DOWNLOAD PDF EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Chapter 1 : Sola Scripturaâ€™s Epistemological Problems - Summary - Orthodox Reformed Bridge

The epistemological problems of perception have traditionally centered on the threat of skepticism, in particular, on the "veil of perception" implicated by a well-known metaphysics of perception, which threatens to lead inexorably to skepticism.

It is relatively easy to identify a chain of paradigmatic materialists: Materialism encompasses much more than thesis or set of theses in the philosophy of mind. It would not be adequate, for example, to identify materialism with the thesis that human beings or indeed all possible persons are essentially embodied. This would incorporate only a small part of what materialists have affirmed, and it would include some anti-materialists, like Aristotle or Leibniz at least with respect to finite and sublunary persons. Materialism entails the affirmation of at least four central theses: Nature forms a causally closed system. All genuine explanation is bottom-up. The intentional and teleological are ontologically reducible to the non-intentional and non-teleological. Ontological and metaphysical realism. Given these four principles, there is a relatively simple and homogeneous backing for all veridical causal explanation, and this foundation is independent of and prior to all intentionality, teleology and normativity. Understanding the world consist simply in decomposing all complex phenomena into their constituent parts and uncovering the causal powers of those parts. These parts and their causal powers are of a relatively familiar and unproblematic sort, harboring no mysteries of merely intentional existence or impenetrable subjectivity. Interactionist substance-dualism rejects 1. The various kinds of anti-realism, including ontological relativity, pragmatism, and idealism, reject 1. Epistemological Objections The epistemological objections to materialism that I will raise fall into two categories: A transcendental argument takes a familiar form: This counts as an objection to materialism, as opposed to merely the drawing out of one of its consequences, when this thesis is combined with an anti-skeptical assumption: A special case of the transcendental argument is one that charges materialism with being epistemically self-defeating: Since knowledge entails truth, we can detach the further conclusion that no one knows that materialism is true. The second category of epistemological objection is that of the violation of no-defeater conditions for knowledge: In other words, suppose that I have various putative reasons r1,â€¦, rn for my belief that p: A defeater for this belief would be a fact q which is such that the conjunction of q with r1 through rn provides no reason for believing that p. A person S violates the no-defeater condition for knowing that p whenever the world as S believes it so be contains a defeater for all of what S takes to be reasons for believing that p. Satisfying the no-defeater condition is a necessary condition of knowledge: Consequently, a successful no-defeater argument establishes that belief in materialism is incompatible with knowledge of subject matter M. A special case of the no-defeater violation argument takes the subject matter M to be the truth of materialism or one of its constituent theses. Since belief is a necessary condition of knowledge, this would be a second route to the conclusion that materialism is unknowable. I will make use of one particular kind of no-defeater violation objection, in which the defeater in question will take the following form: I take the reliability of the underlying cognitive process to be a necessary condition of epistemic warrant. If I believe that my belief that p is unwarranted, then the world as I take it to be contains no reason for my believing that p, and I have thereby violated the no-defeater condition of knowledge. Since an alethically reliable mode of production is a necessary condition of warrant, then I cannot know that p if I believe that my belief that p was formed in an alethically unreliable way. This sort of reliability constraint raises the generality issue: This response is also available to the materialist, since it does not entail that teleology is a fundamental feature of reality. For example, we might suppose the following principle: Materialism, if true, would certainly be a highly robust truth. Hence, a successful argument of the no-defeater violation sort would, together with the robustness of materialism and thesis 2. The appeal of the electroweak theory was grounded the internal symmetry that it posited between electrons and neutrons. According to Weinberg, physicists use aesthetic qualities both as a way of suggesting theories and, even more importantly, as a sine qua non of viable theories. Weinberg argues that this developing sense of the aesthetics of nature has proved to be a reliable indicator of theoretical truth. Steven Weinberg, Dreams of a Final Theory: Vintage Books, , p. As Weinberg observes,

There is no logical formula that establishes a sharp dividing line between a beautiful explanatory theory and a mere list of data, but we know the difference when we see it. As Weinberg concludes, It is when we study truly fundamental problems that we expect to find beautiful answers. We believe that, if we ask why the world is the way it is and then ask why that answer is the way it is, at the end of this chain of explanations we shall find a few simple principles of compelling beauty. We think this in part because our historical experience teaches us that as we look beneath the surface of things, we find more and more beauty. Plato and the neo-Platonists taught that the beauty we see in nature is a reflection of the beauty of the ultimate, the nous. For us, too, the beauty of present theories is an anticipation, a premonition, of the beauty of the final theory. And, in any case, we would not accept any theory as final unless it were beautiful. We can come to know the natures of material things only because they fall into repeatable natural kinds, whose causal powers are delineated by the fundamental laws of nature. Hence, our knowledge of those natures depends critically on our use of simplicity and elegance as a guide to the truth. There must also be a real, non-accidental connection between the belief and the fact believed in. This remains true when the fact in question concerns the holding of a fundamental law of nature. Consider the following Gettier-like thought experiment. Suppose that the orbits of the planets in our local system had been arranged by ancient astronauts from another galaxy, in order to satisfy religious rituals completely unrelated to gravity. In this scenario, it is sheer, dumb luck that the laws share a common aesthetic quality. Scientists who, as Weinberg described above, used this aesthetic quality as a guide for theory selection would acquire thereby true and justified beliefs about the laws, but no knowledge. Whatever characteristics we use as a screen for viable theories about the laws of nature as a set that is a sine qua non must have some real connection to the actual holding of those laws. To count as knowledge, our scientific theorizing must track a causal structure that lies beneath or behind the laws, and this is incompatible with the materialist thesis 1. A materialist who believes in immanent universals might be able to make sense of a causal connection between the natures of material things and the flow of events, and so could perhaps insist that our scientific knowledge of laws be causally connected to the natures involved in those laws. However, a materialist cannot suppose that the laws themselves are products of some causal process that gives to them a common aesthetic quality, since this would be to extend the reach of the causal nexus beyond the realm of space and time. Only such a deep causal structure would establish a non-accidental connection between the laws and the aesthetic qualities, and such a connection is required for genuine knowledge. There are three viable alternatives to materialism: In doing so, God revealed a stable preference for simple, elegant laws. On the Aristotelian picture, material things instantiate Forms or essences, which form a tightly integrated cosmic system. A final alternative is nomological anti-realism. The most relevant version would be the Ramsey-Lewis account of natural laws. A proposition L is a natural law just in case it belongs to that system of propositions that best combines comprehensiveness, accuracy and simplicity. Here is the dilemma: We can know our own conventional standards in ways fully compatible with materialism. Hence, if materialists who accept 3. However, any view that makes the laws of nature depend on our epistemic practices violates principle 1. What if the Ramsey-Lewis definition is rigidified, as in 3. In order to know 3. The problem of accounting for how we could know that Alpha is such a world is exactly the problem materialism cannot solve. Since materialism implies the existence of material things, and since knowledge implies belief, we can conclude that no one knows that materialism is true. Concerning Our Ontological Knowledge of Material Beings As Michael Rea has argued Rea , anyone who believes in material things and who is a metaphysical realist must believe in individual persistence conditions and individual essences. A persistence condition is a proposition laying out either necessary or sufficient conditions for the continued existence of some material thing. Since it is very hard to see how we could know the persistence conditions pertaining to particulars as such without knowing that the same condition pertains to all the particulars in the same natural kind, we can focus on our knowledge of the persistence conditions corresponding to natural kinds of material things. If a natural kind of thing has non-trivial persistence-conditions, it is very plausible to assume that they have de re modal essences as well. In fact, a persistence condition is 17 itself a kind of modal proposition, stating that it is impossible for something to survive or fail to survive under specified conditions. Here are a range of possible ontologies of persistence: Persistence nihilism plus mereological nihilism: Persistence nihilism plus

mereological universalism: Persistence universalism plus mereological universalism: Persistence universalism plus mereological 18 nihilism: These four positions represent the four extremes: Nihilists and universalists bear exactly the same epistemological burdens as do defenders of more common sense ontologies. According to materialist thesis 1. The identity or distinctness of these bodies with bodies that have existed in the past or 2 I am setting aside the issue of endurance vs. The very same epistemological issues will apply in either case. It is hard to see how materialism could be compatible with knowing either of these positions to be the true one, but materialists might well be able to live with agnosticism on this issue. In addition, it is only the arrangement of fundamental particles or arbitrarily small, homogenous masses that do all the causal work: Some anti-materialists can fare much better. Scientific essentialism is the thesis that there are natural kinds with real essences: What I am focusing on here concerns the existence and persistence conditionals of individuals. Even if, for example, water has a scientific essence viz. Simples that compose an organism of a certain kind behave differently than they would if they failed to do so a strong emergence of biological powers. On an Aristotelian picture, the causal laws governing such composition are diachronic: Anti-realists can argue that the composition and persistence conditions are determined by our linguistic conventions, or by features of our concepts understood as contingent features of the human mind.

