

On Quine's Arguments Concerning Analyticity¹

In his *Two Dogmas of Empiricism*², Quine argues that the traditional distinction between statements that are analytically true and statements that are true by virtue of matters of fact is a metaphysical article of faith. He argues that the distinction between the two sorts of statements has never been adequately set out. In this paper, I will attempt to present Quine's arguments and provide evaluations.

Quine sets up the problem of analyticity as being a question of coming up with an adequate account of how one problematic class of statements that have traditionally been considered analytic can be reduced to another less problematic class of statements.

The first class is typified by the statement 'No bachelor is married,' the latter class by 'No unmarried man is married.' The initial stages of argumentation seem to be as follows:

1. Statements traditionally considered analytic come in two general varieties. They are either
 - a. logically true, or
 - b. statements that can be turned into logical truths by substituting synonymous expressions.
2. Statements of type (a) are formally true. Any interpretation of the non-logical terms will give a reading that remains true. The non-logical terms in fact drop out of the explanation of these statements' truth.
3. Statements of type (b) can be turned into statements of type (a) only by substituting a term that means the same thing as (that is synonymous with) one of the non-logical terms. That term which is substituted must have the untouched term as a logical constituent.
4. In (a) type statements, the meaning of the non-logical terms are identical, and drop out as irrelevant to the truth of those statements. But since we are left with the meaning relations between the logical constituents of the sentences, these statements can be considered analytic of the non-logical terms that they contain.

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² Willard Van Orman Quine, *From a Logical Point of View*, Chapter 2, pp. 20-46, Harvard University Press, 1953.

5. In (b) type statements, the meanings of the non-logical terms are relevant to the truth of those statements. Only if we can say that one of those terms is synonymous with some other term that upon substitution would produce an (a) type statement, can we say that a (b) type statement is analytic.

With this as background, Quine moves into the next phase of argumentation. His overall goal is to show that we cannot give an account of analyticity. The form of his argument is disjunctive. He presents several possible accounts of analyticity. On the assumption that his disjunctive premise is exhaustive, he concludes that no account of analyticity is possible, and for us to continue to believe there are such things as analytic truths is to engage in blind faith.

His first few disjuncts are based upon the initial argumentation above. He argues that no account of synonymy is adequate. If that is true then no account of analyticity in terms of synonymy is going to be adequate. He then argues that no account of analyticity that is carried out independently of an account of synonymy will succeed either. I will now examine his arguments concerning synonymy. After that, I will look at the argument that is concerned with synonymy independent accounts of analyticity.

Synonymy

The terms in need of explication in (3) above are 'same in meaning' and 'synonymous'. Quine argues that we cannot give an adequate account of these terms. He argues disjunctively: he offers two possible ways to account for synonymy between terms: The first possibility is that synonymy comes about by one of three sorts of definition. The second possibility is that synonymy between terms is simply the fact that they are interchangeable in all sentential contexts *salva veritate*.³ He argues that neither of these approaches will give an adequate account of what synonymy is. Assuming that the disjunctive premise is exhaustive, and he is correct about each of the disjuncts, he concludes that there can be no adequate account of synonymy. Since there can be no adequate account of synonymy, there can be no adequate account of how statements of type (b) are analytic because that account must depend on an account of synonymy.

In regard to the three types of definition, Quine argues that two types in some way presuppose synonymy without explaining what it is.

³ That is "preserving truth"

The third sort of definition does indeed create genuine synonymy relations, but Quine seems to think that these cases are in some way importantly different from most of the alleged cases of synonymy we find in analytic statements. Therefore, this sort of definition cannot serve as the basis of a general account of synonymy.

In regard to the interchangeability thesis, Quine argues that it ultimately must involve some sort of presupposition of analyticity to work out. The interchangeability thesis fails because it ultimately has to make use of the notion of analyticity in order to make sense of a language that uses the modal operator 'it is necessarily the case that.' That language is apparently the minimal necessary language in terms of which the interchangeability *salva veritate* account of sameness in meaning can be insulated from counterexamples based upon extensionally equivalent terms.

