Announcements and Such

- One Song — *Renaissance*
  - "Mother Russia" from *Turn of the Cards*
- **Second Essay Topics Posted** (**due 4/5**):
  - We will go over and discuss the topics today
- Time Permitting: *The Analysis of Knowledge III*
  - Internalism *vs* Externalism and Theories of Truth
  - Postscript: Virtue Epistemology
- Please welcome our visitor:
  - Professor Christopher Hitchcock from Caltech [one of the world's leading philosophers of science, and the guy who turned me on to *Renaissance*]

Second Essay Questions I

1. Compare and contrast classical *vs* empiricist views of truths of reason (with any eye toward deciding which view you think is more plausible). Your discussion should begin by addressing the central question: (a) What are truths of reason, and why are they necessarily true on a classical view? [Here, be sure to cover the synthetic *a priori* as well as the analytic]. Additionally, you should also address at least one of the following three questions (from the point of view of classicism *vs* empiricism): (b) From an empiricist standpoint, why is the synthetic *a priori* is an illegitimate category?, (c) Can there be empirical necessary truths?, and (d) Are all (conceptually) necessary truths *a priori*?

2. Compare & contrast Coherentism & Foundationalism (with any eye toward deciding which view you think is more plausible). Your discussion should touch on *at least* the following two issues: (a) the precise role of coherence as a contributor to justification (and/or truth and knowledge), (b) whether foundational beliefs (or the coherence of one's beliefs) are (is) the *sine qua non* of justification (and/or knowledge).

Second Essay Questions II

3. Discuss either the preface paradox or the lottery paradox (but not both). First, explain what the (chosen) paradox is. Then, explain what it is supposed to show about deductive/inductive inference and the transmission of justification/ knowledge. Do you think it succeeds in showing what it is supposed to show? Explain. [See lectures #12 and #13 for my notes on these two paradoxes.]

4. Deductive inference is supposed to a be a primary means of expanding our knowledge. Question this, by asking whether deductive inference (*even*) transmits *knowledge*. Describe and explain example(s) that are supposed to show that deductive inference does not (even) transmit knowledge. What do you think about such examples? Can you think of a response on behalf of someone who thinks deductive inference does/ should transmit knowledge? How serious a problem would it be if knowledge were not (in general) transmitted by deductive inference?

Second Essay Questions III

5. Discuss some Gettier-style counterexample(s) against the justified true belief (JTB) theory of knowledge. Here, you can discuss Gettier's original example(s) [I discuss these two examples in lecture #16], or you can discuss other similar example(s) that you think are even more compelling. You should give a precise analysis and discussion of your chosen example(s), and you should say whether you think they are effective (for refuting the JTB theory). Can you think of a response on behalf of a JTB theorist? In light of such examples, what do you think about the prospects for a JTB theory of knowledge [here, the Zagzebski paper might be especially useful — see lecture #16 for more on that paper, and see the website for a JSTOR link to the paper itself — also on reserve in Howison Library: 3rd floor Moses Hall]?

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism I

- Something is *accessible* to *S* if it is *either* present in *S*'s consciousness, *or S* is able to bring it into their consciousness *via* reflection and/or introspection

- We will say that something is (in part) *internal to S* if it has elements that are *accessible to S.*

- Historically, *justification* is *internal* in this sense — it has *accessible* or "by your own lights" elements.

- Because knowledge implies truth, it is to be expected that knowledge has *some external* component(s) — which *may not be* accessible.

- Example: my only *accessible* evidence concerning Tom's reliability indicates Tom is reliable re *p*. So, I am *justified in* believing (internal) *p* on the basis of Tom's testimony. But, unless Tom *really is* reliable (external), I don't *know p* on this basis.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism II

- The "naturalistic" (*e.g.*, truth-tracking/reliabilist) accounts of knowledge tend to be *externalist* (*i.e.*, they emphasize *external* requirements on K).

