

# *Philosophical Perspectives on Confabulation*

TOPOI Special Issue - Call For Papers

<http://www.springer.com/philosophy/journal/11245>

## **Guest editors**

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## **Deadline for manuscript submission:**

31 July 2018.

## **Introduction**

Numerous psychological studies establish that we are unaware of information that is relevant to the occurrence of an event, but we may nonetheless offer a sincere, often inaccurate, explanation for that event. This phenomenon is named *confabulation*, or *broad/everyday confabulation* to distinguish it from those cases of confabulation that are due to impaired memory or that emerge in clinical contexts. We confabulate about what one might think are trivial matters such as consumer choices, but we are also prone to confabulating in situations which, arguably, implicate our identity, such as when we explain our political beliefs and moral convictions.

Confabulation raises a number of important philosophical questions. For instance, it is an open question how exactly we should characterize the phenomenon. Does a single characterization unify all instances of confabulation? Or do we need a family of related cognitions and behaviors to best account for the phenomenon? Whether clinical and non-clinical cases constitute distinct phenomena, or whether these instances are related, and how, is also up for discussion.

Early philosophical work on confabulation identifies it as a threat to first person authority and characterizes it in terms of its epistemic faults. If these accounts are right, then there are wide-ranging consequences for theorizing in the philosophy of mind and epistemology: we are routinely mistaken about the nature and origin of our sensations, preferences and judgements, and develop theories about our motivations that can be wildly inaccurate.

Given the ubiquity of the phenomenon, clarity on the nature and implications of confabulation are important for the project of understanding the mind. But further to this, a better understanding of the phenomenon will facilitate interventions with both psychiatric patients and in everyday cases in order to improve cognition.

Contributions from philosophers working in the philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology, and epistemology are most welcome.

## The Issue

The issue will contain a selection of invited contributions by experts in the philosophical issues raised by confabulation, including:

- William Hirstein
- Sarah K. Robins
- Derek Strijbos & Leon De Bruin
- Louise Moody

The issue will also be open to submitted contributions. Here are some of the questions the contributions could address:

- How should we define confabulation?
- Why do we confabulate?
- What is the relationship between confabulation and memory impairment?
- Does confabulation imply a failure of rationality? Or a failure of self-knowledge?
- What are the costs of confabulation and are there any benefits?
- How should costs and benefits of confabulation be adjudicated?
- Is providing an inaccurate answer or an inaccurate explanation better (and in what sense) than providing no answer or no explanation at all?
- Are the costs and benefits of clinical confabulation comparable to those of non-clinical confabulation?

## Submission Process

All papers will be subject to double-blind peer-review, following international standard practices. Each submission will be peer-reviewed by no less than two referees.

To submit, go to *Topoi*'s online editorial manager:

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/topo/default.aspx>

After logging in, click on **Submit New Manuscript** and select the item "**S.I. Perspectives on confabulation (Stammers/Bortolotti)**" from the menu Article Type.

The deadline for submission is **31<sup>st</sup> July 2018**.

Papers should not exceed **8000 words**.

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