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Lesson 1: The Basics constituents of Knowledge

Epistemology - Theory of knowledge.

- basic constituents of knowledge.
- problem of offering a theory of knowledge.
Gettier Problem.
- Radical skepticism. (we have as much ~~as~~ knowledge as we think ourselves to have).

In this age, we have access to too much information but we need to discern betw. the good and the bad information. And thus, knowledge is important and we need to define it.

Knowledge

Lesson 1 : Video 1

The Basic constituents of knowledge

Epistemology: theory of knowledge.

(Part 1: The Basic constituents of knowledge)

The internet might be at your fingertips but you still need to filter the information.

Knowledge in everyday usage

- Susan knows where the secret compartment is
- Matthew knows how to fly a plane.

Logic comic Neuro comic
Gold Back's Conjecture.

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We use the word 'knows' in many ways but we shall narrow it down to a specific way to use the word 'knows'.

→ Propositional knowledge
(Knowledge that something is the case)

Proposition - declarative sentence.

"The cat is on a mat" → proposition

"Shut the door", "yes, please" → not declarations.

Propositions can be true or false.

Ability knowledge (know how).

knowing how to ride a bicycle.
manifestation of ability / skill.

~~if you~~

constituents of propositional knowledge

→ ~~if you~~ Truth - if you know a proposition is true then it must be.

Knowledge requires truth.

→ Belief - if you know the proposition then you must believe it

The complete Maus.

chromatic figure

recherche.

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When you say "I don't merely believe but I know Paris is the capital of France" we say it as we don't just believe we know implies knowledge is more powerful than belief.

When knowledge requires truth we mean you can't know a falsehood.

When you know, we aren't suggesting that you must be infallible or absolutely certain you just shouldn't know a falsehood

Knowledge doesn't require certainty or infallibility but it is inconsistent with knowing a falsehood.

Probable claims are weaker.

Man went to the moon

It's probable man went

Emily
Dickinson's
poem

Knowledge of proposition doesn't have probability. Propositions mean that this is the only case and it has happened.

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Not that it's probable but this is the case.

Is there more to knowledge than getting it right? Yes.

1st juror doesn't see evidence - passes judgement

2nd juror does and then.

This is interesting to epistemologists.

et
and
gets
it
right

Knowledge requires more than getting it right. Attending the evidence, thinking things through, coming to the correct judgement.

1st juror forms a judgement based on prejudice & 2nd juror carefully attends the evidence and thinks.

Both the jurors end up on the same conclusion and get it right and so this raises an interesting question for epistemologists.

Knowledge requires more than just getting it right. But what marks the difference betw. knowing & getting it right?

There are 2 basic intuitions that govern our thinking about knowledge

1) The Anti-luck Intuition:

When you know you're getting it right your belief is ^{not} just a matter of luck.

Juror 1 just got it through luck.
Take a good route to the truth.

2) Ability Intuition:

When you know, your knowing is down to you and your exercise of cognitive abilities, your ability to check what is relevant to the formation of true beliefs.

Prejudice is a route to falsehood.
2nd Juror is using cognitive abilities

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Video: The Classical Account of Knowledge and the Gettier Problem.

What does it take to turn belief into true knowledge? The Classical Account of Knowledge.

Plato - defended The Classical Acc. of Knowledge until quite recently, this was the standard view of the nature of knowledge

The Classical Account of Knowledge

One can know a proposition is true, only if:

- i) The proposition is true;
- ii) One believes that proposition;
- iii) One's belief is justified.

What is the difference between knowledge & true belief ^{getting it right} in this view?

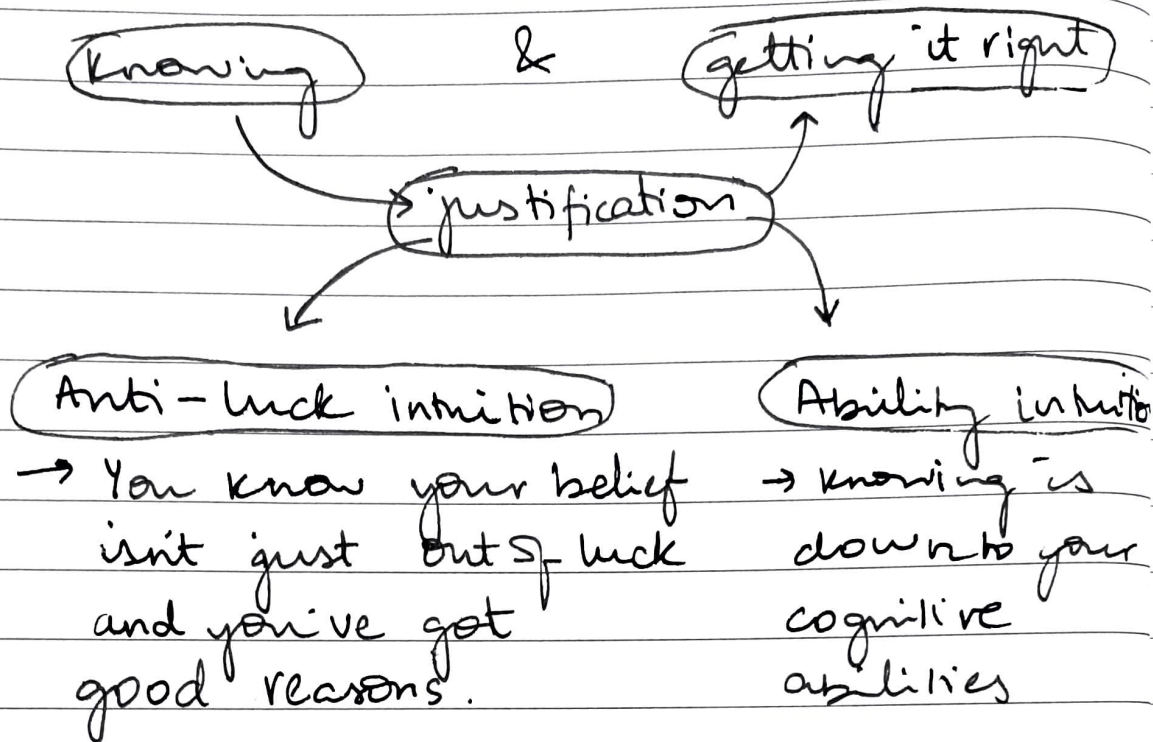
The fact that when one knows, one has the justification

