Philosophy Does Not Rely on Intuitions

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In my book, The Myth of the Intuitive (2015, MIT Press), I deny that philosophy typically relies on intuitions, and hence claim that the widespread belief that it does is a myth – nothing more than a piece of metaphilosophical folklore. If I am right, then “experimental philosophy,” most of whose practitioners assume, without argument, that philosophy does rely on intuitions, does not pose a significant challenge to philosophy more traditionally practiced. In this talk, I will explain the main grounds for my denial and attempt to clarify its content. It does not involve denying that intuitions exist, for example. Nor does it involve denying that philosophy trades in thought experiments and hypothetical cases. It must also be carefully distinguished from the view that biases of various kinds are epistemically unproblematic in the practice of philosophy.