I start by presenting the initial steps of Quine's argument. I will include all the disjuncts he considers in the article. I will however first concentrate on the portion of his argument concerning definitions, interchangeability *salva veritate*, and synonymy. Later, I will look at his argumentation concerning a synonymy independent account of analyticity:

1. Analytic truths of type (b), if they are to exist must be such that they can be turned into analytic truths of type (a) by making use of pairs of synonymous terms.
2. Synonymous terms are synonymous by virtue of either (c) one term being defined in terms of the other, or (d) being interchangeable *salva veritate* in all sentential contexts, or, (e) by being true according to the semantic rules of the language of which they are a part.
3. If terms are synonymous by virtue of (c), the definition has to be one of three types: lexicographic, or explicative/ampliative, or conventional.
4. If the definition is lexicographic, it is a report of pre-existing usage.
5. The lexicographer's report of pre-existing linguistic behavior cannot serve as the explanation or ground of that pre-existing behavior. His report merely records the pre-existing behavior.
6. Therefore, terms cannot be synonymous in virtue of lexicographic definition alone.
7. If the definition is explicative/ampliative, it is a modification or explication of some pre-existing synonymy relation. The person or persons making this definition supplement or refine the pre-existing synonymy for some purpose or another.

8. But if what (7) says is true, then some synonymy is already being made use of. The explicative/ampliative definition is dependent for its existence upon that pre-existing synonymy.
9. If (8) is the case, then the explicative/ampliative definition in question does not introduce the pre-existing synonymy, or account for its existence.
10. So, there is at least one synonymy whose existence cannot be accounted for in terms of this one explicative/ampliative definition.
11. But suppose that the pre-existing synonymy itself was the result of some earlier explicative/ampliative definition.
12. If this earlier event was indeed an explicative/ampliative definition, then it too must have been based upon some earlier synonymy relation.
13. If explicative/ampliative definition is to be used to account for all synonymy relations, then we land in an infinite regress.
14. So, explicative/ampliative definition cannot do as a general account of how synonymy relations come into being. Explicative/ampliative definition cannot give an account of synonymy.
15. If the definition is conventional, then we have a case where two terms are set as equal, one term being introduced as abbreviatory of the other. E.g., 'e.g.' =df 'for example'.
16. If we have a case where two terms are being set as equal, one being abbreviatory of the other, then we have a case where a synonymy relation has been created by definition.
17. Conventional definitions create genuine synonymies.

Even though he allows that conventional definitions can create synonymous pairs of terms, Quine still thinks that an adequate general account of synonymy has not been produced. It seems that he wants an account that can be made use of in explaining synonymies that exist in natural languages. He does not think that this can be done by conventional definition alone. Perhaps it can be carried out via some sort of combination of conventional and explicative/ampliative definition. It remains to be seen if this is true. I will spell out a way this might be done after I have presented Quine's argument concerning the impossibility of a synonymy independent account of analyticity. However, for now I want to look at the argument concerning the inadequacy of interchangeability as an account of synonymy.

Once Quine dismisses definition as an adequate account of synonymy, he moves on to interchangeability *salva veritate*.

Interchangeability *salva veritate* by itself is not sufficient for sameness of meaning for two reasons: One can substitute extensionally equivalent terms and preserve truth, while one does not preserve meaning. So, if we have a language that deals only with one place properties, two or more place relations, and contains the truth functional operators, singular terms, variables for those singular terms, and quantifiers, we will not have enough to guarantee that if we are to replace one term with another, while preserving truth in some statement, that we will have also preserved the original meaning of that statement. It may be true to say that all creatures with hearts live on earth, true that all creatures with hearts are creatures with kidneys, and thereby true that all creatures with kidneys live on earth, but the first and latter sentences do not seem to mean the same thing. So it seems relative to this sort of language, interchangeability is not going to be sufficient for synonymy.

But perhaps we can enrich our language. We can add what Quine calls 'intensional operators' to our language. These would be things like cognitive operators, modal operators, and the like. Quine points out the operator most likely to help us in giving an account of analyticity: the modal operator 'it is necessarily the case that.'

Necessary truths are those that are true 'come what may.' Leibniz took this to mean that they are those statements that are true in every possible world. We can think of possible worlds as possible circumstances. So necessary truths are those that are true in all possible circumstances. This would seem to indicate that their truth is only an internal matter. The circumstances simply do not matter. So it would seem that necessarily true statements are true by dint of a feature having to do only with themselves. That feature cannot be the extensions of the necessarily true statements, should they have them. Therefore, it must be their meanings that are the key feature.

So maybe if we work with a sentential matrix like 'Necessarily, if x is an A, then x is a B', as a sort of test for synonymy we can find those synonymous pairs of type (b) after all. For, only if the non-logical terms are exactly the same in meaning will they drop out and become irrelevant to the truth preservation of the statements we are using as test cases. If we compare the statement 'Necessarily, if x is a creature with a heart, then x is a creature with a kidney,' with the statement 'Necessarily, if x is three in number, then x is odd,' we see how plausible this sounds. This sort of approach also seems to work when we plug in 'bachelor,' and 'unmarried.'