You have good reasons to support what you believe.

Thus, juror 1 can't offer good reasons in their belief

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How do you discern good justifications from bad ones?



The classical account is plausible. Knowledge is a justified true belief. This view is a tripartite analysis because it has 3 parts to it.

Around the 60s this view of knowledge was debunked by Edmund Gettier (2 1/2 pages demolishing the classical account of knowledge)

The agent doesn't know because it's just a matter of luck that their beliefs are true. These are Gettier Counterexamples.

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Stopped Clock Case

- Bertrand Russell
- Although, he didn't realize it was a Gettier counter example he used it to prove a different point.

Someone came down looked at the clock and formed their belief based on that. The clock has been very reliable up until now, and the clock's time corresponds roughly to what time it might be based on the light. So this belief you formed is a true belief and it is justified.

But suppose that clock stopped 24 hours ago and you just happen to be looking at it at the correct time.

But you can't come to know what the time is by looking at a stopped clock even if you happen to get a true belief. Also this is too lucky.

This offends the anti-luck intuition.

We have a justified true belief that doesn't satisfy as knowledge.

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This true belief is just a matter of luck.

The Sheep Case
→ by Roderick Chisholm.

Imagine a farmer looking at the field in clear daylight and seeing what looks like a sheep in a field.

So there is a sheep, so this is a true belief. This is a justified belief you look at something and think it is something.

Imagine we set the case up so that what the farmer is looking at is not a real sheep. They are looking at a sheep shaped obj. But now imagine there really is a sheep behind the view of a sheep shaped obj.

So the farmer has a true belief but what he is looking at isn't a sheep. He is also just lucky.

Justified true belief that doesn't amount to knowledge.

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In a Gettier style case, the subject's justification has nothing to do with the proposition's truth.

To find the solution for Gettier cases in masse lies in the formula for inventing Gettier-style cases.

Step 1) Take a belief that is formed in such a way that it would result in a false belief, but which is justified nonetheless.

Step 2) Make the belief true, ~~albeit~~ albeit for reasons that have nothing to do with the subject's justification.

Generalizations.

Initially, people thought it would be simple solving it by taking one tripartite account and adding a fourth case.

There have been many proposals to solve the Gettier problem.

Keith Lehrer suggested that we add a 4th clause to the classical account

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saying your belief isn't based on any false assumptions.

This is the

'No False Lemmas' View:

One can know a proposition is true, only if:

- i) The proposition is true.
- ii) One believes that proposition
- iii) One's belief is justified.
- iv) One's belief is not based on any false assumptions (or 'lemmas').

The devil of philosophy is in the details. We need to be given a principled way of understanding what an assumption is in this context.

We don't want lemmas to be so broad so that even genuine cases of knowledge are excluded from being it or so narrow that it fails to exclude Gettier cases of knowledge.

Narrow assumption: One thinks as assumption informing one's beliefs.

Like in the stopped clock case the person thinks I assume the clock is working. This seems psychologically implausible. We don't think in our

heads of the lists of assumptions we are making. The subject has no reason to think the clock isn't working.

Broad assumption: Suppose we think of assumption as some false belief one has which is germane to the target belief that you're forming in the Gettier case and is false. We get the right result in the Gettier case, that our subject believes the clock is working falsely. The broad way lots of genuine knowledge shall be excluded. Who is to say these false assumptions have the right to deprive you of the knowledge you seek.

Two questions raised by Gettier-style cases:

1. Is justification even necessary to knowledge?

(It's not psychologically plausible to say to yourself the time is justified. Maybe "justification" needs to be changed.)

2. How does one about eliminating knowledge - undermining luck?

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If the justification responds to our anti-luck intuition. When can't explain when our true belief is down to luck. Because Gettier cases show one can have true belief that are down to luck.

