

Analytic vs Continental Philosophy

Divide: Simply glancing at the terms one might suspect that analytic philosophy is solely devoted to maybe the analysis of terms of our language, while continental philosophy exists particularly on continental Europe. While these differences characterize the beginnings of this distinction, the positions have changed significantly over time.

Analytic: Analytic philosophy began near the turn of the century with the works of Russell, Moore, Carnap and Hempel. Simply, they analyzed complex concepts and ideas through the use of symbolic logic that was codified by Russell, Whitehead, and Frege. Russell’s solution to the four puzzles of philosophy of language is a great example of this method.

While the discipline has changed greatly over time, the principles of logical rigor, and clarity of concepts are still present. Analytic philosophers still use intuition, common sense, or scientific discoveries as their basis for experience, and the laws of logic as their means of reasoning and validating arguments.

Continental: Continental philosophy has similarly migrated from its roots, or at least come to include more ideas and principles. Continental philosophy is so called because many of its principle original champions hailed from continental Europe, particularly Germany and France. It can trace its origins to Husserl and his phenomenological method of doing philosophy. Basically, this method focuses on description of personal experience of the world, instead of logical analysis of collective experiences.

Heidegger turned the tools that Husserl created to bear on questions of freedom and anguish in his famous Being and Time. This project was taken even farther by French Existentialists such as Sartre. Today we count other European derived positions under the heading of continental philosophy, such as Marxism or deconstructionalism.

Though the subject matter has been appended over time, there are still some methodological practices that set continental philosophy apart from analytic philosophy. Whereas analytic philosophy generally focuses on collective experience, common sense, intuition and science, continental philosophy leans more towards personal, transcendental, and absolute experience that moves past the common and scientific to something deeper. Instead of using logical inference to move from one concept to another, continental philosophers claim that we must use imagination to expand our horizons.

Below find some positions and philosophers that are especially associated with Analytic and Continental philosophy. This list should help you get a basic idea of the areas, not in any way serve as an exhaustive categorization.

Analytic Philosophers	Positions	Continental Philosophers	Positions
1. Russell 2. Moore 3. Carnap 4. Hempel 5. Quine 6. Kripke 7. Davidson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Logical ▪ Positivism ▪ Empiricism ▪ Naturalism ▪ Correspondence Theories of Truth 	1. Husserl 2. Heidegger 3. Hegel 4. Sartre 5. Derrida 6. Foucault 7. Marx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phenomenology ▪ Marxism ▪ Existentialism ▪ Post-Structuralism ▪ Deconstructionalism ▪ Hermeneutics

There are significant differences in the styles of these two disciplines. Due to its clarity, the style of analytic philosophy is generally used when communicating between the two disciplines and it remains the primary type of philosophy studied in the English-speaking world.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJIAZynEuWk>