Introduction
Though best known and often identified with his work on concepts of mind, Gilbert Ryle (b. 1900 – d. 1976) was no monoglot. He was a broad thinker, with broad influences, invested in various philosophical issues – perhaps chief amongst them, the status and methods of philosophy itself. Eventually becoming one of the 20th century’s most famous English-speaking philosophers – due to the publication of his classic The Concept of Mind (see Ryle 1949, cited under Monographs and
Collected Works) – his philosophical education focused largely on the history of philosophy, which he drew on throughout his life. His interest in Plato and Aristotle, especially, can be seen not only in his work on concepts of mind, but on language and action, on ethics, on philosophical method, and in scholarly work in ancient philosophy. And though heavily influenced in his contemporary thinking by the analytic philosophy of Frege, Moore, Russell, and Wittgenstein, he did not limit himself to it. He helped it evolve, and he drew on and made important contributions to the understanding of the phenomenological tradition as well, including Brentano, Husserl, Meinong, and Heidegger. Ryle’s best-known work is often taken to have been quickly superseded – whether by new philosophical or psychological theories or by Wittgenstein – but a number of current philosophical ideas can be construed as neo-Rylean, and there is good reason to think that aspects of his work have been substantially underestimated and misunderstood, in no small part due to an underestimation of the breadth of his interests and influences. Much current work on Ryle and in a Rylean spirit aims to correct these misunderstandings. This article surveys the main philosophical topics to which Ryle made significant contributions – to which his contributions are either seminal or else still part of the current debate. His contributions to the understanding of the mind (see the section Mind) and of knowing-how (see the section Knowing-How) remain the most significant. However, there is growing interest as well in his work on moral education and moral memory (see the section Ethics), and his work in ancient philosophy is still regularly cited as well (see the section Ancient Philosophy). Finally, no good history of analytic philosophy can be written without reference to his part in bringing it to and reinterpreting it in Oxford, in dialogue with phenomenology (see the section Philosophical Method). We begin, however, with an overview of his life and work.

**Biography**

Ryle spent a fair amount of time reflecting on his life as a philosopher, and he has a fairly comprehensive story to tell about his own philosophical development. This is especially evident in Ryle 1971a, which is the most comprehensive biography of him apart from Vrijen 2007 (cited under Overviews and Edited Collections). The former gives a sense both of his candour and seriousness in practicing. Owen 1977 and Williams 1979 are in large part brief personal memoirs, conveying Ryle’s very distinctive and widely known mannerisms and style, his humanity, and his commitment not only to doing good philosophy but to philosophy doing well as a discipline, both in its professional and educational aspects. Lyons 2017 and Stroll 2001 focus more on Ryle the professional philosopher, the development of his thinking as it occurred in published work and his impact on the discipline. Kremer 2021 broadens our understanding of Ryle’s life through a discussion of a close philosophical friendship with the philosopher Margaret McDonald.

  - Portrays an admirable life and philosophical career (MacDonald’s) and makes plausible that Ryle’s friendship with MacDonald had a significant influence on some of his central philosophical ideas. Tracks how MacDonald’s ideas, especially about
knowledge and the nature of philosophy, may have influenced Ryle’s thinking about knowledge-how, as well as a metaphilosophical shift after *The Concept of Mind*.

  - Brief biographic account of Ryle’s early work and influences, followed by similarly biographic accounts of each of the periods in which he published his three monographs: *The Concept of Mind*, *Dilemmas*, and *Plato’s Progress* (respectively, Ryle 1949, Ryle 1954, and Ryle 1966a, all cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).
  - Personal memoir presented at the Aristotelian Society upon Ryle’s death, focusing on Ryle’s love of ancient philosophy, his contribution to creating the BPhil degree at Oxford, his style and character as a philosopher, and the extent to which he was indebted to Wittgenstein.
  - Enjoyable, wide-ranging account of his development, of his generation of philosophers, and of his philosophical project.
  - A summary of Ryle’s professional life, his prominence in mid-20th century analytic philosophy, and also of his three monographs, focusing on *The Concept of Mind* (Ryle 1949 cited under Monographs and Collected Papers). Ends with three proposals for why the latter became much less central to the discipline after the 1950s: the publication of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations*, and the verificationist and behaviouristic leanings of Ryle’s book.
  - In part a review of Ryle’s posthumously published collection of essays *On Thinking*, but more substantially a personal memoir. Discusses Ryle’s general geniality, mannerisms, philosophical outlook, his philosophical work and influences, his influence on the discipline, and how the essays collected in *On Thinking* may have been attempts to shake off his behaviourist label.

**Monographs and Collected Papers**

Recent discussions of Ryle’s work have often focused on Ryle 1945 (cited under Knowing-How) and Ryle 1949, but he was fairly prolific outside of these. In total, he published three monographs and more than one hundred articles, nearly a quarter of which are reviews of other philosophers’ work. Ryle 1954 stays in the general vein of Ryle 1949 but is concerned with diverse philosophical puzzles, rather than those which arise from thinking about concepts of mind in particular. Ryle 1966a is his one
monographical contribution to ancient philosophy scholarship – and seems to have made a strong impression on all who read it, whether negative or positive. Ryle 1971b and Ryle 1971c collect the vast majority of Ryle's published essays; they're arranged topically and chronologically, each with a brief introduction by Ryle. Ryle 1979 and Ryle 1993 are posthumously published edited collections of (mostly) unpublished papers and lecture notes.