Video: Do we have any knowledge?

→ Radical Skepticism

Skeptical Challenge

Says we don't know ~~too~~ very much and it's most extreme form knowledge is impossible.

We know ~~nothing~~ nothing, perhaps even nothing.

Form of skepticism that dates back to Descartes which makes an appeal to skeptical hypothesis.

These scenarios are completely indistinguishable from normal life but one is radically deceived.

You can't know that these skeptic hypothesis don't obtain and as far as you don't know that they

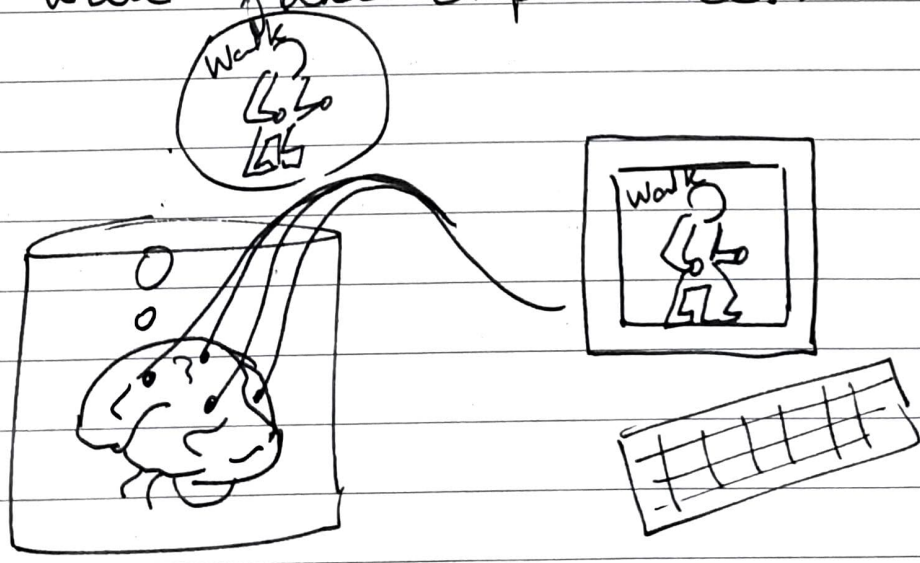
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obtain, you don't know anything (about a world that's external to you).

Take a hypothesis and unpack it.

"Brain-in-a-vat" Hypothesis

Although we think that we are closely interacting others in the context of a shared world, we're embodied people perhaps we're not. Perhaps our brains have been harvested outside of our bodies and they are floating somewhere in a vat of nutrients being fed with fake experiences.



Matrix - The Movie.

Do we know we're not brains in vats?
Do we know we're not the victim of
this skeptical hypothesis.

How could we possibly know?
These scenarios are built in
such a way that it is impossible
to rule them out.

not
If you can't know the fact that you're
a brain-in-a-vat then how can
you know something so mundane
as to having hands. You'd only
have hands if you weren't a
brain-in-a-vat

Argument

Premise 1) I can't know that I'm
not a brain-in-a-vat

Premise 2) If you don't know that
you're not a brain in a
vat then you don't
know very much

Conclusion) You don't know very much

The skeptic isn't saying you're a brain-in-
a-vat and so it is consistent
with the fact that brain in vat

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are far-fetched science fiction stuff. All that matters is that you don't know that they are false.

In a skeptical scenario you don't know if you're a brain in a vat or a demon is controlling you.

And once we've conceded that we can't know the denial of the skeptical hypothesis then we can't ~~know~~ ^{deny} the conclusion.

To rule this out, you may say the skeptic is talking of some very high level of knowledge we're not supposed to know.

But, the skeptic isn't appealing to higher standards in order to motivate their skepticism. You have no reason to believe you've got 2 hands because all the reasons you may offer are all the reasons that pre-suppose you're not a brain-in-a-vat and you can't rule out the possibility of brain-in-a-vat.

It works at high demanding & low standards of knowledge.

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Thus this isn't amenable to a simple solution.

Once we start to reason about our epistemic position, step outside our normal life. Think through the beliefs you have. We realize we don't have such a grip on reality or truth as we thought we did.

Epistemic Vertigo.

Step back from your normal life and reflect on your epistemic position you start to reflectively ascend and start to think about one's belief as a whole and what their connection is to reality.

We know very little of a world external to us.

If you can't tell the difference why does it matter? Well it does matter

~ Gettier

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Lesson 2: Further Discussion

Gettier cases aren't far fetched they happen all the time.

You can't know you aren't a brain in a vat.

Fundamental question is what the skeptic introduces in your own concept of reality.

The paradox here is you can't know what is true in the case. These claims don't have practical ramifications.

What's so bad about lucky knowledge? Sometimes we do get knowledge through luck, lucky discoveries like a lucky set of circumstances.

When you say knowledge is a matter of luck, you mean it's just a matter of that you got things right.

luck

in Robots

But a scientist got things right because of their skill & scientific expertise.

Let's say there was a random petridish with some enzyme and that was just out of luck.

↑
can't exist

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But the scientist classified it for what it is
thus it was not duck.