However, Quine thinks that doing this ultimately lands us in an account of analyticity through interchangeability that involves us in some sort of circular account. His argument is difficult to follow, but it seems to be the following:

Interchangeability

1. In the simpler first order language it is possible for universal claims to preserve truth upon interchange of terms, even when we would say that the meanings of the terms are different. All that needs be the case is that the terms are extensionally equivalent: e.g.; The true statement 'All and only creatures with hearts are creatures with hearts' goes into the equally true statement 'All and only creatures with hearts are creatures with kidneys.'
2. So, for any pair of universal claims that are both true, and one of which is the result of such an interchange of terms, it is possible that they differ in meaning while they agree in extension. They could both be true by accident, by dint of a matter of fact.
3. 'All and only bachelors are bachelors,' and 'All and only bachelors are unmarried males,' are a pair of universal claims, both true, and one of which is the result of interchange of the terms 'bachelor' and 'unmarried male.'
4. It is possible that the pair of universal statements in 3 differ in meaning, while agreeing in extension. It is possible that they are both true by accident, by dint of a matter of fact.
5. If it is possible that of a pair of universal statement which satisfy the description in (2) that one of the pair is true by dint of a matter of fact, then it is possible that they are not both analytic truths.
6. Only if it is not possible for a pair of universal statements like those described in 2 to differ in meaning, while agreeing in extension, and thus it is not possible for one of the pair to be true by dint of a matter of fact, will both statements be analytic truths.
7. Perhaps the following is true. It does seem that Quine's (a) type example and the three and oddness example successfully meet the following condition: Only synonymous terms will fill in a matrix like 'Necessarily, if x is an A then x is a B'. For example, if we put in 'creature with a heart' and 'creature with a kidney' for A and B, respectively, then we create a false statement from a true one. It is logically and physically possible for a creature with a kidney to have no heart, and for a creature with a heart to have no kidney. We can conceive of such beings, and we are

familiar with people on dialysis machines, or who have artificial organs. On the other hand, if we substitute 'creature with a heart' for both A and B, we get a true statement. No matter of fact can refute that statement, and we cannot conceive of a matter of fact that could refute it.

8. But the proposal will work only if the operator 'it is necessarily the case that' does not in some way presuppose a notion of analyticity.
9. But to say that something is necessarily the case is to say that it could not have been otherwise.
10. To say that something could not have been otherwise is to say that it would have been the case no matter what other facts might obtain.
11. To say that something would have been the case no matter what other facts might obtain is to say that the other facts are irrelevant to its truth.
12. But if something is the case regardless of all other facts, then it must be the case because of facts internal to it.
13. Therefore, necessarily true statements are true only because of facts internal to them.
14. Statements have extensions and intensions. These are the only 'facts' cognitively relevant to statements.
15. Whether or not a statement has an extension is a matter of whether or not its constituents have extensions. Whether or not words have extensions depends on what other facts obtain. Therefore, whether or not a statement has an extension depends on what other facts obtain. These other facts are not internal to the statement.
16. Therefore, necessarily true statements are not true by virtue of their extensions.
17. Intensions are the linguistic meanings of words.
18. Words can have linguistic meanings even when they lack reference.
19. Therefore, intensions are something a word can have independently of any matter of fact external to their own meaning.
20. But if linguistic meanings are something words can have independently of any matter of fact external to their own meaning, then statements can have meanings independently of matters of fact.

21. So, the only types of statements that can be necessarily true are those that are true only by virtue of the meanings they have.
22. But the only type of statement that is true only by virtue of the meanings they have are analytic statements.
23. Therefore, to say «Necessarily A is a B» is to say something like «It is analytically true that A is B».
24. But we are presupposing analyticity in order to be able to make sense out of the sentential operator 'it is necessarily the case that,' which we were to use in a non-circular manner, in order to sift out analytic truths.
25. Therefore, we cannot produce an adequate account of analyticity in terms of interchangeability of terms *salva veritate*.

Semantic Rules

Quine now abandons the attempt to produce an account of synonymy, and attempts to give an account of analyticity in terms that are independent of synonymy. He makes use of the notion of semantic rules of languages. To simplify matters he considers artificial formal languages.

The general idea is that the analyticity of a statement is seen as relative to the semantic rules of the language of which it is a part. We might use an example: In pure propositional logic, the semantic value of a statement is one of two truth-values: 'true' or 'false.' There are simple statements, and compound statements.