  - The best-known and most influential of Ryle’s works. Made him a *de facto* figurehead of analytic philosophy in the mid-20th century and is still considered a classic of the period. Aims to untangle numerous confusions concerning mental concepts – knowledge, self-knowledge, will, emotion, dispositions, sensations, imagination, and intellect – providing a picture of the human mind as neither immaterial nor mechanical.
  - Series of attempts to dissolve various philosophical dilemmas. These include simple dilemmas – such as the tension in the impression that our actions are determined yet free, or in the impression that we move yet that space is infinitely divisible – as well as more complex dilemmas – some related to issues broached in Ryle 1949: pleasure, scientific versus everyday explanation, and perception.
  - An in-depth scholarly (and partially speculative) attempt to rewrite the history of Plato’s life, thought, and relationship to Aristotle. Ryle’s interpretation has in some respects been highly influential and in some respects been derided. But it is highly enjoyable and shows the breadth and depth of his familiarity with ancient philosophy. Many Rylean themes appear, such as the centrality of argument and the marginality of theses in philosophy.
  - Compiles Ryle’s “essays on other thinkers” up to 1968 (apart from at least one essay on Collingwood, which appears in Ryle 1971c, and one on Roman Ingarden, which does not). These comprise, amongst others, essays on Locke, Hume, G. E. Moore, Wittgenstein, and J. L. Austin, six essays on ancient philosophy, three on phenomenology, and one on Jane Austen.
  - Compiles most of Ryle’s papers on substantive philosophical issues, including all of his best-known and many lesser-known papers. Also includes a brief introduction, accounting for some of the changes in outlook over the course of his career.
  - Collection of nine papers from the time after his *Collected Papers* were published. Three had previously been unpublished. In the Preface, G.J. Warnock suggests that
Ryle thought of this material as the basis for a planned monograph on thinking. A primary task is working out an understanding of the activity of thinking that avoids both dualism and behaviourism.

  In addition to a first chapter in which the editor defends Ryle’s philosophical approach against common objections, contains some published and unpublished drafts of Ryle’s papers, speculated to have been written between the late 1930s and the late 1960s. Also contains the editor’s own notes from four of Ryle’s lecture courses at Oxford, as well as two tributes, one personal and one philosophical, from John Mabbott and David Gallop.

**Overviews and Edited Collections**

Perhaps because his popularity had waned by the time of his death – almost thirty years after the publication of Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) – there are few overviews and edited collections on Ryle’s work. (Contrast this with, say, Wittgenstein, whose best work was published posthumously.) For readers better versed in current philosophy than in the philosophy of fifty years ago, the best edited collection is Dolby 2015. It collects a number of prominent contemporary philosophers thinking in dialogue with Ryle, on mind and language, in current terms. Similar, but broader and better suited to those interested in Ryle’s own contemporary’s thought about his work, is Wood and Pitcher 1971. The former mirrors much of current philosophy’s narrower understanding of and interest in Ryle – confined mostly to issues of the mind – whereas the latter better aligns topically with Ryle’s own breadth. Lyons 1980 and Tanney 2021 are the best overviews of Ryle’s work, in monographical and encyclopedic form, respectively. Both are highly sympathetic and are good introductions – bested only by reading Ryle himself.

  Collection of essays engaging closely with Ryle’s treatments of mind and language. Many of the essays attempt to correct misperceptions of Ryle’s views, though most are at least partially critical.

  The first English-language monograph on Ryle’s philosophy. Includes a short biography and then sympathetically discusses Ryle’s views of philosophical method, logic, and various issues in the philosophy of mind, including volition, consciousness, perception, thought, and pleasure. Ends with a discussion of whether Ryle was a behaviourist.

  The most comprehensive, succinct summary of Ryle’s philosophical approach to mind and language. Includes discussions of the differences between his own sort of ‘analytic’ philosophy and that of, for instance, Russell and G. E. Moore, of the senses
in which Ryle is and is not an ordinary language philosopher, of his purported behaviourism, and of his similarities to the later Wittgenstein.

  - The second of two monographs devoted wholly to Ryle, and the only one extensively discussing Ryle’s philosophical development. Important for its comprehensive treatment of Ryle’s work and for its references to various unpublished materials, many of which are currently unavailable for viewing at the Ryle Collection at Linacre College, Oxford. Also contains what is currently the most extensive biography of Ryle.


**Philosophical Method**

Working at a time of significant disciplinary change, Ryle was well aware of and highly occupied by methodological and disciplinary philosophical issues. He was in agreement with the anti-psychologism of some early analytic and phenomenological thinkers, but he recoiled from their Platonism (in the sense of their tendency to posit abstract entities for explanatory purposes). His main response was to understand philosophy as having no distinctive subject matter – as having no entities which its purpose is to study or understand and, so, as not being one (or even the queen) of the sciences. He also understood philosophy as being concerned primarily with arguments and with the mapping of concepts.

- **Linguistic Analysis and Conceptual Cartography**
  Ryle 1971d especially expresses his anti-Platonistic sentiment, while Ryle 1937 expresses his view of philosophy as never reaching its goal and as concerned most basically with arguments rather than theses. His preferred methods, too, often drew on and supported his anti-Platonism. In Ryle 1932, he sets out a notion aimed at avoiding the tendency to assume the objecthood of the subject matters of concepts not properly understood as referring. In Ryle 1938, he begins to introduce what he took to be the central form of philosophical confusion – the category mistake – made famous in Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Works) and developed in various other articles. Dancy 2015, Glock 2015, and Goldwater 2018 all evaluate Ryle’s notion of category mistakes. As with other analytic philosophers, Ryle was concerned with a certain kind of analysis of concepts or uses of language, but as Ryle 1953 and Tanney 2013 show, the kind of analysis he practiced was distinct and more holistic – more a matter of understanding and properly mapping conceptual relations than of proffering necessary and sufficient conditions. In Ryle 1966b (cited under
Intentionality), he explains what’s wrong with calling his method “linguistic analysis” while not wholly rejecting the label.

  - Detailed discussion of some of the problems with (one interpretation of) Ryle’s notion of “category mistakes” and of P. F. Strawson’s attempt in Pitcher and Wood 1971 (cited under Overviews and Edited Collections) to answer them. Argues that Strawson’s attempt fails and that without a satisfactory account of category mistakes, we should avoid relying on the notion.

  - In light of criticisms of the notion of a category mistake from Quine and others, as well as the unsatisfactoriness of accounts offered by Ryle and Strawson, proposes instead that we avoid hard and fast accounts of categories – what categories are and what categories there are – and of category mistakes, and instead be content with our ability to draw illuminating category distinctions in particular situations.

  - Engages closely with Ryle’s notion of category mistakes, proposing a general logical form for Rylean category mistakes, against other unsuccessful proposals. Argues that given this form of category mistakes, Ryle’s 1949 arguments against Cartesian dualism (as committing a category mistake) function independently of any positive theory of mind (behaviourist or otherwise).

  - Seminal paper describing Ryle’s then-view of the main task of philosophy: reformulating expressions whose grammatical form misleads us as to the kind of fact they express, so that their grammatical form and logical form match. Mainly discusses expressions which seem to imply the existence of non-entities. Briefly engages with the question of how to test for such misleadingness. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Opposes the idea that philosophy’s aim is to determine which of various ‘isms’ (e.g., realism, idealism, dualism, monism) is true and argues that a philosopher should rather be an endless inquirer, constantly questioning, and

  - Critical discussion of Aristotle and Kant on categories, followed by an expression of the view that philosophy’s business is determining ‘type-trespasses’ – expressions at least one ingredient of which is not the right logical type to pair with its other ingredients, resulting in absurdity. Leaves the question of how to determine absurdity unexplored (possibly for Wittgensteinian reasons). Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Sets out a view of philosophy as distinct from (and not one of) the sciences and a view of the function of philosophical arguments as bringing out latent contradictions in positions and helping us map the logical relations between various concepts.

  - Aims to correct some misapprehensions about reference to “the use of ordinary language” and defends its usefulness for philosophers. Distinguishes between ‘use’ and ‘usefulness’, as well as between ‘use’ and ‘usage’. Also discusses the limited role of technical language and formalisation in philosophy. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Treatment of what distinguishes Ryle’s holistic mapping of uses of expressions, from linguistic or conceptual “analysis” as it’s usually understood. Also historically motivates the discussion of these approaches, by discussing the philosophical problems to which they responded.

**Phenomenology**

Ryle saw many of the issues that were being discussed by his compatriots also being discussed on the European continent, in the school of thought that began with Brentano and became phenomenology under Husserl. As Brandl 2002, O’Connor 2012, and Thomasson 2002 all discuss, Ryle’s interests and methods very much developed in dialogue with the phenomenological tradition and thereby affected the development of analytic philosophy too. As Ryle 1971a (cited under Biography) notes, he regularly taught a lecture course on phenomenology at Oxford. Ryle 1928, Ryle 1938, and Ryle 1962 are key in-print expressions of his understanding of and engagement with the figures of that tradition – both positive and
negative. Murray 1973 and Jackson 2010 discuss some of Ryle’s similarities to and differences from two of its key figures: Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty.

  - In response to Thomasson 2002, presents Ryle as a mediator between analytic philosophy and phenomenology but as, in the end, primarily a critic of the latter. Focuses on phenomenology’s aim of being the queen of the sciences, which is suggested as being essential to its methodology, unlike in the case of analytic philosophy.

  - Argues for a parallel between Ryle and Mearleau-Ponty’s discussions of skill in cognition and perception, respectively. The chapter is most interesting for making evident the “adverbialism” of each (treated again in Jackson 2020 cited under Adverbialism, Behaviourism, Dispositions), as well as for making evident their analogous solutions to difficulties arising from ‘mind’-‘body’ and ‘meaningful’-‘meaningless’ distinctions. Briefly notes the role that phenomenological observation plays in each.

