

Unpacking a Concept

- To make something easier to understand by breaking it up into smaller parts that can be examined separately;
- To analyze the nature of by examining in detail;
- Used metaphorically in philosophical or theoretical contexts as a synonym for to "analyze". Often an idea encapsulated in a single word or phrase has multiple connotations or implications, which need to be carefully distinguished from one another;
- To undo the bundle or more figuratively, to unwrap the concept so one can get at the facets of the concept-bundle, similar to the expression "mining an idea";
- Suggest that there is a finite number of segments within the concept that need to be taken out and addressed, while "mining an idea" has an unidentified number of segments that could be addressed (could be a good vein or nothing at all, but you won't know until you start looking at it), so the former is more definitive while the latter is more speculative; and
- To methodically and deliberately dismantle the 'packaging' to get at and understand the real issues inside.