

# XIV—Cluelessness

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Decisions, whether moral or prudential, should be guided at least in part by considerations of the consequences that would result from the various available actions. For any given action, however, the majority of its consequences are unpredictable at the time of decision. Many have worried that this leaves us, in some important sense, *clueless*. In this paper, I distinguish between ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ possible sources of cluelessness. In terms of this taxonomy, the majority of the existing literature on cluelessness focuses on the simple sources. I argue, contra James Lenman in particular, that *these* would-be sources of cluelessness are unproblematic, on the grounds that indifference-based reasoning is far less problematic than Lenman (along with many others) supposes. However, there does seem to be a genuine phenomenon of cluelessness associated with the ‘complex’ sources; here, indifference-based reasoning is inapplicable by anyone’s lights. This ‘complex problem of cluelessness’ is vivid and pressing, in particular, in the context of Effective Altruism. This motivates a more thorough examination of the precise nature of cluelessness, and the precise source of the associated phenomenology of discomfort in forced-choice situations. The latter parts of the paper make some initial explorations in those directions.