  - Discusses some of the affinities and divergences between Ryle and the Heidegger of Being and Time, with reference to Ryle’s review of Heidegger (Ryle 1928), The Concept of Mind (Ryle 1949 cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) and Ryle’s other pieces on phenomenology. Considers and is attracted to the possibility of Ryle’s being directly influenced by his reading of Being and Time.

  - Argues that Ryle’s notion of a category mistake comes out of his reading of Husserl’s ‘metabasis’ (used by Husserl to denote a categorical confusion). Discusses Husserl’s notion in depth, as well as the extent to which Ryle may have been cognizant of the source of his notion and the extent to which he wished to separate himself from phenomenology in his later work.

  - Focusing on Ryle’s interest in Phenomenology, draws out methodological similarities between phenomenology and analytic philosophy and how the
former, in part due to Ryle (though also Russell and Frege), shaped the methods and perceived role of analytic philosophy.

  - Brief history of phenomenology and critical review of Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. Noteworthy for being the earliest review of Heidegger in English, for being fairly sympathetic, and for (possibly) containing an “intellectualist” view of knowledge, amongst other reasons. Ryle later admitted that he likely misunderstood much of it, especially not having considered its relation to Hegel or Kierkegaard. Reprinted in Ryle 1971b (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Critical survey of Husserl’s phenomenological program. Broadly agrees that phenomenology (as analysing “the most general forms of what experience finds to be exemplified in the world”) is a proper method of philosophy but disagrees with the particular Husserlian doctrines which lead him to a Cartesian “egocentric metaphysic”: his doctrine of intentional objects and his doctrine of immanent perception. Reprinted in Ryle 1971b (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Qualifies the sense in which Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) is a work of phenomenology and re-characterises some of the findings of that book: on dispositions (characterised as Aristotelian *hexeis*), on imagination (with sympathetic reference to Sartre), and on self-knowledge (characterised not as behavioural ‘ejaculations’ but as ‘avowals’). Reprinted in English in Ryle 1971b (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

**Ancient Philosophy**

Like many philosophers of his generation, Ryle seemed to have seen the history of philosophy as a scholarly discipline, mostly distinct from philosophy proper. But unlike many, he continued to engage in this historical work alongside his other work, and it greatly influenced the shape of his thinking. The entries in this section show the scholarly side of this engagement and some responses to it. As with much of Ryle 1966a (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers), Ryle 1939 and Ryle 1976 are concerned with the constitution and character of Plato’s corpus. Ackrill 1971, Bambrough 1972, and Owen 1971 engage with Ryle’s characterisation of some aspect of Plato. Penner 1971 engages with some Aristotelian aspects of Ryle’s discussions of action in Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).
  o Against Ryle 1966a (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers), according to which ‘the method of division’ sometimes attributed to Plato is not a true method of philosophy and that Plato did not see it as one, argues that the method of division is essential to understanding Plato, that it has important uses, and that it is not as distinct from Ryle’s preferred method of dialectic as Ryle supposes.
  o Sympathetically discusses the merits of a broadly Rylean reading of the development of Plato’s thought and argues, in particular, for the importance of seeing the variability in Plato’s thinking across his works.
  o Critical (but friendly) discussion of Ryle 1939. Discusses the fact that Ryle reads a Russellian theory of types into the Parmenides, that he attributes to Plato certain reductio ad absurdum arguments, and that he conjectures that the dialogue was in fact written in two parts, to be performed aloud in Plato’s Academy.
  o In-depth treatment and partial defence of Ryle’s interpretation and use of Aristotle’s distinction between energeia (or ‘activities’) and kineseis (or ‘movements’). Discusses the distinction at length, alongside its relation to Ryle’s distinction between ‘achievement verbs’ and ‘task verbs’, generally defending Ryle’s use while also criticizing it for not reading logical form deeply enough into Aristotle.
  o Attempt to explain the Meno’s brevity compared with “nearby” dialogues and to defend the hypothesis that it had originally been longer, parts having been repurposed for the Gorgias. Cites the paucity of argument in the Meno and the view that the dialogues were written for performance and, thus, of a standard length. Printed with minor differences in Ryle 1993 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).
  o Interpretation of Plato’s Parmenides according to which its antinomies (about the Theory of Forms, for instance) are seen to be genuinely problematic and genuinely troubling to Plato. Intriguingly proposes (but does not elaborate on the claim) that the dialogue should be understood as a work in logic, and a work in logic most closely

**Mind**
Ryle loathed the separating of philosophy into sub-disciplines, but most philosophers would nonetheless categorise him as a philosopher of mind. That’s understandable given his influence in the area. Though most philosophers take Ryle’s views on mind to have been ill-founded, many still think of *Ryle 1949* (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) and its critique of Cartesian dualism as foundational for the subsequent development of the sub-field. Park 1994 and Tanney 2021 (cited under Overviews and Edited Collections) reasonably criticize the understanding of Ryle implicit in this story. But the correct understanding of his views about mind, and the correct evaluation of them, has been and continues to be a matter of debate. A central question is whether Ryle is a behaviourist – and, if so, what kind of behaviourist he is. And if he is not a behaviourist, what alternative is he proposing? These are the main questions discussed under Adverbialism, Behaviourism, Dispositions.