Chapter 2 : Books / Digital Text | Mises Institute

Epistemology, the philosophical study of the nature, origin, and limits of human knowledge. The term is derived from the Greek epistÄ“mÄ“ ("knowledge") and logos ("reason"), and accordingly the field is sometimes referred to as the theory of knowledge.

This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. June Learn how and when to remove this template message In art, essentialism is the idea that each medium has its own particular strengths and weaknesses, contingent on its mode of communication. A chase scene , for example, may be appropriate for motion pictures , but poorly realized in poetry , because the essential components of the poetic medium are ill suited to convey the information of a chase scene. Essentialism is attractive to artists, because it not only delineates the role of art and media, but also prescribes a method for evaluating art quality correlates to the degree of organic form. However, considerable criticism has been leveled at essentialism, which has been unable to formally define organic form or for that matter, medium. What, after all, is the medium of poetry? If it is language, how is this distinct from the medium of prose fiction? Is the distinction really a distinction in medium or genre? Questions about organic form, its definition, and its role in art remain controversial. Generally, working artists accept some form of the concept of organic form, whereas philosophers have tended to regard it as vague and irrelevant. This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. June Learn how and when to remove this template message This problem originally arose from the practice rather than theory of art. Marcel Duchamp , in the 20th century, challenged conventional notions of what "art" is, placing ordinary objects in galleries to prove that the context rather than content of an art piece determines what art is. While it is easy to dismiss these assertions, further investigation[who? For example, if a pianist plays a Chopin etude , but his finger slips missing one note, is it still the Chopin etude or a new piece of music entirely? Most people would agree that it is still a Chopin etude albeit with a missing note , which brings into play the Sorites paradox , mentioned below. If one accepts that this is not a fundamentally changed work of music, however, is one implicitly agreeing with Cage that it is merely the duration and context of musical performance, rather than the precise content, which determines what music is? Hence, the question is what the criteria for art objects are and whether these criteria are entirely context-dependent. Philosophy of language[edit] Main article: Counterfactual conditional A counterfactual statement is a conditional statement with a false antecedent. For example, the statement "If Joseph Swan had not invented the modern incandescent light bulb , then someone else would have invented it anyway" is a counterfactual, because in fact, Joseph Swan invented the modern incandescent light bulb. The most immediate task concerning counterfactuals is that of explaining their truth-conditions. As a start, one might assert that background information is assumed when stating and interpreting counterfactual conditionals and that this background information is just every true statement about the world as it is pre-counterfactual. In the case of the Swan statement, we have certain trends in the history of technology, the utility of artificial light, the discovery of electricity, and so on. We quickly encounter an error with this initial account: Epistemology[edit] Epistemological problems are concerned with the nature, scope and limitations of knowledge. Epistemology may also be described as the study of knowledge. Gettier problem Plato suggests, in his Theaetetus a and Meno 97aâ€”98b , that "knowledge" may be defined as justified true belief. For over two millennia, this definition of knowledge has been reinforced and accepted by subsequent philosophers. In , Edmund Gettier published an article in the journal " Analysis ", a peer reviewed academic journal of philosophy, entitled "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? Finally, if infallibilism is true, that would seem to definitively solve the Gettier problem for good--the idea is that knowledge requires certainty, such that, certainty is what serves to bridge the gap so that we arrive at knowledge, which means we would have an adequate definition of knowledge. Problem of the criterion[edit] Main article: Problem of the criterion Overlooking for a moment the complications posed by Gettier problems, philosophy has essentially continued to operate on the principle that knowledge is justified true belief. One must therefore provide a

justification for the justification. That justification itself requires justification, and the questioning continues interminably. The conclusion is that no one can truly have knowledge of anything, since it is, due to this infinite regression, impossible to satisfy the justification element. In practice, this has caused little concern to philosophers, since the demarcation between a reasonably exhaustive investigation and superfluous investigation is usually clear. Others argue for forms of coherentist systems, e. Recent work by Peter D. Klein [1] views knowledge as essentially defeasible. Therefore, an infinite regress is unproblematic, since any known fact may be overthrown on sufficiently in-depth investigation. The problem raises fundamental issues in epistemology and the philosophy of mind , and was widely discussed after Locke included it in the second edition of his Essay Concerning Human Understanding. His version of the problem, however, dealt mainly with colors rather than shapes. The resolution of this problem is in some sense provided by the study of human subjects who gain vision after extended congenital blindness. In one such study, subjects were unable to immediately link objects known by touch to their visual appearance, and only gradually developed the ability to do so over a period of days or months. According to this argument, the proof of any theory rests either on circular reasoning , infinite regress, or unproven axioms.

Chapter 3 : Epistemological Problems of Economics | Mises Institute

Epistemology (/ Éª ËŒ p Éª s t Éª Ëˆ m É’ l É™ dÊ’ i / (listen); from Greek, Modern á¼•Ï€Î¹Ïƒ„Î®Î¼Î·, epistÄ“mÄ“, meaning 'knowledge', and Î»ÏŒÎ³Î¿Ï‚, logos, meaning 'logical discourse') is the branch of philosophy concerned with the theory of knowledge.

So what is it that one is immediately aware of in memory if not the past? As its name implies, the RTM answer is that one is aware of a representation of that past event. Recall some important event in your life â€” your twenty-first birthday, your bar mitzvah or confirmation, your wedding, etc. You recall such events by bringing to mind images. So you picture, say, a large cake with twenty-one candles sitting on a table around which sit your parents and siblings. You remember your twenty first birthday by recalling this image. So as with the representational theory of perception, the RTM claims that the object of your immediate awareness in memory is a representation or image, and that it is in virtue of your now having that image that you are now able to recall the event you are remembering. A difficulty arises almost immediately. As the last sentence of the above paragraph suggests, other cognitive processes or faculties also make use of images or representations. What, then, makes a representation a memory image rather than a perceptual or imaginary representation? No perceptual realist, Hume nevertheless went along with the representational component of representational realism. Like the other empiricists of his time, Hume believed that the immediate objects of cognition are representations. Hume divided the representations that inhabit the mind into two types: Impressions are the basic building blocks of cognition. Hume, then, answers our question about the distinguishing characteristic of memory images by appealing to the relative vivacity and force of the image. Memory images are, by definition, fainter than impressions but more vivacious and forceful than images of imagination. First, as Hume himself recognizes, there is nothing in principle to prevent an idea of memory from being decidedly faint and without force just as ideas of imagination can be vivid and forceful. Hume can and does say that when memory ideas are faint, they are often not recognized as memory images, but are instead taken to be of the imagination. But this response confuses the issue. Our concern here, and the one that Hume is addressing in the relevant sections of the Treatise, is with the metaphysics of memory and not with its epistemology. For even in describing such a circumstance, one assumes that the fact of the matter is that the image in question is a memory image and that the subject has made a mistake in judging the image to be of imagination. We are trying to figure out the criteria according to which an image is of memory and not the conditions under which one can introspectively know that this. And while the storehouse metaphor remains in the second edition of the Essay, Locke nevertheless backs away from it dramatically. Be this as it may, although Locke is clearly a proponent of RTM, he does nothing to help us answer the question of what it is that distinguishes memory images from those of other kinds. In his The Analysis of Mind, Russell offers a distinctly RTM that clearly addresses the issue of what it is in virtue of which an image is a memory image. Here is a clear statement of his position as it involves a particular example: Suppose you ask me what I ate for breakfast this morningâ€¦The process of remembering will consist of calling up images of my breakfast, which will come to me with a feeling of belief such as distinguishes memory-images from mere imagination-imagesâ€¦ Memory-images and imagination-images do not differ in their intrinsic qualities, so far as we can discover. Memory demands a an image, b a belief in the past existenceâ€¦The believing is a specific feeling or sensation or complex of sensations, different from expectation or bare assent in a way that makes the belief refer to the past; the reference to the past lies in the belief-feeling, not in the content believed. They differ, however, in two important respects. But Humean ideas are not essentially propositional. In fact, a propositional representation will have to be constructed from two or more ideas. Pace Hume, Russell takes the distinguishing feature of memory images to be relational: For any event that one perceives, remembers, and imagines, one will need three distinct images each with the appropriate level of vivacity and forcefulness. In this way, the same thing can be the object of belief, thought, desire, and any other propositional attitude. This will provide us with a natural transition to the next section on the Direct Theory of Memory, the chief proponent of which is none other than Reid himself. For on the standard Early Modern view, an idea is

