

Philosophy 122

Theory of Knowledge

1

Administrative Stuff I

- Index Cards — Please fill-out with:
 - name
 - student ID #
 - email address
 - year
 - major
 - # of previous philosophy courses
 - Preference ranking for section times

2

Administrative Stuff II

- Course Syllabus (handout)
 - Text and Supplementary Readings
 - What, when, where, why?
 - Grades, assignments, and all that...
 - Tentative course schedule
 - See website for complete schedule
 - Stay tuned to the website

3

Topic Outline

- Audi's outline (and ours)
 - Sources of Knowledge
 - Inference & The Extension of Knowledge
 - The Architecture of Knowledge
 - The Analysis of Knowledge
 - Scientific, moral, and religious knowledge
 - Skepticism

4

Three Senses of Justification I

- Intuitively, many of our beliefs are *justified*
 - E.g., my belief that we are now in PHIL 122
- This *doesn't* require a *process* of justifying
 - Justifiedness as a *property* vs a *process*
- 2 properties: *belief* vs *situational* justification
 - S's (actual) belief that *p* is justified
 - belief justification
 - S's is/would be *justified in* believing *p*
 - situational justification

5

Three Senses of Justification II

- One can be *justified in* believing *p* (*situational*) without (actually) believing *p*
 - *Situational justification* \nRightarrow *Belief justification*
- But, the converse implication *does* hold
 - *Belief justification* \Rightarrow *Situational justification*
- Situational justification involves being *in a position* to justifiably believe/know *p*
 - E.g., an eyewitness under good conditions

6

Three Senses of Justification III

- We also speak of *grounds* or *bases* for beliefs.
 - S's belief that *p* *on the basis of* *q* is justified
 - S is *justified in* believing *p* *on the basis of* *q*
- If S has *no* basis/ground for believing *p*, then S's is not justified in believing *p* (full stop)
- Bases/grounds draw from various *sources*:
 - Perception, memory, introspection/ consciousness, reason, testimony
- And, there are three *kinds* of grounding...

7

Three Kinds of Grounding I

- *Causal* grounding
 - S belief that *p* is *caused* or *produced* by *q*
- *Justificational* grounding
 - S's belief that *p* is *justified* by *q*
 - S's belief that *p* *on the basis of* *q* is justified
- *Epistemic* grounding
 - S *knows* *p* on the basis of *q*
- *Epistemic grounding* is *strictly stronger* than *justificational grounding* (*this is important!*)

8

Three Kinds of Grounding II

- The three kinds of grounding often *coincide*.
- But, their *divergences* are *crucial*.
- Example: A mathematician *S* believes *p* (is a theorem) on the basis of a faulty proof (*q*).
- *S*'s belief is *causally* — but *not justificational* or *epistemically* — grounded by *q*.
- As it happens, someone who knew a correct proof *told S* that *p* (call this *testimony r*).
- *S*'s belief that *p* *would be justificational* (and perhaps even *epistemically*) grounded by *r*.

9

Three Kinds of Grounding III

<i>S</i> 's belief that <i>p</i> is...	Not <i>Causally</i> grounded by <i>q</i>	Not <i>Justificational</i> grounded by <i>q</i>	Not <i>Epistemically</i> grounded by <i>q</i>
<i>Causally</i> grounded by <i>q</i>		Possible	Possible
<i>Justificational</i> grounded by <i>q</i>	Possible		Possible
<i>Epistemically</i> grounded by <i>q</i>	Possible	Not Possible	

10

Sources of Belief/Knowledge I

- Perception (*i.e.*, sensory experience)
 - Good case: I see the green field, and my belief that the field is green is both causally and epistemically grounded by my seeing.
 - Bad case: I am hallucinating.
- The first part of the course is about perception. We'll talk about perception *a lot*.
- Puzzle: What am I perceiving when I hallucinate? Can't it be *the same* whether I'm hallucinating or not? If so, *whither epistemic grounding?*

11

Sources of Belief/Knowledge II

- Memory
 - Good case (rare, in my case): I *vividly recall*/remember turning off the iron, and this *causes & justifies* my belief that same.
 - Bad case (typical): I'm actually recalling *yesterday's* morning routine.
- Memory is often *parasitic* on other sources like *perception* (or *testimony*, *introspection*, etc.)
- As such, it seems that it can be *no more reliable* than these other sources.

12

Sources of Belief/Knowledge III

- Introspection
 - I (seem to) imagine a rainbow, and as a result of reflecting on this imaginative experience (which seems present to my consciousness), I come to believe that I have imagined a rainbow.
 - This is (say) a “good case” of *self-knowledge*.
 - Can there be a *bad* case here?
- While hallucination is (in some sense) clearly possible in the case of perception, is there an analogous phenomenon for introspection?

13

Sources of Belief/Knowledge IV

- Reason
 - *A Priori*
 - I know (*via* perception, etc.) that John is taller than Mary, and that Mary is taller than Kim. I *infer* (*via a priori* logico-mathematical reasoning) that John is taller than Kim.
 - *Inductive*
 - I know (*via* perception, memory, testimony, etc.) that the sun has risen for 10,000 straight days. I *infer* (*via inductive* reasoning) that the sun will rise again tomorrow.

14

Sources of Belief/Knowledge V

- Testimony
 - An expert on DNA who has done the relevant tests themselves and whom I trust implicitly on such matters testifies under oath that my DNA was not found at the scene, and (so) I come to believe same.
 - Tricky case? I find myself in a foreign town, and the first person I see cries “wolf!”. So, I come to believe there is a wolf (and I run!).
- Testimony is a common and *indispensable* source of justified beliefs and knowledge.

15

Fallibility and Skepticism

- The “bad cases” — (especially) vivid hallucination cases — give one pause.
- Such possibilities (or even more sinister possibilities, like the existence of an “evil deceiver”) can make one worry about whether one knows anything at all.
- The last part of the course is about skepticism. We’ll spend as much time on this topic as any other single topic in the course.
- Question: *How do I know* (now) that I am not currently dreaming/hallucinating/etc.?

16