Intentionality lists some of Ryle’s engagements with the topic of kinds and ways of “being about”. And Thought documents some of his proposals for a proper conception of thought, and some engagements with these proposals.

- **Behaviourism, Adverbialism, Dispositions**
  In the closing pages of *Ryle 1949* (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers), he claims that the accusations of behaviourism which that work was guaranteed to evoke, would be harmless. At least as a prediction of the book’s future reception, he’s turned out to be wrong. If Ryle’s understanding of mental concepts is not taken seriously today, that is almost invariably due to his supposed behaviourism, a view commonly thought to have been superseded by functionalism. Bestor 1979 and Jackson 2020 argue that Ryle is better understood as an adverbialist – as holding that mental concepts should be understood as styles or modes of activity. Ryle 2000 adds that they may concern “courses of action” as well. MacDonald 1951 and Hornsby 2000 discuss the importance of the distinction between personal activity and sub-personal processes, a distinction central to Ryle’s understanding of mental concepts and plausibly crucial to avoiding a problematic form of behaviourism. Park 1994 argues that Ryle’s conception of mental concepts avoids behaviourism by being non-denotational. Alston 1971, Alvarez 2015, and McGeer 2018 all engage with his understanding of dispositions, which has also invited accusations of behaviourism, amongst other criticisms. McGeer 2018 uses Ryle’s notion of dispositions indirectly against a behaviouristic understanding of them, to defend a particular notion of free will.
    - Challenges the claim in *Ryle 1949* (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) that if a phenomenon is a disposition (such as, e.g., being skilled, being motivated, being in a mood, etc., are claimed there to be), it is not also an occurrence, mental or otherwise. Also discusses the extent to which
Ryle's arguments about mental concepts have implications for the states which those concepts concern.

  - Examines and evaluates Ryle’s claim that motives are dispositions and that, as such, motive-involving explanations of action are non-causal explanations. Also discusses the relation between motives and character traits, disagreeing with Ryle that the former are always expressible in terms of the latter.

  - Argues that the best way to understand why Ryle is not a behaviourist is to think of him as proposing that the dualist mistakenly takes mental concepts to be names, rather than adverbial modifiers.

  - Defence of a distinction crucial to, if merely implicit in, Ryle’s arguments about mental concepts. Dennett derives the distinction from Ryle and Wittgenstein; Hornsby provides arguments to the effect that it’s crucial to a sound philosophy of mind.

  - In addition to arguing for an unorthodox interpretation of Ryle’s view of knowing-how – that it is a particular kind of action, rather than a disposition or ability – also presents him as holding an adverbial theory of intelligent action (as in Bestor 1979) – namely, the view that the intelligence of an action is a kind of mode, style, or manner of its performance.

  - Responds to early reviews of Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) from J. L. Austin and Stuart Hampshire – touches on the issue of the personal/subpersonal distinction and on Ryle’s refusal of both dualism and monism – though does ascribe to him “logical behaviourism”. As Kremer 2021 (cited under Biography) notes, may also have begun to lead Ryle away from “category mistake” arguments and, indeed, to considering private thought.

  - Makes use of Ryle’s discussions of dispositions – specifically, of intelligent capacities – to respond on behalf of those in the free will debate who use the notion of dispositions to argue that determinism and free will are compatible.
Argues that because intelligent capacities require practice, there is a sense in which agents who respond to bad moral reasons nonetheless possess the capacity of moral reasons-responsiveness and, thus, free will.

  - Argues that Ryle’s understanding of mind is no form of behaviourism (whether ontological, linguistic, or philosophical) because (as in Bestor 1979) he denies that mind-talk is suited to a denotational theory of meaning, which behaviourism assumes. The rejection of behaviourism is helpfully related to (and tested against) Ryle’s work throughout his career, focusing especially on his view of the task of philosophy, in contrast to that of science.

  - Late attempt to account for mental acts which avoids both Cartesianism and behaviourism. Distinguishes between acts and courses of action, the latter of which are not reducible to any particular act or acts (mental or behavioural) but, rather, consist of having some higher order purpose in carrying out particular acts across time. Characterises mental ‘acts’ as courses of action.

**Intentionality**

Beginning with the early Ryle 1933a, Ryle was willing to discuss many senses in which a thing (mental, linguistic, or otherwise) could be “about” something. The entries in this section touch on many of them. Ryle 1933a discusses linguistic aboutness generally. Ryle 1933b discusses terms which are about imaginary objects and the status of those objects. Ryle 1928 discusses some aspects of intentionality in the phenomenological tradition, including the idea of a human being as being “about” something. Farkas 2018 touches on Ryle’s view that knowing-how is about practical success in an activity. And Ryle 1966b surveys historical and then-recent notions of meaning, involving some discussion of intentionality.

  - Develops and defends the Rylean idea that whereas knowing-that has truth as its intentional object, know-how has practical success. Also develops a view of (one sense of) practical knowledge as incorporating both intellectualist and anti-intellectualist elements (respectively, reflection on how to do a thing and the ability to do it). Begins with a helpful, even-handed overview of the knowing-how literature.