necessarily consciously perceived. Stored ideas of which one is not currently aware are not possible; a non-conscious idea is an unperceived idea and hence an impossibility. So Locke notes that to say that the mind is a storehouse of ideas is only to say that the mind has: But as Locke himself acknowledges elsewhere in the Essay, no object can have two beginnings of existence â€" that is, it cannot come into existence at two distinct times. So there is no serious sense in which an old idea is revived. So Locke must be read as saying that when we remember, our minds produce ideas that we recognize as similar to ideas we have had before. Of course, we might take these ideas of memory to be the very same token ideas we previously had, but this is just a pre-reflective opinion that we can see on reflection is not quite right. But even this somewhat sympathetic reading of Locke creates problems. Yet this ability would seem to itself presuppose memory. Yet even if this serious difficulty is resolved or ignored, there are other problems lurking nearby. Every man knows what memory is, and has a distinct notion of it: Locke speaks of a power to revive in the mind those ideas, which, after imprinting have disappeared, or have been, as it were, laid out of sight, one would hardly know this to be memory, if he had not told us. There are other things which it seems to resemble at least as much. I see before me the picture of a friend. I shut my eyes, or turn them another way; and the picture disappears, or is, as it were laid out of sight. I have a power to turn my eyes again toward the picture, and immediately the perception is revived. But is this memory? No, surely; yet it answers the definition as well as memory itself can do. Reid asks what Hume could mean by experience in the quoted sentence. Reid can think of only one plausible answer: So while Hume offers us a deflationary account of memory according to which to remember something is merely to have an idea that is midway between an impression and an idea of imagination, he helps himself in forming the account to experience which, Reid argues, turns out to require the robust memory of common sense. Reid says, According to vulgar apprehension, memory is an immediate knowledge of something past. He maintains that memory is nothing but a present idea or impression. But, in defining what he takes memory to be, he takes for granted that kind of memory which he rejects. For can we find by experience, that an impression, after its first appearance to the mind, makes a second, and a third, with different degrees of strength and vivacity, if we have not so distinct a remembrance of its first appearance, as enables us to know it, upon its second and third, notwithstanding that, in the interval, it has undergone a very considerable change. All experience supposes memory; and there can be no such thing as experience, without trusting to our own memory or that of others; so that it appears from Mr. But it gets worse. Suppose a man strikes his head smartly against the wall, this is an impression; now he has a faculty by which he can repeat this impression with less force, so as not to hurt him; this, by Mr. But surely such head banging is not remembering. Reid offers one further criticism of the RTM. He notes the structural similarity between the RTM and the representational theory of perception. He claims that Hume followed the logic of the view that the only objects that are truly given in perception are ideas, that all we ever experience are representations, to its natural conclusion: If there is any single lesson taught by the history of epistemology, it is that there are no successful arguments that have only premises about the contents of our ideas and which conclude with propositions about physical objects. The so-called Theory of Ideas in the realm of sense perception brings with it skepticism about the physical world. Reid argues that for exactly similar reasons, the RTM leads to skepticism about the past. If we begin with the thesis that in memory all that one is aware of are ideas, then in order to justify beliefs about the past one will have to provide an argument with premises about our present ideas and a conclusion that the past is how we remember it. But there is no more reason to think that such an argument will be forthcoming than there is for thinking that on the basis of our ideas of sense we can show that the world is as we suppose it to be. It would seem that they do. Thus, he was just as opposed to the representative theory of perception as he was to the RTM. My, say, seeing the table is immediate if and only if there is no other object O such that it is in virtue of my seeing O that I see the table. These ideas and impressions, these representations, mediate our knowledge of the world, if knowledge of the world there be. Reid believed that there was no reason to posit ideas that we perceive immediately. This is not to say, of course, that our perception of the world lacks an experiential component but only to deny that it is in virtue of perceiving that element that we perceive the world. Reid thought that just as representationalism for perception was flawed, so was the RTM. Rather, my remembering breakfast is a direct apprehension of the

past. To get from the experience to the representative theory requires two steps: According to Reid, memory is a faculty by which we: The senses give us information of things only as they exist in the present moment; and this information, if it were not preserved by memory, would vanish instantly, and leave us as ignorant as if it had never beenâ€¦ The object of memoryâ€¦must be something that is pastâ€¦What now is, cannot be an object of memory; neither can that which is past and gone be an object of perception or of consciousness. So Reid flatly rejects what some have claimed to be a datum: Indeed, not only does Reid reject this principle, but he accepts its contrary: It has seemed to some that it does. How, it might be asked, can something be remembered and hence be present before the mind while at the same time not in the present but in the past? Reid would allow that nothing could be both present before the mind and at the same time past but insist that his theory entails no such consequence. We are currently aware of our act of remembering but the object of the act is in the past. So far, so good. But what exactly is the cognitive act of remembering? And what distinguishes it from other mental events? Although Reid points to certain characteristics of memory i. The knowledge which I have of things past, by my memory, seems to me as unaccountable as an immediate knowledge would be of things to come: I find in my mind a distinct conception, and a firm belief of a series of past events; but how this is produced I know not. I call it memory, but this is only giving a name to it; it is not an account of its cause. So the most plausible interpretation is that memory is unanalyzable. When looking for problems with the DTM a good place to start is by recalling the problems that face a Direct Theory of Perception. The most obvious and possibly most serious problem for the DTP is the problem of error.

Chapter 4 : Sola Scripturaâ€™s Epistemological Problems (1 of 4) - Orthodox Reformed Bridge

Epistemological Problems of Memory First published Mon Jan 3, ; substantive revision Fri Sep 4, That most of our knowledge is in memory at any particular time is a given.

I list them below and describe how Orthodoxy addressed these problems. First, if Scripture is divinely inspired but interpreted by flawed, fallible men, then how do we know that we have the right interpretation and not some heretical misinterpretation? Most Protestants would answer in one of two ways. In their struggle against heretics the early Church Fathers did things differently. They cited written Tradition Scripture which they had received from the Apostles, and they interpreted Scripture according to the oral Tradition which they also had received from the Apostles. Irenaeus raises the question of how to find the truth when there is a doctrinal controversy. Suppose there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us, should we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question? For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary, [in that case,] to follow the course of the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they did commit the Churches? Athanasius the Great made a similar appeal to Tradition. In his letter to Bishop Serapion he writes: In accordance with the Apostolic faith delivered to us by tradition from the Fathers, I have delivered the tradition, without inventing anything extraneous to it. What I learned, that have I inscribed conformably with the holy Scriptures; for it also conforms with those passages from the holy Scriptures which we have cited above by way of proof. Rather, what we find is Tradition with Scripture as taught by Orthodoxy. Athanasius commended the passing on of Tradition by the Church Fathers, something that Protestants do not advocate. Zwingli and Luther at the Marburg Colloquy â€" two rival interpretations of the Bible Second, if Scripture is the true revelation from God, how do we deal with competing interpretations of the Bible? Within Protestantism there are those who believe the Bible teaches double predestination while other sincere Protestants affirm free will; some believe in a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, while others prefer to understand Revelation 20 as symbolic; and some Protestants believe that miracles have ceased, while others believe that charismatic gifts are with us today. The plethora of conflicting interpretations of the Bible has given rise to thousands of Protestant denominations â€" all of them claiming fidelity to sola scriptura. This raises the question as to whether truth is multiple or whether there is one reading of Scripture that is true and all others are wrong. If there is only one true interpretation, then how can we find our way among the many readings within Protestantism? Orthodoxy understands Scripture within the framework of the patristic consensus, the Divine Liturgy, and the Ecumenical Councils. All these interrelate organically. The early Church Fathers, for the most part, were bishops who celebrated the Divine Liturgy every Sunday and who expounded Scripture in the Liturgy. The Church Fathers who attended the Ecumenical Councils likewise, for the most part, were bishops â€" successors to the Apostles. The closest thing Orthodoxy has to a systematic theology is the Divine Liturgy. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Liturgy provides Orthodoxy a doctrinal stability that has served it well for two millennia. There is within Protestantism a strong distrust of the Church having the authority to interpret the Bible. This individualistic attitude has troubling implications. Can you imagine a first-year medical school student rejecting the teachings of the faculty? Or a local attorney putting his personal interpretation of the Constitution over the precedents set by the Supreme Court? This third assumption in effect constitutes a rejection of the promise of Pentecost. In Acts 15, we are told that the Holy Spirit guided the early Church through its first theological crisis Acts In all three instances we see the Holy Spirit guiding the early Christians as a corporate body. Orthodoxy believes that the Holy Spirit was present in the early Church guiding the early bishops as they celebrated the Eucharist, discerned which writings were to be regarded as inspired Scripture, and expounded on the true meaning of Scripture. The Holy Spirit later guided the Church Fathers as they refuted heresies, and made historic rulings at Ecumenical Councils. Holy Tradition in its varied forms â€" the Liturgy, the episcopacy, the Nicene Creed, the Ecumenical Councils, the patristic consensus, all inspired by the Holy Spirit â€" has given Orthodoxy a doctrinal stability and profound spirituality that has served it well for two

millennia. Among many Protestants is the belief that the Holy Spirit was active during the lifetime of the Apostles, especially during the writing of the New Testament, but once the New Testament was completed and the last Apostle died, the Holy Spirit then retreated into heaven. Shortly after that, the Church fell into ritualism, false teachings, and spiritual darkness until the Protestant Reformation. Among many Protestants, notably in the Reformed tradition, is the belief that the right understanding of Scripture is best guaranteed through knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, textual criticism, and a good training in scientific exegetical approach acquired at seminary. They then supplement all this by keeping up with the latest trend in biblical scholarship. This attitude has led many Protestant Reformers and present day Evangelicals to disregard the teachings of the Church Fathers and Ecumenical Councils when these contradict their own interpretation of Scripture. As noted earlier, to reject the Church Fathers and the Ecumenical Councils is to reject the promise of Pentecost.