Compound statements are created by concatenating simple statements using truth functions. (i.e., the connectives $\&$, \vee , \sim , etc.). Each truth function is assigned a truth table. The truth tables give semantic rules by which one can determine the truth-value or semantic value of any truth functionally compound statement that is created by use of the connectives. Analytic statements could be specified as those that describe applications of the semantic rules (the truth tables) which come out true on every possible concatenation of semantic values possible for the propositional variables in the statement. By that rule 'p' is not an analytic statement of propositional logic, but ' $p \vee \sim p$ ' is.

Here is what Quine says about this:

A semantical rule of this ... type, a rule of truth, is not supposed to specify all the truths of the language; it merely stipulates, recursively or otherwise, a certain multitude of statements which, along with others unspecified, are to count as true. Such a rule may be conceded to be quite clear. Derivatively, afterward, analyticity can be demarcated thus: a statement is analytic if it is (not merely true but) true according to the semantic rule.

Quine now complains that in such a definition, one unexplained term is being substituted for another. Assuming 'truth' is not a problematic term, 'analytic' has been replaced by 'true by virtue of a semantical rule'. Using the example, we can give a semantic rule for propositional logic as follows: All statements that are of the form ' $p \vee \sim p$ ' are true. We might be inclined to say that this is a statement of a semantic rule of propositional logic. But Quine tells us that this statement is most generally described as a statement which says of a certain set of statement types that they are true. But not every statement that says of a certain set of statement types that they are true is happily described as a statement of a semantic rule. I might say, (and it might be the case that) all the predictions of the oracle of Delphi are true, but this would not seem to be a statement of a semantical rule of any language. Neither would my saying this sort of thing make it true that the oracular utterances are all analytically true. If all statements which say of a certain set of statement types that they are true were semantic rules, then all truths would be analytic. Clearly, it must be the case that some subset of these sorts of statements are statements of the semantic rules of languages and some are not. But what property sets off the favored subset from its brethren? Maybe that property is the fact that the favored statements point out truths that result only from the primitive postulated semantic rules (such as the truth table of disjunction in our example). The 'analytic making property' would be something like 'being a sentence form that receives a semantic value assignment true each time it is evaluated using the primitive semantic rules, and receives this assignment regardless of the truth value assignments of the atomic statements. Quine is not satisfied with this sort of move, and thinks that ultimately it cannot be used to give an account of analyticity. His reason seems to be the following: When we set up a formal language like propositional logic, we start by postulating some set of semantic rules as basic. Others can be defined in terms of the postulates. In formal languages, we are interested in statements in so far as they can be derived from other statements in accord with transformation rules. But it is open to us which semantic rules we treat as the basic set. E.g., we can treat rules involving negation and disjunction as the primitive semantic rules, and can then define other semantic rules involving, for example, conditionals in terms of the primitive rules we have chosen.

We might even go the other way, treating as basic the conditional, and negation, and define disjunction in terms of these. It is also possible that we could try and start with one semantic rule, perhaps the 'Sheffer stroke' and attempt to define a large set of connectives in terms of it. Conversely, we could start with a rich language, containing many basic semantic rules, and define certain long formulae using the Sheffer stroke in terms of the many postulated semantic rules.

In the former kind of case, the non-basic semantic rules are derived. They can be described as abbreviatory conventions. The language could do without them. It would just be more cumbersome without them. In those sorts of languages, it seems that the derived rules are not really in an ultimate sense basic semantic rules of the language. They are not among the postulates. But since it is up to us which semantic rules will be basic, there is no sense in saying that there is in any sort of task independent sense, a privileged set of statements that follow from the basic semantic rules of propositional logic. Relative to task A, semantic rule x can be treated as being a postulate, but relative to another task B, x may be treated as being defined in terms of and being dependent upon other semantic rules that are being used as postulates. There are many possible purely logical tasks that can be carried out using a formal language. So if 'x is analytic' means 'x is invariably true by the basic semantic rules of L', means 'x's invariable truth is the result only of an application of a postulate of L', then any invariable truth of propositional logic could conceivably be the result merely of an application of some postulate of some L which is family related to propositional logic. It would thereby be an analytic truth by the basic semantic rules of that L.