  - Surveys the history of meaning and intentionality in the phenomenological tradition from Brentano to Husserl and engages with Heidegger’s idea that
the most basic form of intentionality is Dasein’s being about its world.

  - Short piece distinguishing between some different senses in which phrases and expressions can be “about” something. Most generally, distinguishes between “linguistic” aboutness and “referential” aboutness. Notes but sets aside the task of understanding “thinking and knowing about”. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Contribution to a symposium on imaginary objects which also included R. B. Braithwaite and G. E. Moore. Proposes that imaginary object-terms merely pseudo-designate and, so, that they are not about anything. Also offers an account of what artists (and others) are doing when they create imaginary characters (or objects). Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Summative and rich discussion of theories of meaning and their motivations, in theories of logic (since Mill) and in theories of philosophy (roughly since Mill, though with reference to philosophy prior to Mill as well). Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

**Thought**

Thought is one of the central concepts of mind on which Ryle focused – and focused more and more as his career progressed. Ryle 1930 engages with the notion of thought by asking what propositions are. Ryle 1951 and Ryle 1953 argue that no general, analytic account of thought can be given. Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) had been criticized for not being able to give a satisfying characterisation of thought – and of covert thinking in particular. Ryle 1968 is one of a number of his late attempts to do so (see also Ryle 2000 cited under Adverbialism, Behaviourism, Dispositions); Snowdon 2015 responds to a few of those attempts. Sellars 1963 includes an attempt to account for thinking with the presumed tools of Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Contribution to a symposium including Iris Murdoch. Argues that thinking shouldn’t be thought of on the model of speaking, believing, or symbol manipulation and, also, that this is not merely because we need a broader account of thinking. Rather, no general analytic account of thinking is possible; the types of thinking are too various, sometimes with only family

  - Partially a discussion of how philosophers’ accounts of thinking have misled psychologists, partially an argument that philosophers should not try to give an analytic account of thinking, and partially a construal of thinking as consisting of skill and art – of successful thinking as ‘going ahead of all beaten tracks’. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Discussion of the main reasons for thinking that propositions exist objectively (from Brentano, Frege, Husserl, Meinong, and others), as well as objections to that way of thinking. Tentatively proposes, rather, that there are facts, not objective propositions; that propositions are vehicles, not contents; and that, as a result of these, the problem of truth is a philosophically shallow one. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Accepts that Rodin’s *Le Penseur* (or any ponderer) may be described as covertly talking and, instead, inquires about the description which captures *Le Penseur*’s pondering in its fullness. Proposes that the description will understand his pondering as purposive and as, at best, minimally methodical. Proposes, more specifically, that the ponderer’s purpose is determining the serviceability of certain thoughts. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Contains (amongst much else) the best-known attempted extension of the supposed behaviourism of Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers). Imagining a “Rylean” community with the conceptual means to talk only about observable objects and events, describes how such a community might come to posit and talk about unobservable mental phenomena – thoughts, beliefs, etc. Plausibly lends itself more to non-Rylean views of thought, than to Ryle’s own.

  - Critically discusses two of Ryle’s late papers on thinking: ‘Thinking and Reflecting’ and Ryle 1968. Wonders about why the case of *Le Penseur* puzzled Ryle, speculates about the extent to which his discussions of it may
or may not diverge from positions in Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers), and challenges the supposition that Ryle’s adverbial interpretation of mental concepts achieves what it’s intended to achieve.

Knowledge

Though itself a concept of mind, knowledge is significant enough (and especially in contemporary discussions drawing on Ryle) to warrant its own section. Ryle’s contributions to this topic mostly fall under three headings: treatments of knowledge in general, treatments of self-knowledge and self-understanding, and treatments of knowledge of how to do things, which Ryle contrasted with knowledge of facts. In regard to knowing-how, the literature is vast. The entries in the Knowing-How section thus focus on just some of the best contributions to discussions of that topic, which also focus on or engage substantially with Ryle on the topic.

- Knowledge and Self-Knowledge
  In light of debates about knowing-how and knowing-that, Kremer 2016 offers an account of Ryle’s view of knowledge in general, subsuming both knowing-how and knowing-that. Hyman 1999, rejecting Ryle’s distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that, proposes a general account of propositional knowledge which nonetheless saves some of Ryle’s insights into the nature of knowledge. Ryle 1994 discusses his notion of self-knowledge. Cassam 2014 and Levy forthcoming are, in different ways, contemporary engagements with that notion of self-knowledge.
    ▪ Defends a broadly neo-Rylean account of self-knowledge, according to which we know our own mental states in the same ways in which we know other people’s mental states.
    ▪ Proposes an account of propositional knowledge in a Rylean spirit. Criticizes Ryle’s distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that but builds on Ryle and Wittgenstein’s idea that the concept of knowledge is closely related to that of ability. Develops an account according to which knowing that \( p \) is being able to \( \phi \) for the reason that \( p \).
    ▪ Argues that Ryle had a unified account of knowledge which subsumes both knowing-how and knowing-that, on which knowledge is the capacity to get things right – “practically” in the case of knowing-how and “theoretically” in the case of knowing-that. Also argues that, on Ryle’s view, knowing-how and knowing-that are interdependent capacities.
Levy, Yair. "Neo-Ryleanism about Self-Understanding." *Inquiry*, forthcoming. (I understand that this will need to be removed if unpublished by this article’s publication date.)