Chapter 5 : Epistemological Problems of Economics

epistemological problems We will discuss what facts a person or robot must take into account in order to achieve a goal by some strategy of action. We will ignore the question of how these facts are represented, e.g., whether they are represented by sentences from which deductions are made or whether they are built into the program.

Abstract There is no doubt that a relationship of interdependence remains the tool with which subsystems within a system of such a generic field as philosophy gather the resilience necessary for surpassing vicissitude. In the ease of ethics and epistemology however, this symbiosis has been exposed to be of a unique form. This paper resumes with a clear distinction between ethics per se and other related or identical fields. It explores the option of construing ethics as a level of abstraction beyond moral theology, morality and the like. This level of abstraction brings it closer in form to epistemological enquiries that consist majorly of conceptualization and clarification. The symbiosis between ethics and epistemology has been examined to the conclusion that the existence, life and certainty of ethics is very much dependent on epistemology and developments within epistemology. It consequently implies that epistemological investigations have continually served as midwife to ethical issues and have also determined its contents and dictate its direction. He considers ethics as practical science. To begin with, there is no doubt that personal experiences are socially and theoretically constructed, and that it is in this manner that knowledge is produced. The implication is that knowledge is a product of personal, social and theoretical experience. It is equally true, that such socially bound problems especially the ethics related issues and phenomenon stem from epistemological experiences. The claim to be advanced in this paper is that there are no genuine ethical problems; that ethical problems are not necessarily religious problems as they are often concerned, and most of all, that what we call ethical problems are some sort of epistemological problems moralized. This paper explores the traditional conception of ethics and ethical problems and argues to the contrary that as long as ethical problems involve value judgments and theoretical examination, there is a close relation between ethics and epistemology. The paper also explores a more systematic approach to the conclusion that as long as ethical problems are traceable to their epistemological foundation, it follows that ethical problems are off-shoots and variations of epistemological problems. Solutions to such ethical problems can only be found within the framework of epistemology. In this manner therefore, classifying moral epistemology, as a sub-field of meta-ethics [4] 1 is a mis-normal, as it should more properly have been classified as practical or applied epistemology, and even issues in first â€" order or normative ethics are not different either. The Nature of Ethical Problems From the very on-set, it is necessary to differentiate between ethics and morality. Until such distinction is made, it might appear too difficult to ascertain whether ethical problems are epistemological problems or not. There is no claim here that, the two concepts â€" ethics and morality may not or cannot in certain circumstances be used interchangeably. Scholars often correctly use the two terms as through they are the same. Aigbodioh for instance refers to ethics as one of the moral disciplines. The morality of a class or group has to do with the right beliefs or behaviours recommended and approved for the class or group in question. It is an intellectual reflection on those approved norms and principles of morality with the intent of proffering answers to question that are raised on the moral principles and norms of morality. The consequence of this is that, ethical problems are systematic or intellectual problems requiring conceptual analysis, clarification and deeper reflection. Ethics therefore does not aim at describing how individuals, group or people behave, neither does it only try to identify the pattern, norm or principles of conduct of an individuals or people ought to behave, as well as why such principles or norms should be considered good or bad, appropriates or otherwise. Ethical problems can be classified into what is usually called first order issues and second order issues about morality. Very often, they are normative issues within morality. Here marks the link or overlap between morality and ethics. The destruction is basically on degrees of abstraction. Second â€" order problems properly understood, as meta-ethical problems are problems and questions about, rather than within morality. Brink, take the form of metaphysical, epistemological, semantic, or psychological analysis about morality and our moral claims. Can we justify our moral claims and judgments? Are our actions actually guided by moral considerations? Is there any such thing

as objectivity in moral action or choice? Ethics became prominent in philosophy with the arrival of the sophists and consequently of Socrates, who sometimes is classified as one of the sophists. Who made ethical comments and got engaged in philosophical endevaours that are related to ethics. Plato and Aristotle amplified elaborated and systematized what was more or less started by Socrates in the form of analysis of ethical concepts. Notable among the philosophers representing this period are Augustine, Aquinas and Machiavelli. Since after the medieval period when the church lost its grip over society, ethics has become predominant within competing schools of thought as well as moral standards among which are situationism, intuitionism, naturalism, objectionism, existentialism and utilitarianism. The historical as well as the analytic survey makes it apparent that moral principle which are component parts of both morality and ethics involves some form of judgment and decision, ethics per se includes further judgments on such judgments and decisions. Epistemology Philosophy has remained an intellectual enterprise, which deals with ideas or concepts by way of creating, criticizing and justifying it. In philosophy, areas of interest is a function of which aspect also that there is also a constant correlation within and between the core areas of philosophy like epistemology, metaphysics, ethics and logic, and other disciplines such as psychology, religion, mathematics, technology, physics medicine history to mention but few. However, emphasis is often given to this correlation between the core areas of philosophy and these other disciplines as a second order application of philosophy to the neglect of the functional relationship of interdependency between the core areas of philosophy. Conventionally, it is believed that there is a sharp distinction between epistemology, metaphysics, logic and ethics with a far less relationship than actually exists. For instance, it is believed that epistemology is concerned with determining the basis of knowledge claims, and that issues in epistemology pertain to the justification of beliefs, enquires into the sources of knowledge as well as the scope and extent of knowledge. Usually, the foundation of epistemological enquiry is the belief in the existence of things. According to Nicholas Rescher, it is misleading to call conjuncture theory at large epistemology as its range of concern includes not only knowledge proper but also ration belief probably evident and even erotetics epistemological to call problem. Sometimes, one talks about knowing with reference to mere acquaintance of some kind. Te best definition that has ever been given, which defines knowledge as justified true belief has however been refuted [24] with rival analyses, [25] but there is yet neither a better alternative nor a consensus on what knowledge is. Another problem in epistemology, which has remained intractable, has to do with the ultimate source of human knowledge. There are two opposing traditions on this issue: In spite of the length, height and depth of arguments, these epistemological problems have remained intractable. All these aspects are of primary relevance to ethics and moral choices of both individuals and groups. The Confluence Of Ethics A Epistemology At the foundation of every ethics and ethical choice stands the quest for certainty and the pursuit of the reasonable, which form the fundamental basis of epistemological issues and debates. Historically, the quest for certainty has played a considerable role in the history and evolution of ideas and the formation of ethical theories. As to the nature of and where we can find knowledge, idea varies. These variations in epistemological positions reflect and are well represented in ethics and moral philosophy. This is why the classification of theories in epistemology are of almost equal importance in ethics. This is why in both sub-fields of philosophy we are able to debate on truth, certainty of knowledge, belief, conceptual scheme, grounds or justification of belief and claims to knowledge, commonsensism as found in Moore and non-commonsensism, foundationalism as a school of thought, non- foundationalism, rationalism, empiricism and skepticism. It suffices to say that we also have moral realism, reliabilism, naturalized ethics, politicized theories and a host of others that have their root in epistemology. Ross for instance refers to an aspect of ethics as classifiable as epistemic intuitionism. This is a view that if one is justified in believing something, then it follows that one has a decisively good reason which makes one epistemically responsible in believing it. Consequent to the requirement of epistemic justification in ethics, we also talk of moral foundationalism, [34] moral coherentism [35] and moral contextualism [36] to mention but few. Moral luck for instance is meta-philosophical problem spanning the division between sub fields in philosophy and predominantly in epistemology and ethic. In epistemology, innatism represents the position that some ideas are innate, inborn or not acquired through experience. This position is most appropriately portrayed in the philosophical writings of

Plato, [38] Descartes [39] Berkeley [40] and Jefferson [41]. In ethics it becomes a view that some moral ideas are inborn or innate, or the opinion that some moral sense, obligations or right are natural. Infact, it was rightly observed by Philomena Egbe, that ethics primarily deals with the pursuit of truth and the reason for its study is the quest for knowledge, as ethics naturally aims at finding out the truth about the rightness or otherwise of human actions. This if succeeded by an explanation of the nature and content of ethics as conceived differently from morality or moral theology. This is not made different by the emotionist argument that choices are determined by emotion rather than reason. Among authentically human act we cannot have one that is completely emotionless neither can we have such an act completely devoid of reason. Regardless of the degree or speediness of reason or emotion involved, mental evolution of choice and alternatives cannot be ruled out. It logically involve epistemological considerations scheme. It is also argued that as long as fundamental debate and positions in ethics are determined by concurrent corresponding debates and positions in epistemology, ethics cannot but be an offshoot or a handmaid, or a bye-product of epistemology. Consequently, there are in authentically or fundamentally autonomous ethical position or issue that could be discussed independently and not subject to results of corresponding debated in epistemology only as its extension or practical application or both.