So it seems that the following is the case: If the analyticity of a formula of some formal language L is to be defined in terms of whether or not it is (1) a statement which is true only because of the fact that it turns out true on every possible assignment of truth values to its propositional constituents, and (2) it uses only the primitive semantic rules of that language to determine if (1) is the case, and (3) what rules are treated as primitives, or postulates is something that is relative to the tasks that the creator of that system has in mind, then (4) it is true that analyticity, so defined is relative to languages. However, this does not seem to show that there are no analytic truths, as Quine seems to maintain.

But how can these considerations be applied to ordinary language? I think they can be applied in such a way as to throw doubt on Quine's strong position. Earlier, I mentioned in connection with the discussion of definition, that there might be a way of combining conventional definition, and explicative/ampliative definition so as to give some account of analyticity. Now I will try and sketch this out.

Because the relative richness of the concepts used in a language are in some way relative to tasks undertaken via that language, what may be a deductive consequence of the meaning of a word used to designate a concept of one language may not be a deductive consequence of the meaning of that same word as used in a richer language. But if there are deductive consequences of the meanings of words, then there are analytic truths. True, there cannot be analytic truths in some sort of absolute sense, but this does not seem to count against the thesis that there are at least some analytic truths. Quine claims that there are no analytic truths. To prove, as his semantic rules argument seems to, that analytic truths, if there are any, are in some way language dependent, and task dependent does not establish the stronger point. It still seems that relative to a given task, and a given way of conceptualizing a situation, that there will be some deducible consequences of that conceptualization. If the deduction of such consequences is not an analysis of the postulates, or conceptual underpinnings of that language, then what else could it be? This theory of language relative analytic truths may allow us to deal with the alleged counterexamples that are aimed at traditional examples of analytic statements. One such traditional example is the statement 'All bachelors are unmarried male humans of marriageable age.'

Psychologists have found that people, if asked, will say that the Pope is not a bachelor. This is true despite the fact that he is an unmarried male human of marriageable age. People will also refuse to label a man who has lived in the same house as a woman with whom he is not wed with the term. Also, extremely old single men are not counted as bachelors (the Pope is once again a good example of this).

All of this is supposed to count against reading the universal generalization above as an analytic truth concerning the word 'bachelor'.

It seems that there are two distinct ways to respond to this claim.

(1) 'Bachelor' just means *unmarried human male of marriageable age*, and the counterexample shows that within that broad category there are subspecies. People may have in mind some rather typical examples of the species when they are asked to answer the questions concerning atypical examples. Because they have these typical examples in mind, more so than examples of the atypical types, they make these judgments. The empirical results do not show that there are no analytic truths concerning the term 'bachelor', they just show that people can be led into error by psychological factors. It seems that empirical results could be produced that would corroborate this view. If the psychologists had asked their subjects to think carefully and tell them whether 'strictly speaking' the Pope etc., were bachelors, it seems to me that they would have received affirmative answers.

(2) The second type of approach to these alleged counterexamples would be more in line with the way Quine looks at formal languages.

According to that view, the word 'bachelor' can be seen as a symbol that is shared by various languages, each of which is a part of a motley collection called 'English', or 'natural language' or something of the sort. These languages are collected together by the fact that they are used by at least some people in our society at any one time.

Some languages are proper subsets of others, some languages share terms, or conceptual underpinnings, but are otherwise independent, and others might be completely independent of one another. Some terms are shared by various members of the motley crew, but vary in meaning either through variations in relative conceptual richness, or complete difference in meaning. Different languages or sublanguages can be roughly delineated by different tasks for which they were more or less consciously designed. So terms shared by distinct languages or sublanguages will vary in meaning according to the task or tasks for which the language or sublanguage exists. Being members of the overall society that makes use of this hodgepodge, we more or less pick up and use the members of the hodgepodge. Our problems with the term 'bachelor' are reflective of this situation. It may be an analytic truth of language A that an unmarried male of marriageable age is a bachelor, and an analytic truth of A that an unmarried male of marriageable age who is shacking up with a woman is also a bachelor. Yet language A may be some sort of a sublanguage of a larger language, which also has language B as a part. Language B has some task different than that of A, and according to it, only unmarried males of marriageable age who are in some sense of the word eligible are bachelors. So, according to this hypothetical language B the Pope does not make the cut, and neither does our shacking up guy. We might imagine language A to be used by the legal community, or by the IRS, and language B to be used by people more or less interested in who stands a realistic chance of getting hitched.