- Against neo-Rylean views about self-understanding – according to which we know our own mental states and understand our own behaviour in the same kind of way in which we know others’ – defends the idea that self-understanding is unique. Surveys some recent psychological research which has been thought to support neo-Ryleanism and argues that it does not in fact do so.


- Selection from Chapter VI of Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers). Argues that knowledge of one’s own mental states and knowledge of another’s are not distinct in kind, though usually are in degree.

**Knowing-How**

Knowing-how is almost certainly the topic in contemporary philosophy in which Ryle is most directly involved. Ryle 1945 in addition to Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers) are the seminal contributions on this topic. Stanley and Williamson 2001 started the most recent wave of interest in Ryle’s notion of knowing-how, by arguing that his distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that collapses. Since then, a number of philosophers have aimed to better understand, and some to defend, Ryle. Brandt 2020, Dougherty 2020, Hornsby 2012, Kremer 2017, Small 2017, and Wiggins 2012 all fall into this broad category. Hickman 2019 aims to do a better job than Stanley and Williamson 2001 in understanding Ryle but, like the latter, aims for a view on which knowing-how is a kind of knowing-that. Löwenstein 2017 is equal parts attempted vindication of Ryle and engagement with contemporary arguments on the topic of knowing-how.

  - Helpfully discusses some common misconceptions of Ryle’s treatment of knowing-how. Also attempts to improve on that treatment, given perceived problems with the view that all intelligent actions involve know-how and with the regress arguments in Ryle 1945 and Ryle 1949 (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Discusses two ethical sources of Ryle’s interest in the notion of knowing-how: his concern to show that philosophy has a distinctive and meaningful task and his interest in the ancient question of whether virtue is a kind of knowledge. Charts the movement of Ryle’s thinking on these issues over the course of his career.
  - Argues that some of Ryle’s positive claims about knowing-how (setting other claims aside as implausible) point to a form of intellectualism – in this case, the view that knowing-how is a certain way of knowing rules, methods, principles, or criteria. Proposes “knowing rules… in the executive way” as a competitor to the standard intellectualist view that knowing-how is knowing a certain kind of proposition under a “practical mode of presentation”.
  - Argues that Ryle’s primary aim in discussing knowing-how was to show that the kind of knowledge required to apply propositional knowledge cannot itself be another kind of propositional knowledge – also defends this Rylean view and argues that a satisfactory account of human agency would be impossible without it.
  - Situates Ryle’s rejection of the Intellectualist Legend (the view that for a bit of behaviour to be intelligent is for it to have involved, or been caused by, a distinct act of thinking) within a larger debate between “intellectualists” and “anti-intellectualists” in the late 19th and early 20th century. Shows that Ryle aimed to be proposing a third way, that goes between these two views.
  - The best and most comprehensive monographical discussion of knowing-how in a Rylean spirit. Helpfully reviews much of the literature on knowing-how, noting crucial distinctions in position and methodology.
  - Ryle’s seminal paper on the topic of knowing-how. Argues that knowing how to do a thing is not reducible to knowing any propositions or facts and, also, that any instance of knowing-that requires a concomitant form of knowing-how. Makes use of at least three distinct types of argument or test for the former claim. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).
- Aims to explain the role that the notion of knowing-how is meant to play in Ryle's work and, also, begins to defend its ability to play that role. Knowing-how is understood as explaining the intelligence of intelligent actions, such that every intelligent action requires the exercise of know-how.

  - Seminal defence of the view that knowing-how is reducible to knowing-that. The main arguments propose that the regress arguments in Ryle 1945 and Ryle 1949 (cited in Monographs and Collected Papers) fail and that 'knows how to'-statements can, without loss, be expressed as 'knows that'-statements.

  - Rich discussion of practical knowledge in Aristotle and Ryle. Begins with a discussion of Aristotle on why an *ethos* (an outlook or general way of being) cannot be expressed in a list of propositions, then turns to Ryle, defending a qualified version of Ryle’s claim that knowing-how is not a kind of knowing-that.

**Ethics**

In concert with his interests in ancient philosophy and the kind of teaching that results in intelligent capacities was Ryle’s lifelong interest in ethics. He did not engage in the kind of ethics inaugurated by G. E. Moore, however, but in ethics more as the ancients practiced it. Two topics on which he made special contributions, and which have been the starting point for discussions today, are moral memory and moral knowledge. What is virtue? Is it a kind of knowledge? If it is a kind of knowledge, why can’t it be forgotten? And how, if it all, can it be taught? Ryle's main contributions to discussions of ethics aim to answer these questions.

- **Moral Memory**
  - Ryle inaugurated discussions of the problem of moral memory with a supposed puzzle: why can one not forget the difference between right and wrong? Ryle 1958 mostly takes it for granted that one cannot, and attempts to explain why one cannot. Koutstaal 1995 and McGrath 2015 argue that Ryle’s starting assumption is false, such that one can forget the difference between right and wrong. Bugeja 2016 largely agrees with Ryle but aims to express and defend his account in contemporary expressivist terms. And Doyle 2020 proposes to modify and broaden Ryle’s explanation.
      - Develops Ryle's 1958 position on the puzzle of moral memory in a non-cognitivist, expressivist direction. Also considers various other explanations for why some claims to have forgotten moral truths sound strange.
- **Doyle, Casey.** “Remembering What is Right.” *Philosophical Explorations* 23.1 (2020): 49–64.
  - Argues that the puzzle of moral memory can be motivated by a weaker form of motivational internalism than Ryle 1958 seems to employ and that the puzzle should be understood as a problem for moral psychology rather than for moral epistemology. Also relates this debate to those about whether moral beliefs should be formed on the basis of testimony.

  - Argues that even if Ryle 1958 is correct that moral knowledge is tightly connected to or constituted by caring, what one once morally knew can still be forgotten, because one can forget any learned pattern, whether of judging, evaluating, or behaving.

  - Argues that Ryle’s characterisation of and solution to the puzzle of moral memory is unsatisfactory, on the basis that usually only first-person attributions of moral forgetting sound strange. Explains this strangeness by proposing that such first-person attributions usually concern “blind-spot” propositions, propositions to which we usually don’t have epistemic access.

  - Aims to explain the intuition that it makes no sense to say that one has forgotten the difference between right and wrong. Proposes that knowing the difference between right and wrong in part consists of caring about certain things, and that though cares can be lost, they can’t be forgotten. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

- **Moral Knowledge and Education**
  Ryle went through various phases in his thinking about moral knowledge, and the progression was not always linear. Dougherty 2020 discusses these phases in some detail. Throughout the progression, however, Ryle continued to think of training as essential to moral education, and he also despised the tendency of philosophers (and moral philosophers in particular) to think of knowledge as lying in one rather than another of our faculties – usually to think of it as lying in the intellect, rather than in emotion or the will – and to understand moral knowledge on that assumption. Ryle 1967 discusses the notion of training and how it differs from a standard conception of teaching. Ryle 1966c and Ryle 1972 touch on (amongst much else) resisting the temptation to compartmentalise moral knowledge. Driver 2013 and Hermann 2013 both engage with Ryle and the idea of moral knowledge by engaging with the idea of
moral expertise. Ryle 1940 aims to solve a puzzle about what he takes to be the nature of conscience, by relation to distinguishing between types of moral knowledge; Langston 2001 critically discusses Ryle’s view of conscience.

  - Traces the development of Ryle’s thought on the question of whether ethical virtue is a kind of knowledge, and what kind of knowledge it might be. Shows that at the time of Ryle 1945 (cited under Knowing-How), Ryle believed that virtue is a kind of knowledge-how, whereas that by Ryle 1972, he had come to think of virtue as no kind of knowledge.

  - Motivated by some arguments of Ryle’s that can seem to imply that there are no moral experts, argues that there are at least three forms of moral expertise. Relates the issue of whether there are moral experts to the issue of whether moral knowledge can be formed on the basis of testimony.

  - Aims to develop the view that moral knowledge is a kind of skill or competence, in dialogue with Ryle’s distinction between knowing-how and knowing-that and with his arguments that moral knowledge is not a kind of know-how or skill. Seems to suggest that moral knowledge can be understood as a kind of skill despite also thinking (along Rylean lines) that moral knowledge consists of more than skill.

  - Critical engagement with Ryle’s view of conscience. Takes Ryle’s view as foundational for 20th century thinking about conscience and uses difficulties with the view as the basis for a critique of contemporary conceptions of conscience. Compares Ryle’s view to Freud’s, also in connection to the medieval distinction between *conscientia* and *synderesis*.

  - Aims to explain why one can have moral convictions about others’ behaviour but pangs of conscience only about one’s own. Proposes that moral conscience involves a kind of “operative” rather than merely “academic” knowledge, in virtue of which one oneself is disposed to behave in a certain way. The distinction is a precursor to that between knowing-how and

  - Takes up the ancient question of whether virtue can be taught. Discusses the kind of knowledge that virtue might conceivably be and why such knowledge would or wouldn’t be teachable. Concludes, however, that virtue isn’t teachable, on the basis that it isn’t merely a matter of “knowing” but is rather a matter of “being”.

  - Paints Austen as a mostly non-moralising (i.e., non-preachy) moralist novelist and as an expert portrayer of the human condition, not subject to the compartmentalising of human faculties often performed by philosophers. Discusses at length the moral aspects of Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, and Persuasion, amongst other novels. Also compares some of Austen’s moral outlook to Shaftesbury’s. Reprinted in Ryle 1971b (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).

  - Proposes to persuade us that teaching and coming to know are never forms merely of teaching-that or learning-that. Proposes that a learner has not learned even simple things until they can go on in their own way. Understands methods not as rote routines but, rather, as involving taking care to avoid certain things, which is itself unteachable. Reprinted in Ryle 1971c (cited under Monographs and Collected Papers).