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Epistemological Problems of Economics was original published in , a period when the social sciences and economic policy were undergoing upheaval. The classical view of economics as a deductive science, along with the laissez-faire policies implied by that view, were being displaced by positivism and economic planning.

On the other hand, if something is actually known, then it categorically cannot be false. For example, if a person believes that a bridge is safe enough to support her, and attempts to cross it, but the bridge then collapses under her weight, it could be said that she believed that the bridge was safe but that her belief was mistaken. It would not be accurate to say that she knew that the bridge was safe, because plainly it was not. By contrast, if the bridge actually supported her weight, then the person might say that she had believed the bridge was safe, whereas now, after proving it to herself by crossing it , she knows it was safe. Epistemologists argue over whether belief is the proper truth-bearer. Some would rather describe knowledge as a system of justified true propositions , and others as a system of justified true sentences. Plato, in his Gorgias , argues that belief is the most commonly invoked truth-bearer. According to the theory that knowledge is justified true belief, to know that a given proposition is true, one must not only believe the relevant true proposition, but also have a good reason for doing so. One implication of this would be that no one would gain knowledge just by believing something that happened to be true. For example, an ill person with no medical training, but with a generally optimistic attitude, might believe that he will recover from his illness quickly. Nevertheless, even if this belief turned out to be true, the patient would not have known that he would get well since his belief lacked justification. The definition of knowledge as justified true belief was widely accepted until the s. At this time, a paper written by the American philosopher Edmund Gettier provoked major widespread discussion. See theories of justification for other views on the idea. Gettier problem Euler diagram representing a definition of knowledge. That is, Gettier contended that while justified belief in a true proposition is necessary for that proposition to be known, it is not sufficient. As in the diagram, a true proposition can be believed by an individual purple region but still not fall within the "knowledge" category yellow region. According to Gettier, there are certain circumstances in which one does not have knowledge, even when all of the above conditions are met. Gettier proposed two thought experiments , which have become known as Gettier cases, as counterexamples to the classical account of knowledge. One of the cases involves two men, Smith and Jones, who are awaiting the results of their applications for the same job. Each man has ten coins in his pocket. Smith has excellent reasons to believe that Jones will get the job and, furthermore, knows that Jones has ten coins in his pocket he recently counted them. From this Smith infers, "The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. Furthermore, Smith, not Jones, is going to get the job. While Smith has strong evidence to believe that Jones will get the job, he is wrong. In other words, he made the correct choice believing that the man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket for the wrong reasons. Responses to Gettier[edit] This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. November Learn how and when to remove this template message The responses to Gettier have been varied. Usually, they have involved substantial attempts to provide a definition of knowledge different from the classical one, either by recasting knowledge as justified true belief with some additional fourth condition, or proposing a completely new set of conditions, disregarding the classical ones entirely. Infallibilism, indefeasibility[edit] In one response to Gettier, the American philosopher Richard Kirkham has argued that the only definition of knowledge that could ever be immune to all counterexamples is the infallibilist one. In other words, the justification for the belief must be infallible. Yet another possible candidate for the fourth condition of knowledge is indefeasibility. For example, suppose that person S believes he saw Tom Grabit steal a book from the library and uses this to justify the claim that Tom Grabit stole a book from the library. The Indian philosopher B. Nyaya theory distinguishes between know p and know that one knows pâ€”these are different events, with different causal conditions. The second level is a sort of implicit inference that usually follows immediately the episode of knowing p knowledge simpliciter. The Gettier case is examined by referring to a

view of Gangesha Upadhyaya late 12th century , who takes any true belief to be knowledge; thus a true belief acquired through a wrong route may just be regarded as knowledge simpliciter on this view. The question of justification arises only at the second level, when one considers the knowledgehood of the acquired belief. Initially, there is lack of uncertainty, so it becomes a true belief. But at the very next moment, when the hearer is about to embark upon the venture of knowing whether he knows p, doubts may arise. Reliabilism Reliabilism has been a significant line of response to the Gettier problem among philosophers, originating with work by Alvin Goldman in the s. According to reliabilism, a belief is justified or otherwise supported in such a way as to count towards knowledge only if it is produced by processes that typically yield a sufficiently high ratio of true to false beliefs. In other words, this theory states that a true belief counts as knowledge only if it is produced by a reliable belief-forming process. Examples of reliable processes include: In the thought experiment, a man, Henry, is driving along and sees a number of buildings that resemble barns. Based on his perception of one of these, he concludes that he has just seen barns. Theoretically, Henry does not know that he has seen a barn, despite both his belief that he has seen one being true and his belief being formed on the basis of a reliable process i. S knows that P if and only if: Nozick further claims this condition addresses a case of the sort described by D. His belief via the method of the courtroom satisfies the four subjunctive conditions, but his faith-based belief does not. If his daughter were guilty, he would still believe her innocent, on the basis of faith in his daughter; this would violate the third condition. He says that "we do not want to award the title of knowing something to someone who is only meeting the conditions through a defect, flaw, or failure, compared with someone else who is not meeting the conditions. Timothy Williamson has advanced a theory of knowledge according to which knowledge is not justified true belief plus some extra condition s , but primary. In his book Knowledge and its Limits , Williamson argues that the concept of knowledge cannot be broken down into a set of other concepts through analysisâ€”instead, it is sui generis. Thus, according to Williamson, justification, truth, and belief are necessary but not sufficient for knowledge. Alvin Goldman writes in his " Causal Theory of Knowing " that knowledge requires a causal link between the truth of a proposition and the belief in that proposition. Externalism and internalism[edit] Main article: Internalism and externalism A central debate about the nature of justification is a debate between epistemological externalists on the one hand, and epistemological internalists on the other. Externalists hold that factors deemed "external", meaning outside of the psychological states of those who gain knowledge, can be conditions of justification. For example, an externalist response to the Gettier problem is to say that for a justified true belief to count as knowledge, there must be a link or dependency between the belief and the state of the external world. Usually this is understood to be a causal link. Such causation, to the extent that it is "outside" the mind, would count as an external, knowledge-yielding condition. Internalists, on the other hand, assert that all knowledge-yielding conditions are within the psychological states of those who gain knowledge. He wrote that, because the only method by which we perceive the external world is through our senses, and that, because the senses are not infallible, we should not consider our concept of knowledge infallible. The only way to find anything that could be described as "indubitably true", he advocates, would be to see things "clearly and distinctly". God gave man the ability to know but not omniscience. Descartes said that man must use his capacities for knowledge correctly and carefully through methodological doubt. In his own methodological doubtâ€”doubting everything he previously knew so he could start from a blank slateâ€”the first thing that he could not logically bring himself to doubt was his own existence: The act of saying that one does not exist assumes that someone must be making the statement in the first place. Descartes could doubt his senses, his body, and the world around himâ€”but he could not deny his own existence, because he was able to doubt and must exist to manifest that doubt. Even if some "evil genius" were deceiving him, he would have to exist to be deceived. This one sure point provided him with what he called his Archimedean point, in order to further develop his foundation for knowledge. If so, what is the explanation? Socrates points out to Meno that a man who knew the way to Larissa could lead others there correctly. But so, too, could a man who had true beliefs about how to get there, even if he had not gone there or had any knowledge of Larissa. Socrates says that it seems that both knowledge and true opinion can guide action. Meno then wonders why knowledge is valued more than true belief and why knowledge and true belief are different. Socrates responds that

knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief because it is tethered or justified. Justification, or working out the reason for a true belief, locks down true belief. Zagzebski analogizes the value of knowledge to the value of espresso produced by an espresso maker: If the espresso tastes good, it makes no difference if it comes from an unreliable machine. She assumes that reliability in itself has no value or disvalue, but Goldman and Olsson disagree. By analogy, having a reliable espresso maker that produced a good cup of espresso would be more valuable than having an unreliable one that luckily produced a good cup because the reliable one would more likely produce good future cups compared to the unreliable one. The value problem is important to assessing the adequacy of theories of knowledge that conceive of knowledge as consisting of true belief and other components. According to Kvanvig , an adequate account of knowledge should resist counterexamples and allow an explanation of the value of knowledge over mere true belief. Should a theory of knowledge fail to do so, it would prove inadequate. Instead, epistemologists ought to focus on other mental states, such as understanding.

