philosophers a silence about value, for nothing meaningful can be said about it. And this argument applies to the Tractatus itself; in the penultimate paragraph of the work Wittgenstein writes about using his work as a

ladder, which needs to be thrown away after use. It would help, at this point in my argument, to bring in some evidence for from outside the text to support this reading of the Tractatus. It is indisputable that Wittgenstein was passionately interested in religious questions whilst developing the arguments of the Tractatus: In his notebooks, written while involved on the Eastern Front in the First World War, there is a continual interleaving of remarks on logic and remarks about religion. Most important, however, is the letter which Wittgenstein wrote to Ficker, the publisher of the Tractatus: And precisely this second part is the important one. The difference is only that they have nothing to be silent about. Positivism holds "and this is its essence" that what we can speak about is all that matters in life. Whereas Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about. When he nevertheless takes immense pains to delimit the unimportant, it is not the coastline of that island which he is bent on surveying with such meticulous accuracy, but the boundary of the ocean. Wittgenstein is addressing the question of the meaning of life, questions of value and ethics. He wishes to say something about it, to indicate the solution, but part of his solution is the realisation that nothing can be said about questions of value. In this he is acting as a mystic, in the Jamesian sense " he is arguing that questions of value are ineffable, and that rationality logic and natural science is incapable of answering these questions. He is therefore engaged in putting limits to what can be said " in order that what cannot be said can be seen clearly. In the Investigations Wittgenstein was still concerned with putting limits to the project of philosophy, of stopping it going beyond the bounds of sense, and this was because he still believed that what was most important could not be stated, that questions of value were ineffable. So although the content of his philosophy changed, the framework within which that philosophy was held stayed the same. The Method of the Investigations " Clarity, not Truth As is well known, in the Investigations Wittgenstein develops a new account of the nature of language. However, it would be misleading to characterise this as a new theory about language, for that would be to give theory a certain foundationalist primacy which Wittgenstein is concerned to disavow. Rather, in the Investigations, it is more correct to think of Wittgenstein advancing a new method of doing philosophy, which has the investigation of language at its centre, rather than as simply providing a new theory of what language is and does. Philosophical problems are the result of conceptual confusion and to meet these problems what is needed is conceptual clarification. The task of the philosopher is carefully to depict the relationships between different concepts. The concepts are the ones used in our everyday language, and it is the fact that the concepts are used in our language that gives them their importance. When philosophers ask how it is that we know that there is an external world, how we can be assured of the independent existence of other people and so on, this is evidence that the philosophers do not understand the words that they are using. For Wittgenstein, however, these are not genuine questions, rather they are confusions felt as problems. The philosopher should be concerned with what sense it makes to say certain things, not whether something is true or false. Wittgenstein at one point⁵⁹ employs the analogy of a potato growing shoots if it is left in the dark. He considered that this was what happened in philosophy: What Wittgenstein wanted to do was to shed light on the potato to stop the tendrils from growing in the first place. Surface grammar is the explicit content and form of a sentence: It is what we normally think of as grammar. Depth grammar is the function that a sentence plays within the life of the person speaking the sentence. For the purposes of this paper I am just going to consider the spoken word. In other words, an investigation of the depth grammar of a word will indicate the use that the words have. This seems quite straightforward, but depending upon the context and the emphasis placed upon different words, it could have all sorts of different senses. For example, it could be a straightforward description of thirst, or an expression of the need for an ingredient in making bread, or preparing water colours. So far, so straightforward. But think of something more interesting. Perhaps it also contains elements of an insult: I am a mechanic, and I am working on fixing a car radiator. My assistant knows that I need some fluid, but passes me some left over orange squash: In order to understand the words properly, we need to situate them into their natural context. Now, for Wittgenstein, the point of this grammatical investigation was that you achieved clarity about any questions that are at issue. If there is a philosophical discussion, then the way to proceed is to conduct a grammatical investigation of the words and concepts that are in dispute. To look at how different words are used in their normal context. For

Wittgenstein, philosophical problems are the result of conceptual confusion and to meet these problems what is needed is conceptual clarification. The task of the philosopher is carefully to depict the relationships between different concepts, in other words, to investigate their grammar. A grammatical investigation in the Wittgensteinian sense is one that looks at how words are used within a lived context. Hence there is the need to investigate the nature of language games and forms of life. In contrast to almost all philosophers within the Western tradition Wittgenstein was not concerned with providing answers to particular questions. Rather, he wished to gain clarity about the question at issue, in order therefore to dissolve the controversy. How then should a philosopher work? In any philosophical investigation, the examination of language has a preeminent role. For Wittgenstein many of our problems arise because we expect our language to be logical and clear, when in fact it is complex and opaque. We are misled by the grammar of particular concepts. For example, on the surface the following two sentences would appear to have the same grammar: The first word in each sentence functions as a noun. We want to know what the word means, and because the word is a noun we look to see what it is that is referred to. And in developing an answer, a metaphysical system can be generated like potato shoots looking for the light. For Wittgenstein, though, this question, when asked by a philosopher, is literally without sense.