Within each language, there are certain things that are taken for granted. In the IRS language, the universe of discourse simply consists of unmarried adult males and females, and married adult males and females, and bachelor simply means unmarried adult male, because relative to the task of determining what tax rate an adult male gets, whether he is married or not is one of the relevant characteristics he may have. Whether he is eligible is irrelevant to the purposes of the IRS. In the matchmaker's language, the universe of discourse consists of unmarried viable males and females, unmarried unviable males and females, and married males and females, and bachelor means unmarried adult male who is viable husband material, because relative to the task of determining which males are

possible 'hitchees,' not only is being unmarried a relevant property, but viability (broadly construed) is a relevant property.

In general, Quine thinks that it is troubling for those that are committed to the existence of analytic truths, that all the attempted explications of what analyticity is somehow land the believer in a closed apparently circular definition of analyticity. It is explained in terms of synonymy, and interchangeability, and these themselves ultimately depend upon the notion of analyticity themselves. Now it is not clear exactly what we should take away from these states of affairs, even if we grant that they are true. Quine seems to allow that we can create, by conventional means, some analytic, or definitional terms. Yet, he thinks that aside from this, we cannot point to analytic truths of ordinary language. Yet, he also feels that logical laws, such as the law of excluded middle, are open to empirical falsification. He has in mind the particle wave duality of particle physics. So it seems that these too are synthetic, or have some empirical element. But if we try to define analyticity in terms of any of the notions canvassed above, we will find ourselves explicating this family of terms by other terms in the family. Quine thinks this is a fatal flaw. It is fatal because it is circular.

However, there are other families of terms each member of which finds its meaning explained in terms of other members of the same set. Consider the terms 'father', 'mother' 'child'. A child is the result of genetic contributions of a male and female human (a mother and a father), who account for the child's existence. A father is a male human, who along with a female human (that would be a mother) has contributed genetically to a third human (that would be a child) accounting for that human's existence. A mother is a female human who along with a male human (father) has contributed genetically to a third human (child again) accounting for that human's existence.

Does this relation between these terms throw us into grave doubts as to the viability of familial discourse, and the very possibility of making meaningful utterances about children, fathers and mothers? Does it lead us to think there is no distinction between things familial, and things non-familial? No. Even in logic, (as Quine points out in his essay), the truth functional terms are defined in terms of each other. This fact does not lead us to abandon logical discourse, or proclaim that there can be no satisfactory account of the logical connectives. It does not lead us to claim that there is no distinction between logical truths and truths of other types.

In general, if we can countenance such families of related terms, and can establish membership in such families, then there will be analytic truths. Those truths will explicate the conceptual structure, indeed

the identity of those families. Similarly, if we can countenance the family of terms that Quine presents, and their conceptual interrelations, then there will be such properties as analyticity, synonymy, and necessity.

Philosophy is replete with such families of terms. The family that Quine explores is one. Another is {knowledge, truth, justification}. Another is {good, obligatory, permissible}.

In general, Quine has this problem: If we are to take interdefinability as a fatal flaw, and as an indicator that an area of discourse is either impossible, or ultimately meaningless in some way, it seems we will have to throw out not only philosophical discourse, but much discourse that has to do with matters of fact. But we (and presumably Quine) do not want to abandon the latter sort of discourse.

Why abandon the former? Perhaps there are some practical considerations. A reason that Quine has for adopting his 'web of belief' view is that it is supposed to be a tonic against dogmatism.

Philosophical discourse might degenerate into dogmatism, and people will not keep their minds open, if they are convinced that there are truths that are immune to empirical falsification. If we were convinced web of belief theorists, this would be less likely to occur.

But the possible empirical falsification of logical laws does not lead Quine to abandon the practice of that discipline. Why then should he abandon, as impossible, the possibility of conceptual analysis in general, which is in effect exactly what he is doing? Perhaps his overriding concern is the specter of a recalcitrant dogmatism.

Concerning the worry over dogmatism, I think that way lies a two-edged sword, which can with equal justice be wielded against web of belief theory. If applied consistently, web of belief theory can and should land one into a firm acceptance of the alleged fact that all statements are in some way synthetic, and that there are no conceptual truths, and that even the laws of logic are (even if only slightly) empirical, and open to falsification. This would tend to degenerate into dogmatic relativism, and a quick dismissal of views of a more traditional nature. But, this would be to take up a position that any statement of the Quinean or relativistic position is itself somehow independent of the web of belief, and privileged in that it is immune from empirical falsification. To take up this sort of position is just as dogmatic as is the position that claims that the Pope-type examples do not show that there are no analytic truths, only inadequately grasped conceptual structures. So if there is no virtue in the one camp, then there is none in the other. It may be that there are analytic truths.

We should not dismiss that possibility