Chapter 7 : Epistemological Problems: Kantâ€™s Critique of Hume | Shaun Rieley - racedaydvl.com

Epistemological Problems of Economics has 76 ratings and 5 reviews. Ibrahim said: For now, I am gonna stop reading this book around its half. I am not re.

The nature of epistemology Epistemology as a discipline Why should there be a discipline such as epistemology? Aristotle â€" bce provided the answer when he said that philosophy begins in a kind of wonder or puzzlement. Nearly all human beings wish to comprehend the world they live in, and many of them construct theories of various kinds to help them make sense of it. Because many aspects of the world defy easy explanation , however, most people are likely to cease their efforts at some point and to content themselves with whatever degree of understanding they have managed to achieve. Unlike most people, philosophers are captivatedâ€"some would say obsessedâ€"by the idea of understanding the world in the most general terms possible. Accordingly, they attempt to construct theories that are synoptic, descriptively accurate, explanatorily powerful, and in all other respects rationally defensible. In doing so, they carry the process of inquiry further than other people tend to do, and this is what is meant by saying that they develop a philosophy about such matters. Like most people, epistemologists often begin their speculations with the assumption that they have a great deal of knowledge. As they reflect upon what they presumably know, however, they discover that it is much less secure than they realized, and indeed they come to think that many of what had been their firmest beliefs are dubious or even false. Two of those anomalies will be described in detail here in order to illustrate how they call into question common claims to knowledge about the world. Two epistemological problems Knowledge of the external world Most people have noticed that vision can play tricks. A straight stick submerged in water looks bent, though it is not; railroad tracks seem to converge in the distance, but they do not; and a page of English-language print reflected in a mirror cannot be read from left to right, though in all other circumstances it can. Each of those phenomena is misleading in some way. Anyone who believes that the stick is bent, that the railroad tracks converge, and so on is mistaken about how the world really is. Although such anomalies may seem simple and unproblematic at first, deeper consideration of them shows that just the opposite is true. How does one know that the stick is not really bent and that the tracks do not really converge? Suppose one says that one knows that the stick is not really bent because when it is removed from the water, one can see that it is straight. But does seeing a straight stick out of water provide a good reason for thinking that when it is in water, it is not bent? Suppose one says that the tracks do not really converge because the train passes over them at the point where they seem to converge. But how does one know that the wheels on the train do not converge at that point also? What justifies preferring some of those beliefs to others, especially when all of them are based upon what is seen? What one sees is that the stick in water is bent and that the stick out of water is straight. Why, then, is the stick declared really to be straight? Why, in effect, is priority given to one perception over another? One possible answer is to say that vision is not sufficient to give knowledge of how things are. But what justifies the belief that the sense of touch is more reliable than vision? After all, touch gives rise to misperceptions just as vision does. For example, if a person chills one hand and warms the other and then puts both in a tub of lukewarm water, the water will feel warm to the cold hand and cold to the warm hand. Thus, the difficulty cannot be resolved by appealing to input from the other senses. Another possible response would begin by granting that none of the senses is guaranteed to present things as they really are. The belief that the stick is really straight, therefore, must be justified on the basis of some other form of awareness, perhaps reason. But why should reason be accepted as infallible? It is often used imperfectly, as when one forgets, miscalculates, or jumps to conclusions. Moreover, why should one trust reason if its conclusions run counter to those derived from sensation, considering that sense experience is obviously the basis of much of what is known about the world? Clearly, there is a network of difficulties here, and one will have to think hard in order to arrive at a compelling defense of the apparently simple claim that the stick is truly straight. A person who accepts this challenge will, in effect, be addressing the larger philosophical problem of knowledge of the external world. That problem consists of two issues: The other-minds problem Suppose a surgeon tells a patient who is about

to undergo a knee operation that when he wakes up he will feel a sharp pain. When the patient wakes up, the surgeon hears him groaning and contorting his face in certain ways. Although one is naturally inclined to say that the surgeon knows what the patient is feeling, there is a sense in which she does not know, because she is not feeling that kind of pain herself. Unless she has undergone such an operation in the past, she cannot know what her patient feels. Indeed, the situation is more complicated than that, for even if the surgeon has undergone such an operation, she cannot know that what she felt after her operation is the same sort of sensation as what her patient is feeling now. Similar remarks apply to the use of colour terms. That possibility is known as the problem of the inverted spectrum. It follows from the foregoing analysis that each human being is inevitably and even in principle prevented from having knowledge of the minds of other human beings. Despite the widely held conviction that in principle there is nothing in the world of fact that cannot be known through scientific investigation, the other-minds problem shows to the contrary that an entire domain of human experience is resistant to any sort of external inquiry. Thus, there can never be a science of the human mind. Issues in epistemology The nature of knowledge As indicated above, one of the basic questions of epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge. Philosophers normally treat the question as a conceptual oneâ€”i. The question raises a perplexing methodological issue: It is frequently assumed, though the matter is controversial, that one can determine what knowledge is by considering what the word knowledge means. Although concepts are not the same as words, wordsâ€”i. Hence, examination of the ways in which words are used can yield insight into the nature of the concepts associated with them. An investigation of the concept of knowledge, then, would begin by studying uses of knowledge and cognate expressions in everyday language. Expressions such as know them, know that, know how, know where, know why, and know whether, for example, have been explored in detail, especially since the beginning of the 20th century. As Gilbert Ryle â€”76 pointed out, there are important differences between know that and know how. The latter expression is normally used to refer to a kind of skill or ability, such as knowing how to swim. One can have such knowledge without being able to explain to other people what it is that one knows in such a caseâ€”that is, without being able to convey the same skill. The expression know what is similar to know how in that respect, insofar as one can know what a clarinet sounds like without being able to say what one knowsâ€”at least not succinctly. Know that, in contrast, seems to denote the possession of specific pieces of information, and the person who has such knowledge generally can convey it to others. Knowing that the Concordat of Worms was signed in the year is an example of such knowledge. Ryle argued that, given such differences, some cases of knowing how cannot be reduced to cases of knowing that, and, accordingly, that the kinds of knowledge expressed by the two phrases are independent of each other. For the most part, epistemology from the ancient Greeks to the present has focused on knowing that. Such knowledge, often referred to as propositional knowledge , raises a number of peculiar epistemological problems, among which is the much-debated issue of what kind of thing one knows when one knows that something is the case. The list of candidates has included beliefs, propositions, statements, sentences, and utterances of sentences. Although the arguments for and against the various candidates are beyond the scope of this article, two points should be noted here. First, the issue is closely related to the problem of universals â€”i. Five distinctions Mental and nonmental conceptions of knowledge Some philosophers have held that knowledge is a state of mindâ€”i. According to Plato c. Contemporary versions of the theory assert that knowing is a member of a group of mental states that can be arranged in a series according to increasing certitude. At one end of the series would be guessing and conjecturing, for example, which possess the least amount of certitude; in the middle would be thinking, believing, and feeling sure; and at the end would be knowing, the most certain of all such states. Knowledge, in all such views, is a form of consciousness. Accordingly, it is common for proponents of such views to hold that if A knows that p, A must be conscious of what A knows. That is, if A knows that p, A knows that A knows that p. Beginning in the 20th century, many philosophers rejected the notion that knowledge is a mental state. They are not two mental states like, say, surmising and being sure. Such philosophers then observe that it is possible to know that something is the case without being aware that one knows it. They conclude that it is a mistake to assimilate cases of knowing to cases of doubting, being in pain, and the like. But if knowing is not a mental state, what is it? Some philosophers have held that knowing cannot be described as a single thing,

