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# *False belief in the Theaetetus*

GAIL FINE

1. It is often supposed that Plato regards knowledge as some kind of acquaintance, so that knowing consists in some sort of grasping or hitting, the only alternative to which is not hitting, or missing. Knowledge is an all or nothing, hit or miss affair. It is also often assumed that this model of knowledge underlies or explains Plato's supposed inability to accommodate false belief in dialogues prior to the *Sophist*. Either one "hits" what one is talking about, and so has knowledge, not false belief; or else one fails to grasp, and so has said nothing, and hence again does not have false belief.<sup>1</sup>

A major source of evidence adduced in support of this view is the *Theaetetus*' discussion of false belief. That discussion ends at an impasse, and it is often alleged that Plato fails to explain in what false belief consists because of an underlying acquaintance model.<sup>2</sup> With this claim I shall not quarrel. I shall argue, however, that Plato is not committed to the underlying acquaintance model that occurs here. Rather, he uses it to buttress Theaetetus' suggestion, presented just before the discussion of false belief (at 187b), that knowledge is true belief. When, at the end of the discussion, Socrates rejects Theaetetus' suggestion (201a-c), he also rejects the acquaintance model that had made Theaetetus' suggestion look plausible and that also precludes a satisfactory explanation of false belief. This strategy, in addition to freeing Plato from any commitment to the acquaintance model here, also shows that the discussion of false belief is not, as is usually supposed, an irrelevant digression, awkwardly sandwiched between Theaetetus' definition and its refutation.<sup>3</sup> Rather, the discussion is an integral part of Plato's attack on that definition. I shall return to these general morals at the close of the paper. First, however, it is necessary to understand Socrates' general procedure.

Socrates presents two puzzles designed to show that false belief is impossible, and three models that attempt, but fail, to overcome the puzzles. I shall here consider only the first puzzle, what I shall call K, and the first model of false belief, *allodoxia* or otherjudging.<sup>4</sup> I argue first that K rests on a strong acquaintance view. I then argue that *allodoxia* is not defective in any of the ways usually proposed, but that it matches Plato's account of falsity in the *Sophist*. It fails here only because of its reliance on

K. But since Plato is not committed to K, this does not show that he cannot handle the subtleties of *allodoxia*. Rather, *allodoxia*'s failure to explain in what false belief consists is an indirect argument that Theaetetus' definition of knowledge as true belief is faulty, since that definition requires K in its support, and K in turn precludes a satisfactory account of false belief.

2. I turn first to the first puzzle (188 a-c), what I call K. Socrates argues that:

(1) For any x, either one knows x or one does not know x.

(2) For any x such that one has a belief about x, either one knows x or one does not know x.

(3) It is impossible for one both to know and not to know the same thing.

He then argues that (1)-(3) rule out false belief:

(4) If one has a false belief that x is y, either

(a) one knows x and y; or

(b) one knows x or y, but not both; or

(c) one knows neither x nor y.

(5) None of (4) (a)-(c) is possible.

(6) Therefore there is no false belief.

Two questions arise immediately. First, why is none of the cases described in (4) possible? (1)-(3) seem simply to be instances of logical laws, (1) and (2) of the law of the excluded middle, and (3) of the principle of noncontradiction; it is then difficult to see how they could rule out false belief.<sup>5</sup> Second, even if (5) follows, why does (6) follow? (5) seems at most to rule out false identity beliefs; (6) rules out all false beliefs.<sup>6</sup>

Socrates defends (5) in this way: if one believes that x is y, but x is not y, then one is ignorant of x and y (188b4-6). But if one is ignorant of x and y, one cannot have any beliefs about them, and hence no false beliefs about them (188b6-c4). Otherwise put, whichever option in (2) obtains, false belief is impossible. If one does not know x, one cannot have any beliefs about x; but if one does know x, one cannot have any false beliefs about x, since knowledge precludes error. If one is to have a belief about x, then, one must know x:

(2a) For any x such that one has a belief about x, one knows x.

Read one way, (2a) is innocuous enough. If I have a belief about something, I must know it in at least the minimal sense that I could identify or recognize it; I do not have beliefs, for example, about persons I have never met or heard of. (2a) then suffices to rule out (4b) and (4c); in them I do not know, that is, could not identify or recognize, one of the items in a pur-

ported belief. If I am totally ignorant of one of these items, it is reasonable to suppose that I cannot hold the belief in question.

