

- ## Analyses: objections and rejoinders

Analyses: objections and rejoinders (ctd)

- Regarding (b), the thought is that, intuitions provide only *prima facie* evidence
- This evidence can be overturned if
 - we can argue that intuitions are unreliable in this instance (e.g. because the case is too convoluted, the intuitions can be explained away or intuitions diverge)
 - we can point to the fact that no other competing analysis does a better good a job of capturing intuitions overall, without sacrificing simplicity (analogy: curve fitting)
- Typical pattern: proposal > counterex. > tweak > counterex....
- Unfortunately, the end result can look pretty convoluted!
- The analysis of knowledge provides a fairly striking case in point

The missing ingredient?

- Failure of sufficiency:
 - MICROBES:** I irrationally become convinced that, if I don't carry my magic crystal, I will get ill. I forget my magic crystal at home, go about my business and happen to fall ill. I (truly) believed all day that I would fall ill, but didn't know that I would.
- What conditions could we add?
 - JUSTIFICATION:** *S* is 'epistemically' justified in believing that *P*
- What does it mean to be **epistemically justified** (henceforth 'justified') in believing? Roughly:
 - to have formed one's belief that *P* in a reasonable, responsible way wrt the goal of believing truths rather than falsehoods (e.g. to have inferred *P* from assumptions whose truth would render *P* sufficiently probable)

The TRUTH and BELIEF conditions

- So: What does it take for a person *S* to know that *P*?
- Two baseline requirements:
 - TRUTH:** It is the case that *P*
 - BELIEF:** *S* believes that *P*
- Failure of necessity for BELIEF?
 - 'I don't believe that Paris is the capital of France: I know it is.'
- Rejoinder: what one really means by this is:
 - 'I don't *just* believe that Paris is the capital of France: I know it is.'

The missing ingredient? (ctd)

- Note: I spoke of *epistemic* justification in contrast with a notion of purely **purely pragmatic** justification
- A belief is claimed to be pragmatically justified in cases in which one would have reasons to hold it are divorced from the aims of believing truths rather than falsehoods
- Example: increased psychological well-being might provide a pragmatic justification for believing in the afterlife
- The claim that JUSTIFICATION is *all* we need in addition to the previous two conditions = the '**JTB**' (or '**tripartite**') analysis of knowledge

The Gettier problem

- Not all true justified beliefs amount to knowledge:

FORD (inspired by Gettier 1963): Smith tells you he has just bought a Ford. He shows you the receipt, takes you for a drive, etc.: you justifiedly form the belief that he owns a Ford. From this you legitimately infer that he owns an American car. However, Smith has lied to you: the car is in fact his brother's. Plot twist: Smith does however own an old Jeep. You hold a true, justified belief which doesn't qualify as knowledge: the belief that Smith owns an American car.

The Gettier problem (ctd)

- Here is even one due to the Buddhist thinker Dharmottara, writing in the 8thC:

MIRAGE: We are in the desert seeking water. We think we can see water some distance ahead. Although our perception was in fact caused by a mirage, we find water when we finally arrive at our destination.

(Again, it would appear that this case wasn't introduced to argue against a JTB account of knowledge)

- As we shall see, these kinds of scenarios spawned an *enormous* and complicated literature...

The Gettier problem (ctd)

- Although it was popularised by Gettier, this type of case wasn't new:

CLOCK (Russell 1912): You glance at your usually reliable Swiss Cuckoo clock. It reads 12 o'clock. You legitimately form the belief that it is indeed 12 o'clock. And it is in fact 12 o'clock. However, unbeknownst to you, the clock stopped yesterday at 12. You have a justified true belief that falls short of knowledge.

(Note: Russell actually simply uses this as an example to show that knowledge isn't mere true belief)

Reacting to Gettier: the options

- The options:

- (1) Deny that Gettier victims fail to have knowledge
- (2) Deny that Gettier victims are justified in holding their beliefs
- (3) Accept that the JTB analysis needs strengthening ($K = JTB + X$ or $K = TB + X$)

- I'll set aside (1), while noting that

- Sartwell (1992) heroically argues that knowledge is true belief
- Hetherington (1999) suggests that Gettier victims do enjoy knowledge, albeit of a lower-grade

- Warning: some of this might be difficult; **please make use of our Q&A session!!**

References

- Gettier, E. L. 1963: Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?. *Analysis* 23(6), pp. 121-3.
- Hetherington, S. 1999. Knowing Failably. *Journal of Philosophy* 96: 565–87.
- Russell, B. 1912. *Problems of Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sartwell, C. 1992. Why Knowledge is Merely True Belief. *The Journal of Philosophy* 89(4).