such as a state of consciousness. Instead, they claim that one can ascribe knowledge to someone, or to oneself, only when certain complex conditions are satisfied, among them certain behavioral conditions. For example, if a person always gives the right answers to questions about a certain topic under test conditions, one would be entitled, on that view, to say that that person has knowledge of that topic. Because knowing is tied to the capacity to behave in certain ways, knowledge is not a mental state, though mental states may be involved in the exercise of the capacity that constitutes knowledge. A well-known example of such a view was advanced by J. Instead, one is indicating that one is in a position to assert that such and such is the case one has the proper credentials and reasons in circumstances where it is necessary to resolve a doubt. When those conditions are satisfiedâ€”when one is, in fact, in a position to assert that such and such is the caseâ€”one can correctly be said to know. Occurrent knowledge is knowledge of which one is currently aware. In contrast, dispositional knowledge, as the term suggests, is a disposition , or a propensity , to behave in certain ways in certain conditions. Although Smith may not now be thinking of his home address, he certainly knows it in the sense that, if one were to ask him what it is, he could provide it. Thus, one can have knowledge of things of which one is not aware at a given moment. A priori and a posteriori knowledge Since at least the 17th century, a sharp distinction has been drawn between a priori knowledge and a posteriori knowledge. The distinction plays an especially important role in the work of David Hume â€”76 and Immanuel Kant â€” The distinction is easily illustrated by means of examples. In the case of the second sentence, the answer is that one knows that it is true by understanding the meanings of the words it contains. That kind of knowledge is a priori in the sense that one need not engage in any factual or empirical inquiry in order to obtain it. In contrast, just such an investigation is necessary in order to know whether the first sentence is true. Unlike the second sentence, simply understanding the words is not enough. Knowledge of the first kind is a posteriori in the sense that it can be obtained only through certain kinds of experience. The differences between sentences that express a priori knowledge and those that express a posteriori knowledge are sometimes described in terms of four additional distinctions:

Chapter 8 : Epistemological Problems of Memory (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Artificial intelligence (AI) problem has been divided into two partsâ€"an epistemological part and a heuristic part. This chapter further explains this division, explains some of the epistemological problems, and presents some new results and approaches.

We will ignore the question of how these facts are represented, e. We start with great generality, so there are many difficulties. We begin by asking whether solving the problem requires the co-operation of other people or overcoming their opposition. If either is true, there are two subcases. The problem is even more difficult if bargaining is involved, because then the problems and indeterminacies of game theory are relevant. Facts like a person wanting a thing or a person disliking another must be described. The second subcase makes the assumption that the other people can be regarded as machines with known input-output behavior. This is often a good assumption, e. Neither the goals of the clerk or the professor need be taken into account; either might well regard an attempt to use them to optimize the interaction as an invasion of privacy. In such circumstances, man usually prefers to be regarded as a machine. Let us now suppose that either other people are not involved in the problem or that the information available about their actions takes the form of input-output relations and does not involve understanding their goals. The second question is whether the strategy involves the acquisition of knowledge. Even if we can treat other people as machines, we still may have to reason about what they know. Thus an airline clerk knows what airplanes fly from here to there and when, although he will tell you when asked without your having to motivate him. One must also consider information in books and in tables. The latter information is described by other information. The second subcase of knowledge is according to whether the information obtained can be simply plugged into a program or whether it enters in a more complex way. The general distinction may be according to whether new sentences are generated or whether values are just assigned to variables. An example worth considering is that a sophisticated air traveler rarely asks how he will get from the arriving flight to the departing flight at an airport where he must change planes. He is confident that the information will be available in a form he can understand at the time he will need it. If the strategy is embodied in a program that branches on an environmental condition or reads a numerical parameter from the environment, we can regard it as obtaining knowledge, but this is obviously an easier case than those we have discussed. A problem is more difficult if it involves concurrent events and actions. To me this seems to be the most difficult unsolved epistemological problem for AI--how to express rules that give the effects of actions and events when they occur concurrently. We may contrast this with the sequential case treated in McCarthy and Hayes In the sequential case we can write where is the situation that results when event e occurs in situation s. The effects of e can be described by sentences relating , e and s. One can attempt a similar formalism giving a partial situation that results from an event in another partial situation, but it is difficult to see how to apply this to cases in which other events may affect with the occurrence. When events are concurrent, it is usually necessary to regard time as continuous. We have events like raining until the reservoir overflows and questions like Where was his train when we wanted to call him?. Computer science has recently begun to formalize parallel processes so that it is sometimes possible to prove that a system of parallel processes will meet its specifications. However, the knowledge available to a robot of the other processes going on in the world will rarely take the form of a Petri net or any of the other formalisms used in engineering or computer science. In fact, anyone who wishes to prove correct an airline reservation system or an air traffic control system must use information about the behavior of the external world that is less specific than a program. Nevertheless, the formalisms for expressing facts about parallel and indeterminate programs provide a start for axiomatizing concurrent action. A robot must be able to express knowledge about space, and the locations, shapes and layouts of objects in space. Present programs treat only very special cases. Usually locations are discrete--block A may be on block B but the formalisms do not allow anything to be said about where on block B it is, and what shape space is left on block B for placing other blocks or whether block A could be moved to project out a bit in order to place another block. A few are more sophisticated, but the objects must have simple geometric shapes. A formalism

capable of representing the geometric information people get from seeing and handling objects has not, to my knowledge, been approached. The difficulty in expressing such facts is indicated by the limitations of English in expressing human visual knowledge. We can answer many more questions in the presence of a scene than we can from memory. The relation between three dimensional objects and their two dimensional retinal or camera images is mostly untreated. Contrary to some philosophical positions, the three dimensional object is treated by our minds as distinct from its appearances. People blind from birth can still communicate in the same language as sighted people about three dimensional objects. We need a formalism that treats three dimensional objects as instances of patterns and their two dimensional appearances as projections of these patterns modified by lighting and occlusion. Objects can be made by shaping materials and by combining other objects. They can also be taken apart, cut apart or destroyed in various ways. What people know about the relations between materials and objects remains to be described. Modal concepts like event e1 caused event e2 and person e can do action a are needed. Suppose now that the problem can be formalized in terms of a single state that is changed by events. In interesting cases, the set of components of the state depends on the problem, but common general knowledge is usually expressed in terms of the effect of an action on one or a few components of the state. However, it cannot always be assumed that the other components are unchanged, especially because the state can be described in a variety of co-ordinate systems and the meaning of changing a single co-ordinate depends on the co-ordinate system. The problem of expressing information about what remains unchanged by an event was called the frame problem in McCarthy and Hayes His hypothesis seems to have been that almost all situations encountered in human problem solving fit into a small number of previously known patterns of situation and goal. I regard this as unlikely in difficult problems. The frame problem may be a subcase of what we call the qualification problem, and a good solution of the qualification problem may solve the frame problem also. In the missionaries and cannibals problem, a boat holding two people is stated to be available. In the statement of the problem, nothing is said about how boats are used to cross rivers, so obviously this information must come from common knowledge, and a computer program capable of solving the problem from an English description or from a translation of this description into logic must have the requisite common knowledge. However, this statement is too rigid to be true, because anyone will admit that if the boat is a rowboat and has a leak or no oars, the action may not achieve its intended result. One might try amending the common knowledge statement about boats, but this encounters difficulties when a critic demands a qualification that the vertical exhaust stack of a diesel boat must not be struck square by a cow turd dropped by a passing hawk or some other event that no-one has previously thought of. We need to be able to say that the boat can be used as a vehicle for crossing a body of water unless something prevents it. However, since we are not willing to delimit in advance possible circumstances that may prevent the use of the boat, there is still a problem of proving or at least conjecturing that nothing prevents the use of the boat. A method of reasoning called circumscription, described in a subsequent section of this paper, is a candidate for solving the qualification problem. The reduction of the frame problem to the qualification problem has not been fully carried out, however.

Chapter 9 : Epistemology - Wikipedia

This paper explores the traditional conception of ethics and ethical problems and argues to the contrary that as long as ethical problems involve value judgments and theoretical examination, there is a close relation between ethics and epistemology.