But this still leaves (4a). Suppose I know Gerald Ford; I've heard him, seen pictures of him, could easily recognize him, and so forth. Still, I might have the false belief about him that he was born in Boston; (2a) is not strong enough to yield (5).

Other readings of (2) are possible, however. We might note, first, that Plato's substitutions for 'x' are all of persons. We might then suppose he has in mind some sort of acquaintance principle:

(2b) For any x such that one has a belief about x, one is acquainted with x. However, if 'acquaintance' is taken in the ordinary sense in which I can 'know' a person or thing (*connaître*), it is still not strong enough. I may have met Gerald Ford, and so 'know' him or be acquainted with him; nonetheless, I might still think he was born in Boston. *Connaître*-acquaintance will not rule out false belief, as Plato attempts to do.<sup>7</sup>

Russell once held a principle like (2b), claiming that "whenever a relation of judging or supposing occurs, the terms to which the supposing or judging mind is related by the relation of supposing or judging must be terms with which the mind in question is acquainted."<sup>8</sup> Russell explained further that "We shall say we have *acquaintance* with anything of which we are directly aware . . . no further knowledge of [such a thing] is even theoretically possible."<sup>9</sup> Acquaintance, in this sense, confers total knowledge; it is, moreover, a hit or miss, all or nothing, affair. Either one is acquainted with something, and so knows all there is to know about it, or else one is not acquainted with it, and so has total ignorance. (2b) then becomes:

(2c) For any x such that one has a belief about x, one either knows everything about x or is totally ignorant of x.

And (2c) does yield (5). If I am ignorant of x, I have no beliefs about x, as (2a) plausibly claimed; but if I know everything about x, I can have no false beliefs about x. Although (2c) yields (5), (1)-(3) are now no longer innocuous.

3. The answer to our second question, of why Plato moves from (5) to (6), emerges from a consideration of the first model of false belief, *allodoxia* or otherjudging. Socrates suggests that a false belief occurs when one "says in his thought that something of the things that are is, having interchanged some other thing for it. For then he always judges something that is, but one thing in place of another, and since he misses what he was aiming at, he can rightly be said to be judging falsely." (189c1-4) Theaetetus suggests as an example "whenever one thinks ugly in place of beautiful, or beautiful in

place of ugly.” (ὅταν γάρ τις ἀντὶ καλοῦ αἰσχροῦν ἢ ἀντὶ αἰσχροῦ καλὸν δοξάζῃ 189c5-6).

Theaetetus' example is an instance of the general schema 'thinking that x is not x but something else, y'. But there are at least four ways in which this schema can be read and, correspondingly, at least four ways in which Theaetetus' example can be parsed. One difficulty arises over Plato's use of such phrases as 'the beautiful' (*to kalon*). The phrase can refer to the property of beauty; but it can also be used as an adjective, as 'the beautiful —', with a proper or common name filling the blank. A second difficulty arises when we note that Theaetetus' example can be taken to be either an opaque or a transparent representation of a belief; it might be a verbatim report of a belief, or it might be a description of a belief that does not report it verbatim.<sup>10</sup> Thus one way we might read Theaetetus' example is:

(7) Theaetetus thinks that ugliness is beauty.

In (7) 'ugliness' refers to the property of ugliness, and Theaetetus' example is taken to be an opaque representation of a belief — the terms it contains also occur explicitly in the believer's belief, and the example is a direct report of that belief. The belief is also an identity belief, involving a mix-up of concepts or properties.

Now (7) is a reading often proposed for *allodoxia*.<sup>11</sup> But if (7) is the right reading of Theaetetus' example, it is unclear why Theaetetus needs such lengthy persuading that *allodoxia* is implausible — for on (7) *allodoxia* is *obviously* implausible and unintelligible. Nor is it plausible to suppose that *allodoxia*, so construed, is a *general* model for false belief; it is not at all obvious that every false belief involves the explicit mix-up of concepts or properties that occurs in (7). Yet Socrates introduces *allodoxia* as though it is a general model of false belief, and, moreover, as though it is a plausible one.

As Ackrill notes, we should be justly disappointed if (7) is all *allodoxia* discusses.<sup>12</sup> Other readings of *allodoxia* are possible, however. Theaetetus' example can be read transparently rather than opaquely, as a description, rather than as a verbatim report, of Theaetetus' belief:

(8) Theaetetus thinks of ugliness that it is beauty.