- But, the JXTB theories tend to be *internalist* (*i.e.*, they emphasize *internal* requirements on K).

- *Extreme* internalism about knowledge seems very implausible (given *realism about truth* – see below)

- *Extreme* externalism about knowledge has been more widely accepted in contemporary philosophy

- Sometimes extreme externalists talk about "justification", but (for them), this is *external*

- I will focus mainly on internalism about *justification*, and externalism about *knowledge.*

- There are various varieties of internalism/ externalism, differing along various dimensions.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism III

- The internalist about justification holds only that the *grounds* for one's justified beliefs are internal.

- They do *not* require that *how* (or *how strongly*) those grounds justify beliefs based on them must also be internal (accessible to introspection)

  - The "support" relation *needn't itself* be internal. I'll return to this, below, since it can seem odd.

- One important dimension along which alternative internalist theories of justification differ:

  - *How accessible* must the justifiers *j* of *p* be?

    - Typical examples: sensory states of the kind present in perception or beliefs, assenting thought of believed propositions.

- A useful way of thinking about internalism is in terms of *unjustified* beliefs being *blameworthy.*

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism IV

- The externalist about knowledge, similarly, holds only that *some* of *what* grounds knowledge (*e.g.*, *that* the constituent true belief was *reliably generated*) will not be accessible to introspection.

- This is consistent with *some* of the grounds of knowledge being *internal* (*e.g.*, sensory experience)

- If *what* grounds knowledge is not accessible, then it is to be expected that *how* it grounds isn't either.

- One important dimension along which alternative internalist theories of justification differ:

  - The *kind* of (non-introspective) evidence required to ascertain whether K-grounds are present

  - *E.g.*, is commonsense observation enough to ascertain how reliable perception is, or is more full-blooded *scientific evidence* required?

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism V

- **Internalism about justification**:

  - What one *justifiedly believes* is determined by mental states and processes to which one has internal (introspective/reflectional) access, *e.g.*:

    - One's visual experiences

    - One's memory impressions

    - One's reasoning processes

    - One's beliefs of supporting propositions *j*

  - Note that Audi does *not* include on this list:

    - One's belief *that j* supports *p*

  - What if someone reliable on such matters (falsely) tells me that *j* does *not* support *p*. Is *j* still a justifier of *p* for me? Audi says "Yes". Odd, no?

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism VI

- **Externalism about Knowledge**:

  - What one *knows* is known on the basis of one's meeting conditions that are not (at least not entirely) internally accessible, as states or processes in one's consciousness are.

- Note: for the externalist about knowledge *even introspective* (self) *knowledge* is based partly on things that are *in*accessible to consciousness.

  - As in all other cases, *the faculty of introspection must be reliable*, and *that* this is so is *not* (in general) *introspectively accessible to the agent*.

- This implies that (KK) is *generally false*: $Kp \Rightarrow KKp$.

- That is, on an externalist view of knowledge, one can know *p* without knowing (or even *being in a position to*) *that one knows p*. We'll return to (KK).

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism VII

- The internalist "blameworthiness" or "by your own lights" account of justification has its problems.

- If justification is going to be a component of *knowledge*, one would think that it should be *truth-conducive*. But, where could *that* come from?

- What does being "permissible" or "not blameworthy" have to do with being *true*?

- Reliabilists have their own conception of "justified belief", which is *reliably generated* belief (and, it's easy to see how *reliability* is connected to *truth*).

- The answer to this question *cannot merely* involve the fact that *j* must (*in fact*) support *p* in order to be a justifier of *p*. After all, *j* may be *false*!

- It seems that the concept of justification must have built-into it *presuppositions about reliability*.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Internalism *vs* Externalism VIII

- The key here is that as we cease to *take* a ground of belief as indicating truth, we tend to cease to *take* beliefs thus grounded to be *justified*.

- So, while it may be an internal matter *whether* a belief is justified, *the standards we use for determining whether* justification obtains are sensitive to our judgments about reliability.

