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- Use black ink or black ball point pen. Do not use pencil or gel pen. Do not use correction fluid.
- Write the information required in the spaces above.
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- Write the question number in the two boxes provided in the left hand margin at the start of each answer e.g. 0 1
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- Leave at least two line spaces between each answer.
- Do all rough work in this answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked. Do not tear out any part of this book. All work must be handed in.
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AB 12



0 6

Knowledge can be defined as a justified true belief according to the Gettier definition. Scepticism challenges how we justify beliefs to amount them to ~~knowledge~~ knowledge and thus ~~is~~ ^{is} impossible.

Gettier cases target the justification of knowledge and ~~is~~ ~~as~~ ~~result~~ leads us to scepticism as a result. Gettier shows how justification can be inadequate when searching for knowledge. To illustrate: I place a melon in my fridge to store over night. In the middle of the night, a friend eats my melon and ~~disposes~~ ^{disposes} what is left and replaces it in the morning. When looking for my melon, my belief that it is in the fridge is justified because I remember putting it there and I find a melon in my fridge. However, this case shows my belief does not amount to knowledge as my melon has actually been eaten and disposed of. There have been attempts to respond to Gettier such as infallibilism (I know I have not made a mistake) and indefeasibility (my belief is not defeated by facts). However, this leads to scepticism for two reasons. Firstly, we cannot rule out error while justifying a belief and secondly we can never know whether we are in a Gettier case or normal case.

Other attempts of questioning justification have been made other than Gettier. The illusion argument illustrates how our empirical data is not always coherent, we can witness a straight ruler appear to be bent when half



Submerged in a pool of water or our thumb would appear bigger than a coin that is far away. However, we know of these illusions because of sense experience, so this does not present a strong argument. Knowledge is still possible because we know why these illusions occur using physics.

Descartes also attempted to show knowledge is impossible because we can never know if we are dreaming or are part of reality as dreams can appear to be similar, no matter how intricate. This too fails as an argument to support scepticism as it presupposes a reality and thus knowledge is still possible. We are also able to distinguish between dreaming and reality because reality is more coherent than dreaming so we know which is which.

The illusion argument and argument from dreaming at most shows our vulnerability to error as opposed to showing knowledge is impossible but we are still able to distinguish whether something is an illusion or if we are dreaming. ~~So far~~ ^{To add} to this; so far these sceptical arguments, including Gettier, have only challenged the notion of propositional knowledge so it would seem that analytical knowledge is still possible and is still knowledge, knowledge by definition, mathematical, and deductive e.g. C is smaller than A because B is smaller than A and C is smaller than B or $2 + 8 = 10$, $5 + 5 = 10$ therefore $2 + 8 = 5 + 5$.

The brain in a vat thought experiment challenges all knowledge, propositional and analytical. It is because of the idea that all knowledge is



Answer

write the two right question number *inside* the boxes next to the first line of your answer

downloaded into our brains through ~~the~~ a computer and what you are currently experiencing is... also put into your head. It is also possible that $5+5$ is in fact 26 but it is put into our brains that it is 10 . This presents a challenge to all knowledge but fails... in a similar way to the argument from dreaming. It is a pointless thought experiment because we can actually refer to a brain in a ~~text~~ as opposed to the image of a brain being in an image of a text. This, along with the problem with the argument from dreaming shows a similar objection to scepticism as seen in the ordinary language argument.

The ordinary language argument shows that scepticism cannot claim knowledge is impossible. Sceptics use the term 'error' when talking about justification but this presupposes 'correctness' and thus it is possible to have knowledge because it is possible to be correct. However, sceptics challenge this notion as this does not ~~not~~ necessarily mean we are correct, imperfection presupposes perfection but it is still possible to have no object being perfect. Wittgenstein developed the ordinary language argument by adding that to doubt something is to doubt the very meaning of what you are doubting. With this in mind, it then becomes very difficult to know what it is you are doubting as it no longer has any meaning.

Sometimes it would seem sceptics try too hard to ~~disprove~~ ^{discredit} knowledge and they can get a bit excessive. With reference to Hume's ~~intentional~~



scepticism, this would mean that we would have to give up many values and ~~some~~ beliefs because many are founded on faith. This would in fact be difficult so even if scepticism shows knowledge to be impossible, it does not actually matter as it would not change anything. People will still search for (contingent) truth and it is these beliefs people will hold.

Sceptical claims are dismissed as meaningless as we can see using the verification principle. Sceptical claims are neither analytical or empirically verifiable and will therefore ~~with amount~~ amount to nothing. Or, instead, you could refer to the falsification principle as here sceptical claims are meaningless as they cannot be falsified. Using these principles we can see that what we regard as 'knowledge' is possible as through analysis and empirical data, we can strengthen ideas and theories based on the world. ~~It~~ It is also possible to look at the idea of synthetic a priori knowledge as we gain knowledge of the ~~area~~ external world using mathematics to justify such claims.

In conclusion, the sceptic's use of 'error' presupposing 'correctness' is a seemingly valid argument. It shows how knowledge is possible as opposed to difficult. On top of this, it is difficult to put down analytical knowledge as ~~difficult~~ impossible and, both verificationism and falsificationism, show that sceptical claims are in fact meaningless claims. A final point to make is that the claim 'sceptical arguments show that knowledge is impossible' is similar to the Socratic paradox 'I know that I know nothing'. Knowledge does appear possible, according to the claim, but paradoxically claiming no knowledge.