In (8) 'ugliness' is still taken to refer to the property of ugliness. But now Theaetetus does not explicitly say 'ugliness is beauty'. Rather, he is described as believing that ugliness is beauty, but his actual belief would be, for example, 'gaudiness is beauty'. Now some instances of *allodoxia*, construed on the model (8) provides, may be unintelligible. Theaetetus' belief might be so far wrong that we would say, not that he has a false belief about beauty, but that he fails to have the concept at all (for example, he might

believe ‘what disgusts the beholder is beauty’). But aside from this limiting case, many instances of the allodoxastic schema, construed as in (8), will be intelligible. For example, ‘being brightly colored is beauty’ is false but intelligible; and so (8) is an instance of the allodoxastic schema that is not unintelligible.

(7) and (8) restrict themselves to consideration of properties. But the schema Socrates provides can also accommodate beliefs concerning particulars:

(9) Theaetetus thinks that the ugly thing (for example, Socrates) is beautiful.

(10) Theaetetus thinks of the ugly thing (for example, Socrates) that it is beautiful.

In (9) and (10) ‘ugly’ functions as an adjective, and some particular thing is affirmed to be beautiful. (9), like (7), is an opaque representation of the belief, and it is similarly unintelligible. Theaetetus here explicitly affirms something like ‘ugly Socrates is beautiful’, and it is difficult to construe this belief so that it is intelligible.<sup>13</sup> (10), like (8), is a transparent representation of the belief, and it is a *prima facie* plausible subject-predicate sentence. Theaetetus’ explicit belief would be, for example, ‘Socrates is beautiful’. This belief is still allodoxastic, since Theaetetus has substituted ‘beautiful’ for ‘ugly’; but the belief, although false, involves no mix-up of concepts or properties.

Now (8) and (10) together show how *allodoxia* can be a plausible model of false belief, and one that is perfectly general. They show that instances of the general schema are neither restricted to identity beliefs nor to beliefs involving only properties nor to opaque representations of beliefs; rather, the schema will even accommodate ordinary subject-predicate judgments. Correspondingly (8) and (10) show how Plato can move from (5) to (6). For although the beliefs described in K may appear to be restricted to identity beliefs, (8) and (10) show that the restriction is unnecessary there, too. For K’s schema for false belief is also ‘thinking that x is not x but something else, y’ (cf., e.g., 188b3-5), and (8) and (10) show that instances of this schema are not restricted to identity beliefs. (8) and (10) also match the *Sophist*’s account of falsity, where false statements are analyzed as cases where one says of something something other than what is true of it (cf., e.g., 263b7-13). (8) and (10) are then *prima facie* plausible false beliefs; they show how *allodoxia* can accommodate all false beliefs; they explain K’s seeming restriction to identity beliefs; and they match Plato’s account of falsity in the *Sophist*.<sup>14</sup> But although they are possible readings of the allodoxastic formula for representing false beliefs, this does not by itself

show that they are the readings Plato intends. All I have argued so far is that if (8) and (10) are the readings Plato intends, *allodoxia* is more general and more plausible than on any other reading; but does Plato intend *allodoxia* to be general and plausible?

Theaetetus' opening comments suggest that he does. But Socrates' concluding comments, in which *allodoxia* is rejected, rather suggest (7) or (9). Socrates asks Theaetetus to 'try to recall whether you have ever said to yourself that assuredly what is ugly is beautiful or that what is unjust is just. Or again, in general, consider whether you have ever tried to persuade yourself that assuredly one thing is another thing . . .' (190b2-8). The attempt is taken to be absurd; but since neither (8) nor (10) is absurd, (7) or (9) should be assumed here.

Now it is usually supposed that since Socrates clearly invokes (7) or (9) in his rejection of *allodoxia*, either they are all he considers here, or, alternatively, that he somehow confuses them with (8) or (10).<sup>15</sup> The first alternative is unattractive. For if (7) or (9) are all Plato considers, it is, as I have already noted, difficult to understand why Theaetetus initially takes *allodoxia* to be a plausible model of false belief, or why he needs such lengthy persuading that it is not. Perhaps, then, Plato confuses the various possibilities, trading on the plausibility of (8) and (10) to secure Theaetetus' agreement, but using (7) or (9) to show the absurdity of *allodoxia*. An equally plausible interpretation that avoids attributing confusion to Plato is to be preferred, however, and I think such an interpretation is available. I shall argue that Socrates begins with the plausible (8) or (10) – and hence Theaetetus accepts *allodoxia* as a plausible model of false belief – but that Socrates then argues that (8) or (10) can be reduced to (7) or (9), respectively; the argument he presents is valid, however, and does not trade on any confusion.