The Problem of the External World The question of how our perceptual beliefs are justified or known can be approached by first considering the question of whether they are justified or known. A prominent skeptical argument is designed to show that our perceptual beliefs are not justified. The argument introduces some type of skeptical scenario, in which things perceptually appear to us just as things normally do, but in which the beliefs that we would naturally form are radically false. To take some standard examples: It is usually not specified how one gets from here to the conclusion that our perceptual beliefs are unjustified. I offer one possible reconstruction of the skeptical argument, one which helps to illustrate the central problems in the epistemology of perception. The skeptical scenarios dreaming, brains in vats, differently situated sense organs, etc. Further reflection on the scenarios suggests that although I might know very littleâ€"perhaps nothingâ€"about how things are in the external world, I can nevertheless know quite a lot about how it appears to me that things are. This engenders a shift from thinking about perceptual appearances as features of objects e. Finally, it seems that if we are to know anything about the external world at all, that knowledge must be indirect, for what is directly before me is not the world itself, but only these perceptual appearances. I know and have justified beliefs about the external world only insofar as I know and have justified beliefs about appearances. Paraphrasing David Hume But if our only access to the external world is mediated by potentially misleading perceptual appearances, we ought to have some assurance that the appearances we are relying on are not of the misleading variety. And here is where all the trouble arises, for it seems that there is no way we could have any evidence for the reliability of perception i. We have empirical reason, for example, to think that science is not yet capable of stimulating brains in a very precise way, but appealing to this to rebut the possibility of brain-in-a-vat scenarios seems blatantly question begging. I have named the premises, as we will want to discuss them individually. Nothing is ever directly present to the mind in perception except perceptual appearances. Without a good reason for thinking perceptual appearances are veridical, we are not justified in our perceptual beliefs. Metaevidential Principle We have no good reason for thinking perceptual appearances are veridical. Reasons Claim Therefore, we are not justified in our perceptual beliefs. A few comments on the logic of the argument are in order. This means that 1 , which is motivated by the skeptical scenarios mentioned above and the associated veil of perception view, would be unnecessary for deriving the skeptical conclusion, as are those skeptical scenarios, were it not for the fact that 1 is commonly taken to render perception inferential in such a way as to lend support to 2. If 1 is true, then, plausibly, 2 is: And no other reason to endorse 2 is immediately apparent although an additional motivation for 2 will be discussed below, in section 3. The plausibility of 3 derives from the idea that our only means of verifying the veridicality of appearances would itself depend on perception, in the question-begging manner sketched above. Notice that PEW addresses justification rather than knowledge. On the reasonable assumption that knowledge requires justification, 4 implies that our perceptual beliefs do not count as knowledge. One who denies this assumption could easily rewrite PEW in terms of knowledge rather than justification with little or no reduction in plausibility. I have reconstructed PEW in a way that is supposed to be intuitively compelling. Were we to get specific about the implicit quantification involved we have no good reason for thinking that any perceptual appearances are veridical? The simpler version presented above is sufficient for our current purposes. The problem of the external world should be distinguished from what is typically called the problem of perception see the entry on the problem of perception , even though they are motivated by similar considerations, in particular, by the Indirectness Principle. The problem of perception is the problem of how perception is possibleâ€"how it is possible, for example, to see mind-independent objects, rather than inferring them from awareness of sense-experiences, in light of the claim that only appearances are ever directly present to the mind. The problem of the external world is a distinctively epistemological problem, and it focuses on the

normative status of perceptual judgments about external objects; it matters little for these purposes whether and how such judgments might amount to seeing. What matters is whether such judgments are or could be justified. PEW illustrates the central problem of the epistemology of perception: Several subsidiary problems in the epistemology of perception arise in the efforts to solve this central problem. The Metaevidential Principle and the Reasons Claim are epistemic principles: Because PEW can be challenged by denying any of the premises, there are two main classes of solution to the central problem: This section addresses the first class of solutions to the central problem. Section 3 addresses the second class. PEW starts with the Indirectness Principle, and it has often been thought that the central skeptical worry is due to a metaphysics of perception that holds that, although worldly objects do exist outside of the mind, they are never directly present to the mind, but only indirectly so, through mental intermediaries. Consequently, a great deal of philosophy since Descartes has involved various attempts to block PEW by doing away with the intermediaries between the mind and the objects of perception, by offering a metaphysics of perception that puts these objects directly before the mind. If perception is direct in the relevant sense, then the skeptical problem never even gets off the ground. There are two main branches to this tradition. The more obvious and commonsensical one originates with Reid , who denies that only mental items can be directly present to the mind, arguing that physical objects and their properties can be directly present as well. This is the direct realist option. A somewhat older tradition, however, tracing back to George Berkeley , , agrees with Descartes that only mental items are directly present to the mind but insists that the objects of perceptionâ€”tables, rocks, cats, etc. If perception is thus direct, the Indirectness Principle is false, and support for the Metaevidential Principle is undercut, and PEW ceases to pose a threat to knowledge. But what is meant by these spatial metaphors? The metaphors can be unpacked in several importantly different ways, having different implications for the rest of PEW. In the next five subsections, I will briefly distinguish some different ways in which perception might be or fail to be direct. Instead, these paragraphs aim to map out the more salient possibilities. Later, in sections 2. To be directly present is to be present, but not in virtue of the presence of another thing that would be indirect presence. Directness is merely unmediatedness, but what kind of mediation is at issue will depend on what kind of presence is intended. Without these two allowances, claims of noninferentiality would quickly run afoul of standard views in epistemology and psychology, respectively. To claim that perception is phenomenally direct is to claim that it is noninferential in this sense. One might worry, however, that unless perception puts objects directly before us, we are in danger of not genuinely being able to think about the objective, external world at all, but only about ourselves. To say that perception is referentially direct is to say that the ability of perceptual states to represent does not depend on the ability of other states to represent. It is easy to see how such perceptual indirectness may invite the semantic and epistemological worries we have been seeing. To claim that perception of external objects is perceptually direct is to claim that it is not mediated by the perception or quasi-perceptual apprehension or awareness of something else. An alternative is a relational metaphysics of perception according to which elements of the perceived world are literally parts of the perceptual experience. On idealist versions of this view, the mental states whose immediate apprehension constitutes perceptual experience just are the objects of perception or parts of these objects. On direct realist versions of the view, perceptual experiences are not internal mental states of the agent but are relations between the agent and some external objects or states of affairs. Veridical perception is a certain kind of relation to a distal array, while hallucination or dreaming is an introspectively indistinguishable but metaphysically distinct relation to something else entirely. This possibility will be explored in more detail below, in section 3. Epistemological directness will be treated separately from the previous senses of direct presence, which can all be viewed as metaphysical senses of direct presence. The relation between metaphysical and epistemological directness will be addressed below, in section 2. With these distinctions in hand, we can better situate the traditional theories of perception that are often thought to bear on the skeptical problem. There are several varieties of idealism and several motivations for holding the view. But one motivation is that it promises to solve the skeptical problem of the external world. Berkeley held that idealism was a cure for skepticism. Transcendental idealism Kant aims to split the difference with the skeptic by distinguishing the phenomenal objects of perceptionâ€”which are collections of appearances and

about which we can know somethingâ€”from the noumenal objectsâ€”which are things in themselves and not mere appearances, and about which skepticism is true. One way in which idealism might help to solve the skeptical problem is by attacking the Indirectness Principle. If the problem of the external world starts with the gap between the proximal and the distal objects of perceptual experience, then idealism would avoid skepticism by simply closing that gap. The idealist can embrace direct world-involvement while retaining the claim that nothing is ever directly present to the mind but its own mental states, by holding that the world is fundamentally mental, that, e. Although metaphysical solutions are usually aimed at the Indirectness Principle, idealism also offers a response to PEW by way of undermining the Reasons Claim. On the other hand, if the objects of perception are not external after all, we are in a better position to infer causal relations between them and individual experiences. The main difference between idealism and an indirect realism concerns not so much the metaphysics of perception as a larger metaphysical view about what else exists outside of the mind. Berkeley and Descartes agree about the direct objects of perception, but Descartes posits an additional stratum of mind-independent external objects in addition. The idealist denies that there is a veil of perception not because Descartes was wrong about the nature of perception, but because he was wrong about the natures of cats and rocks. Idealism has a few contemporary defenders e. Most responses to PEW in the last century have endorsed some kind of realism instead, insisting that ordinary objects are indeed mind-independent. A red thing is simply something that has the form of RED, which it can transmit, making the receptive, perceiving mind alsoâ€”though presumably in a different senseâ€”red. Both theories suffer from an apparent inability to handle error. Science frequently teaches us that things are not in reality the way they appear to the senses. The sun, for example, perceptually appears as a small disk rather than the large sphere that it is Descartes Nor could we simply be picking up relational properties, like looking small from here, Descartes argues, because I could have the very same perceptual experience in a vivid dream where even the relational properties are not instantiated as I do in waking life. Therefore, perceptual appearances must be entirely mental and internal, rather than relational. Insofar as external objects are at all present to the mind, it is only because of these appearances, which thus serve as inner stand-ins, or proxies, for them. As John Locke puts it, the understanding is not much unlike a closet wholly shut from light, with only some little openings left, to let in external visible resemblances, or ideas of things without. The representative realist may, but need not, hold that these proxies are also representations in the sense of having semantic contents, i. In fact, the most recognizable form of representative realism denies that experiences are in this sense representational. Two important features of this theory are worth highlighting: Any version of representative realism denies direct world-involvement. The sense-datum theory is further incompatible with perceptual directness, as it has us perceive objects by way of perceiving our sense-data; and it is typically fleshed out in such a way as to be incompatible with referential directness as well, holding that we can think about mind-independent objects only as the external causes of these sense-data. It is compatible, however, with phenomenal and epistemological directness. On this view, the inner states are not just representatives but representations; they have semantic values.