

Study about Justified True Belief and The Gettier Problem

Dr. Surender Singh, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy
Govt., Ripudaman College Nabha Punjab

Abstract : To better understand the JTB definition of knowledge, let's go through each of the three elements. First is that the statement must be true. I can't claim to know that Elvis Presley is alive, for example, if he is in fact dead. Knowledge goes beyond my personal feelings on the matter and involves the truth of things as they actually are. Some critics of the JTB definition of knowledge question whether truth is always necessary in our claim to know something. For example, based on the available evidence of the time, scientists in the middle ages claimed to know that the earth was flat. Even though we understand now that it isn't, at the time they had knowledge of something that was false. Didn't they? In response, it may have been reasonable for scientists back then to believe the world was flat, but they really didn't know that it was. Their knowledge claims were premature in spite of how strong their convictions were. This is a trap that we fall into all the time. While talking with someone I may say insistently, "I know that Joe's car is blue!" When it turns out that Joe's car is in fact red, I have to apologize for overstating my conviction. Truth, then, is an indispensable component of knowledge.



© iJRPS International Journal for Research Publication & Seminar

Second, I must believe the statement in order to know it. For example, it's true that Elvis Presley is dead, and there is enormous evidence to back this up. But if I still believe that he is alive, I couldn't sincerely say that I know that he is dead. Part of the concept of knowledge involves our personal belief convictions about some fact, irrespective of what the truth of the matter is. Critics of the JTB definition of knowledge sometimes think that belief isn't always required for our claims to know something. For example, I might say "I know I'm growing old, but I don't believe it!" In this case, I have knowledge of a particular fact without believing that fact. In response, if I say the previous sentence, what I actually mean is that I'm not capable of imagining myself getting old or I haven't yet emotionally accepted that fact. I just make my point more dramatically by saying "I don't believe it!" Instead I really do believe it, but I don't like it.

Third, I must be justified in believing the statement insofar as there must be good evidence in support of it. Suppose that I randomly pick a card out of a deck without seeing it. I believe it is the Queen of Hearts, and it actually is that card. In this case I couldn't claim to know that I've picked the Queen of