The key to this interpretation lies in the intervening discussion between Theaetetus' initial example and Socrates' criticism of it, where Socrates proposes that thinking is a sort of silent speech, 'speech the mind goes through with itself about whatever it is considering.' (189e6-7). In likening belief to speech, Socrates is saying that they are equally propositional, or involve a complete sentence for their expression. Uttering 'beautiful' alone, for example, is not the expression of a belief, but 'Socrates is beautiful' is.

Socrates then insists that in any belief 'both things' (189e1-2) must be involved, and uses this claim to turn all cases of otherjudging into cases of (7) or (9). Now 'both things' clearly refers to 'beautiful' and 'ugly'; but as (7)-(10) make clear, there are different ways in which both things might be in the mind. For example, Socrates might be insisting that when one judges

of an ugly thing that it is beautiful, one's belief must explicitly contain the terms 'ugly' and 'beautiful', so that even (10) involves an explicit mix-up of concepts. If this is meant, it will be difficult to acquit Socrates of foul play.

But another reading of the requirement that 'both things' be in the mind is possible. Socrates might only be insisting that any judgment affirming one thing to be another must involve both items in some way, so as to yield a complete sentence in satisfaction of the logos model of belief. But the ugly can be in the mind without being there under the description 'the ugly' if Socrates, for example, is an ugly thing and is in the mind. Both things, on this view, might be Socrates (who is the ugly thing) and beautiful. Taken this way, Socrates' requirement does not illicitly require self-contradiction (as in (7)) in every belief, but only insists, plausibly, that complete sentences represent beliefs: something must be affirmed to be beautiful. The requirement, then, is consistent with (8) and (10).

Using this plausible claim, however, Socrates can now validly reduce (10) to (9) – given K.

If 'Socrates' and 'beautiful' figure in one's judgment, one must, by (2c), know Socrates and beautiful. But if one knows Socrates, one knows that he is ugly. If one does not know this, he is ignorant of Socrates, and so cannot have any beliefs about him. If, though, one knows that Socrates is ugly, yet claims that he is beautiful, it is as if he said that ugly Socrates is beautiful. And such a belief is absurd.

We can schematize Plato's argument like this:

(11) Theaetetus thinks that Socrates is beautiful (10).

(12) Socrates is ugly.

(13) Therefore Theaetetus thinks that ugly Socrates is beautiful.

The move from (11) and (12) to (13) can be validated with the aid of K:

(14) Theaetetus knows Socrates and beauty, since they figure in his judgment (2c).

(15) Theaetetus, since he knows Socrates, knows that he is ugly.

(16) Theaetetus thinks (a) Socrates is ugly (15), and (b) Socrates is beautiful (11).

(17) Therefore Theaetetus thinks that ugly Socrates is beautiful (13).

Plato has not simply confused (10) and (9); he has argued validly that, given K, (10) reduces to (9).

4. I have argued so far that otherjudging is a plausible model of false belief, endorsed by Plato in the *Sophist*; it fails here not because of any of its intrinsic features, nor because Plato cannot yet handle its subtleties, but because, given K, it can be reduced to absurdity. But this pushes our problem back a step: why endorse K?



K offers us, with (2c), a purportedly exhaustive dichotomy of knowing all about or being totally ignorant of a thing, a dichotomy generated by a particular model of acquaintance. The way to dispel K is simply to attack that acquaintance model, or to point out that the dichotomy is not genuinely exhaustive. It is not the case that, for any *x*, either I know everything about *x* or am totally ignorant of it; I might be in the intermediate position of having knowledge-independent beliefs.

Why does Plato not mention this simple refutation of (2c)? We might think the answer is that he endorses K, that he believes that any grasp of a thing confers total knowledge of it, and that the only alternative is total ignorance. Knowledge is a hit or miss, all or nothing affair. There is a better explanation of K's presence here, however, if we recall the context within which K is offered.

Theaetetus proposes that knowledge is true belief; Socrates then turns to a discussion of false belief and, when he fails to explain it, argues that Theaetetus' definition is faulty; "it is impossible to know what [false belief is] until one knows what knowledge is." (200d). This suggests that the discussion of false belief is relative to Theaetetus' definition and that, since the discussion ended in failure, the definition that guides it is defective.