07

Cognitivists within philosophy aim to search for an ultimate moral truth. It is an apparent teleological approach as we aim to search for and/or follow the ultimate moral truths. However, this proves to be a challenge as there are many who deny moral truth and therefore knowledge of it is impossible.

The idea of moral truth can date back to Socratic times with the likes of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Plato played a big role in searching for moral truths as he used his theory of the forms. Moral truths existed with the Form of honesty, justice, and kindness, and ultimately the Form of good - the supreme Form. Having found knowledge of moral truth, or so he claimed, he showed knowledge of moral truths was possible, albeit through many years of study.

The road to moral truths appears to be an elitist one as only a select few can discover knowledge of moral truths. This is surely unfair as the majority will in fact remain lacking in such knowledge. On the other hand, why should this be an issue? We have experts in other fields, a select few at the top of their field of knowledge so surely it would be acceptable to have experts of morality that others can confront.

Moral truths as a transcendental truth is problematic as they would be very difficult to dispute. On the other hand, you have those who search for knowledge of moral truths in relation to natural facts.



Mill ~~is associated~~ ^{equated} 'good' to 'happy' using natural facts. He had seen that what ~~is~~ overall desirable brings individual happiness as it is a natural fact we search for happiness and pleasure. However, there are two meanings of desirable. The first meaning is 'what is worth desiring' and the second is 'what is capable of being desired'. When looking at what is capable of being desired, we could see that people desire all sorts of unnecessary rubbish. Despite this, it is ~~the~~ unlikely Mill missed this distinction because both, what is worth desiring and what is capable of being desired, would result in happiness.

In response to Mill, it is possible he has made a mistake - the naturalistic fallacy. It is not logical to say that 'goodness = happiness' because you cannot ask 'is ~~being~~ being happy good?' as it would be similar to 'is being good good?'. If the two are synonymous, it is a closed question as there is only one logical answer - 'yes'. Good should equal x and happiness should equal x , 'is x the same as y ?' so it is a question with two possible answers - 'yes' or 'no'. In this instance, we still do ~~not~~ have knowledge of moral truths.

But is the naturalistic fallacy an actual fallacy? It is possible that concepts and properties have been confused. ~~By~~ Take water for example, you have the concept of 'water' and the concept of ' H_2O '. These are two different concepts that refer to the same property. Similarly, the concepts of 'goodness' and 'happiness' may also refer to the same property and therefore we still have knowledge of what is good.

From a non-cognitivist's standpoint, knowledge of moral



truths are impossible. One non-cognitivist argument is emotivism. Here, moral values are reduced to descriptive and emotive meanings. It is not true that stealing is wrong. Stealing refers to taking something not belonging to you without permission (descriptive) and to say it is wrong is to show disapproval (emotive). Here, there is no moral truths as all we have are the emotions of an individual being expressed. ~~The word~~ Emotivism sounds like manipulation as people encourage moral values into others with no reasons. Supporting or disapproving abortion is the same as saying 'horrible abortion' or 'love abortion'. This is not necessarily true as emotions may link to facts about suffering and pain and attitudes are shared and are not made in isolation.

Alternatively, you could take a relativist's argument and interpret as mid-ground between cognitivists and non-cognitivists. Relativism shows that moral values are in fact relative to different cultures. In this case, moral truths are possible to know, knowing the values of a culture, but these moral truths are subjective instead of objective. There many examples of cultural differences, e.g. different ideas on female circumcision, ideas on 'witchhunts', age of consent, piracy laws, etc. The extent of disagreement between cultures is arguable evidence for there being no one objective moral truths.

When using disagreement to disprove objective moral truths, it is logical to have agreement support moral truths. Many cultures disagree with violence and murder while others are following suit, dropping capital punishment or ~~lightening~~ ^{lightening} ~~lapses~~ on such issues. This is different moral progress, mainly towards moral truth



alongside other cultures. Secondly, it is possible that with those in disagreement, at least one side is wrong. One party lacks the knowledge of moral truths while the other does hold knowledge and aims to more towards it. Similarly, both may have knowledge of moral truths but are both in different situations. Similarly to virtue ethics, both know the aim is to flourish but being in different situations, both will have to reach the end in different ways.

One big question that still remains is why people act in a less than the wrong way when they know how to act? Why do they when they know x is the better option. If we were to accept knowledge of moral truths being possible then we would have to accept the weakness of the will. On the other hand, there ^{may be no such thing as the} weakness of the will. It could just be that someone who does y instead of x does not fully understand why x is better and in fact does not have knowledge.

To conclude, it is difficult to dispute that knowledge of moral truths is impossible. A cognitivist can respond to a non-cognitivist with 'they don't know the truth'. The ~~same~~ non-cognitivist arguments are inadequate for disputing moral truths as there are aspects they fail to acknowledge such as arguments supporting moral truths. If knowledge of moral truths was impossible then moral progress would too be impossible but what we can see among different societies suggest otherwise. On the other hand, moral progress is a result of tolerance of one another. At best, moral truths are possible on a subjective level as it is difficult to find an objective moral truth followed by every society.

