

Phil. 270, 1/14: Epistemology, Knowledge, Analysis, Intuitions, and Gettier

The syllabus for the course is available at the course web page: <http://campuspress.yale.edu/keithderose/epistemology-s20/>

1. A question

2. What is Epistemology? -- & the importance of knowledge

3. An Alternative to the Example-Driven-Analysis Game: A Brief Look at the “Genealogical”/“State of Nature” Approach and a (Perhaps) New Genealogical Proposal

-Edward Craig, *Knowledge and the State of Nature* (1999: see

<https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0198238797.001.0001/acprof-9780198238799>) and Steven L. Reynolds,

Knowledge as Acceptable Testimony (2017: see <https://ndpr.nd.edu/news/knowledge-as-acceptable-testimony/>)

4. The Knowledge Account of Assertion

5. The analysis of knowledge: JTB, philosophical analysis, individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for the exemplification of philosophically important concepts

-Issues of conceptual priority: one notion being more fundamental or basic than another. Perhaps knowledge is more basic than some of the concepts being used in attempt to analyze it? Perhaps we knowledge should be used to analyze some of *them*? (Williamson) Perhaps justification can be understood along the lines of “what knowledge looks like from the inside”? (Steven Reynolds) Perhaps belief can be understood as “the attitude of knowledge”? (see C)

- The counter-example game, Gettier cases, intuitions, experimental philosophy

6. The standard conditions: truth

-why a truth-condition?: intuitions, general reluctance to describe believers of falsehoods as knowing what they believe, apparent wrongness of so describing them

-cases involving emphasis/intonation, “protagonist projection” (see A)

7. The standard conditions: belief.

-Is belief necessary for knowledge? What about cases in which it seems you don’t believe something, but “deep down” you know it to be so?

-Is belief the “attitude of knowledge”? This asks more than if belief is necessary for knowledge. It also asks whether belief is all that’s required, attitude-wise, to know.

-Other possibilities: see the analyses on the first page of the Gettier paper and the footnote portion of C

-easy vs. tough accounts of belief: belief & flat-out assertion; tying belief to “p” vs. to “I believe that p”; do we typically believe we’ve lost the lottery?

8. Justification

-“epistemic” vs. “pragmatic” justification

-The case of Ann and Bob: different types of justification

-Gettier’s cases seemed to show that justification isn’t enough to assure that true belief is knowledge. Some attempted analyses supplemented it; others replaced it.

7. Is justification necessary for knowledge? For the case against, see Goldman, "A Causal Theory of Knowing" (item 3 on the syllabus), p. 370 and David Lewis, passage B

-Goldman defends his omission of the justification condition with his Lincoln example (370.4-.7). Compare Lewis's case in B. Goldman supposes his "traditional" opponents will ("doubtlessly"!) deny knowledge in this case.

-What I consider a more promising response in defense of the justification condition: Claim that the belief *is* justified in the Lincoln case. Or note how we can be either easy or tough on both knowledge and justification.

-Notice how Goldman first presents the traditional requirement: "a knower must be able to justify or give evidence for any proposition he knows" (370.2).

-The distinction between the act of justifying and the state of being justified is important here. The latter is the more plausible requirement for knowledge.

-But also note that there *is* a justification that a suitably reflective person could give in the Lincoln case and that knowers in such cases can be plausibly thought to be somehow implicitly relying on.

-Possibility of IUPG justification

(A) Then in the early 1980s two Australian doctors figured out that peptic ulcers were caused not by stress but most often by bacterial infection. That was a stunning development. Everyone knew that stress caused ulcers! People would say: "This job is giving me an ulcer." No, the microbe did it.

--"Cat Carrier: Your cat could make you crazy," *National Geographic*, August 2005

(B) Second, because justification is not always necessary [for knowledge]. What (non-circular) argument supports our reliance on perception, on memory, and on testimony? And yet we do gain knowledge by these means. And sometimes, far from having supporting arguments, we don't even know how we know. We once had evidence, drew conclusions, and thereby gained knowledge; now we have forgotten our reasons, yet still we retain our knowledge. Or we know the name that goes with the face, or the sex of the chicken, by relying on subtle visual cues, without knowing what those cues may be.

The link between knowledge and justification must be broken.

-David Lewis, "Elusive Knowledge," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 74 (1996): 549-567, p. 551

(C) However, it is highly questionable whether belief does so capture the attitude requirement on knowledge, and I, for one, doubt that it does: Perhaps it can happen that a subject believes a proposition, but isn't confident enough in her belief to count as knowing it, and so fails to be knower for purely attitudinal reasons.*

**S is certain that p*, I think, is a better candidate than is the ever-popular *S believes that p* for expressing the attitude requirement for *S knows that p*. . . I am far from certain that even this better candidate perfectly captures what is needed, attitude-wise, to know that *p*. Perhaps there is no common phrase in natural English that perfectly captures this requirement, in which case we may have to make do with calling it something like 'the attitude of knowledge'.

-DeRose, *The Case for Contextualism*, pp. 185-187