Now the failure to explain false belief resulted from K's strong acquaintance model, which precluded any distinction between true belief and knowledge: on that model, any grasp of a thing amounts to knowledge, and so true belief, since it involves a grasp of a thing, is knowledge. But of course Theaetetus should welcome this result, since he suggests that there is no distinction between knowledge and true belief. Thus, the underlying acquaintance model, although it precludes a satisfactory explanation of false belief, supports Theaetetus' suggestion, by obliterating any distinction between knowledge and true belief.<sup>16</sup> K occurs here, then, not because Plato is vulnerable to it, but because it follows from the acquaintance model introduced in support of Theaetetus' suggestion.

I do not claim that Theaetetus' definition entails the conundrums of K. Rather, I claim that the acquaintance model that underlies K is a sufficient condition of Theaetetus' definition. If the acquaintance model is accepted, Theaetetus generates the conundrums of K, and prevents us from the consequences of accepting the support used to make Theaetetus' definition look plausible.<sup>17</sup>

But there is a problem: the acquaintance model used to support Theaetetus generates the conundrums of K, and prevents us from accommodating false belief. The support used for Theaetetus' definition leaves no room for false belief. But since there is false belief, there must be

something wrong with Theaetetus' definition; as Plato says, their inability to explain false belief shows that they do not know what knowledge is, either. If the result of pressing Theaetetus' definition, through its support of acquaintance, is to preclude false belief, then that is an indirect argument that that definition is faulty.

Looked at in this way, the discussion of false belief is not an irrelevant digression; rather, it reveals the difficulties created by acceptance of Theaetetus' definition. Since these difficulties are intolerable, Theaetetus' definition is to be rejected.

Plato thus has a two-pronged strategy against Theaetetus' suggestion that knowledge is true belief. At 201a-c he refutes it directly. In the discussion of false belief he criticizes it indirectly, by showing that its support leads to intolerable results. The discussion of false belief is then an integral part of the consideration of Theaetetus' definition, not a mere digression.

5. If this is right, there is another point worth making. It is often claimed that Plato endorses K, that he thinks of knowledge as a sort of grasping, or acquaintance. But if what I have said so far is right, at least this passage does not support that view. For the same two-pronged strategy Plato used against Theaetetus works as well against K. First, K's inability to accommodate false belief is an indirect argument that it is faulty. Second, 201a-c rejects K by a simple application of *modus tollens*. Plato argues there that knowledge is not true belief, and so Theaetetus' definition is wrong. But if K entails Theaetetus' definition, the rejection of Theaetetus' definition carries with it the rejection of K.

To be sure, those who ascribe an acquaintance model of knowledge to Plato can appeal to other passages. But if the *modus tollens* argument just sketched is right, they should be wary: for Plato consistently denies that knowledge is true belief (see, e.g., *Meno* 98a; *Gorg.* 454d; *Rep.* 477a). If the rejection of that view here counts against acquaintance, it may do so elsewhere as well.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For this view, cf. G. E. L. Owen, "Plato on Not-being" in *Plato*, vol I, ed. G. Vlastos (New York, 1971), esp. 245; 262-5; J. McDowell, *Plato: Theaetetus* (Oxford, 1973); J. McDowell, "Identity Mistakes: Plato and the Logical Atomists", *PAS* 70 (1970) 181-196; W. G. Runciman, *Plato's Later Epistemology* (Cambridge, 1962).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> For this view, see J. McDowell, *Plato: Theaetetus* p. 194; F. M. Cornford, *Plato's Theory of Knowledge* (New York, 1957), p. 110. McDowell does suggest two rather

tenuous links, (a) that the discussion considers knowledge, the central topic of the *Tht.*, and (b) if there is to be true belief, there must also be false belief with which it can be contrasted. (b) is also suggested by F. A. Lewis, "Two Paradoxes in the *Theaetetus*" in J. M. E. Moravcsik, ed., *Patterns in Plato's Thought* (Dordrecht, Holland, 1973), 123. (a) does not explain why false belief should be considered at *this* point in the dialogue, rather than elsewhere. (b) gets Plato's argument back to front. At 200d he claims that they must know what knowledge is *before* they can know what false belief is. The link I suggest later preserves this priority.

