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THOUGHT EXPERIMENTS AS NORMATIVE MODELS

The paper analyzes key features of thought experiments, their scope and functions with the focus on thought experiments understood as normative models. It provides arguments for special importance of these models in sciences. The paper notes some problems, such as the need to rely on intuitions in the course of thought experiments as well as the gap between the hypothetical and counterfactual nature of these models on the one hand and the requirement of feasibility on the other. It also notes the potential of the method of reflective equilibrium for working with intuitions in the course of thought experiments.

Keywords: thought experiment; normative model; hypothetical; counterfactual; rationality; reflective equilibrium

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