- The Key Presupposition is this: Normally, the internal states and processes that justify our beliefs also connect our beliefs with the external facts in virtue of which those beliefs are true.

- This is how truth-conduciveness gets "snuck in through the backdoor" of internalist accounts.

- We've been talking a lot about truth so far, without really talking about what truth *is*. Next, we'll briefly sketch a few popular accounts of *truth*.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
The Correspondence Theory of Truth

- The reason externalism about *knowledge* seems so plausible (*given* our assumption that K ⇒ T) is that we're *also* assuming that *truth* is *external*.

- Whether (*p*) there is a green field before me does *not* depend on what I (or anyone else) *think about p* — *there's an objective fact of the matter about p.*

- Indeed, we've been assuming that this is true for *all p — even p's that are about my own mind.*

- Whether (*p*) I believe that *q* does not depend on what I think *about p* (although it does, of course, depend on what I think *about q*!).

- This idea that propositions (or beliefs) are true just in case they *correspond to objective facts of the matter* is called *the correspondence theory of truth.*

- This is the naive, realist theory we're assuming.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
The Minimalist/Redundancy Theory of Truth

- The correspondence theory needn't posit "facts" that are things which exist independently of propositions, and are the "truthmakers" thereof.

- Instead, it could just say that *p* is true just in case the world really is the way *p* says it is.

- There is an even more deflationary account of truth, which takes it to be constituted by the so-called T-schema — all biconditionals of the form:

  - (T) '*p*' is true iff *p*.

  - Example: 'Snow is white' is true iff snow is white.

- Indeed, we could have gotten away with assuming this less naive, more deflationary account.

- This account is still non-trivial, since it will imply that the truth predicate has a certain *logic*. Even (T) faces foundational problems (*e.g.*, liar paradox).

The Analysis of Knowledge III
The Coherence Theory of Truth

- A non-realist alternative is *the coherence theory of truth*, according to which a proposition is true iff it is fully justified by virtue of coherence with every other relevant justified proposition, where a justified proposition is, minimally, one that at least someone is (or might be) justified in believing.

- For example, if no beliefs you could ever form could fail to cohere with your belief that *p*, then your belief that *p* would come out true on a coherence theory.

- On this view, for instance, if you are a brain in a vat with a permanently coherent belief that there is an external world, then that belief of yours is true.

- This account violates (T). In the brain in a vat case, the assumption is that *there is no external world*.

- This account sure does explain how coherence might be "truth-conducive"! But, it seems to conflate J & T.

The Analysis of Knowledge III
The Pragmatic Theory of Truth

- The pragmatic theory of truth says true propositions are simply those that "work," in the sense that they are *successful in practice — pragmatically.*

- What this comes to is chiefly that believing them, acting on them, and otherwise confirming them, leads (at least in the long run) to positive results.

- This account raises an obvious *Euthyphro* question:

  - Are propositions true because they're successful or are they successful because they're true?

- Also, does this imply that *the proposition that true propositions are successful* is (itself) *true*?

- If so, does this mean that the proposition that true propositions are successful is (itself) *successful*?

- What if I care about *correspondence* truth? Does that mean the pragmatic theory is *false* "for me"?

The Analysis of Knowledge III
Postscript: Virtue Epistemology

- There is a variety of epistemic theory that doesn't get much discussion in Audi: *Virtue Epistemology*.

- According to virtue epistemology, some agents are *epistemically virtuous*, and they get to have knowledge (and/or justified beliefs).

- There are internalist and externalist virtue-epistemologists. These camps disagree about whether epistemic virtue is something *internal*.

- An obvious question about virtue epistemology is whether it is possible to say what the "epistemically virtuous agent" is like, without already having an *independent grasp* of *justification* and *knowledge*.

- The idea is to explicate the concept of an *epistemic virtue* in terms of justification and/or knowledge (*not vice versa*). Roughly, an epistemic virtue is a trait apt for producing knowledge or justified belief.