<sup>4</sup> The second puzzle (188c9-189b8) is essentially the same as K. The second and third models of false belief (the wax tablet and the aviary), like *allodoxia*, fail because of their reliance on K. For further defense of these claims, see my unpublished Ph. D. thesis, "Plato and Acquaintance" (Harvard, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> Lewis, *op. cit.*, Lewis defends this view; I reject it.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, *op. cit.*, 124; McDowell, *Plato: Theaetetus* pp. 185-195; McDowell, "Identity Mistakes: Plato and the Logical Atomists", *PAS* 70 (1970) 181-2; and J. L. Ackrill, "Plato on False Belief: *Theaetetus* 187-200." *Monist* 50 (1966) 385-7 agree that (5) considers only identity beliefs; I argue later that this restriction is unnecessary, and that (5) does entail (6).

<sup>7</sup> McDowell, "Identity Mistakes", argues that *connaître* is all that is involved. He considers the stronger claim I later press, but rejects it on the grounds that it rules out all false beliefs and not merely identity beliefs. The stronger view does have that consequence, but I think it is a consequence Plato intends. In his book, McDowell vacillates between endorsing the *connaître* interpretation ("Acquaintance is a relation of the ordinary sort", p. 197) and the stronger view ("there would seem to be nothing between blank ignorance . . . and the unqualified or complete obtaining of knowledge", p. 197); but these views are obviously quite distinct.

<sup>8</sup> B. Russell, "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description", reprinted in *Mysticism and Logic* (1918), 220-1. The parallel is noticed and pressed by McDowell, *Theaetetus*, p. 196, and "Identity Mistakes", *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> B. Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* (New York, 1912), 46-7. Cf. *Mysticism and Logic*, 202-3, and *Logic and Knowledge*, 204.

<sup>10</sup> C. J. F. Williams, "Referential Opacity and False Belief in the *Theaetetus*", *The Philosophical Quarterly* 22 (1972) 289-302, also distinguishes the opaque from the transparent readings of *allodoxia*. He argues, however, that Plato confuses the two readings, whereas I go on to argue that he does not.

<sup>11</sup> Cf., e.g., Ackrill, *op. cit.*, 388-389.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Although not impossible. The early and middle dialogues, for example, often consider cases of the compresence of opposites; Socrates might be beautiful in one way and ugly in another. But that view does not seem to be relevant here.

<sup>14</sup> This paragraph largely agrees with Williams, *op. cit.*, McDowell, *Theaetetus*, p. 203, considers two purported differences between *allodoxia* and the *Sophist's* later account; but if the analysis of *allodoxia* I offer here is correct, neither of these purported differences is relevant.

<sup>15</sup> For a defense of the first claim, see Ackrill, *op. cit.* 388-9; for a defense of the second claim, see Williams, *op. cit.*, 291ff. and McDowell, *Theaetetus*, pp. 204 ff. Ackrill's view is well criticized by Williams. From now on I shall largely focus on (10); but most of my remarks apply equally well to (8).

<sup>16</sup> This line of reasoning shows that there cannot be knowledge-independent true beliefs; but could there not be false belief? I think Plato would say that if, for any *x*, I have only false beliefs about *x*, then I in effect have ignorance, as described here. If a false belief is to be about *x*, it cannot be all we intend to say about *x*; for a false belief to attach to a referent, it must be linked to other true beliefs. If all I can say of justice is that it is a vegetable, this does not count as a belief about justice at all; it displays ignorance of justice. To count as a false belief about *x*, a claim must be linked to other beliefs that manage to refer to *x*. In this sense, false beliefs require there to be true beliefs, but *K* does not allow this sort of interdependence. For, by (3), one cannot both know and not know the same thing. Our only options, then, are all true beliefs, which here amount to knowledge, or all false beliefs, which then plausibly reduce to ignorance. Plato thus rejects the Kripkean view that all my beliefs about something could be false.

<sup>17</sup> I have suggested so far that the acquaintance model is *used* to support Theaetetus; but is it *necessary*? Plato seems to place the burden on the defender of Theaetetus to find an account of knowledge which (a) unlike the acquaintance model does not entail *K*; and (b) supports Theaetetus' failure to distinguish knowledge and true belief.

<sup>18</sup> An earlier version of this paper was read at the meetings of the A.P.A. Eastern Division, December 1976. I wish to thank Donald Zeyl for his helpful comments on that version. The present version was accepted for publication by the editor of *Phronesis* in May 1977.