

Plato: The tripartite theory of knowledge: K=JTB and issues with the definition

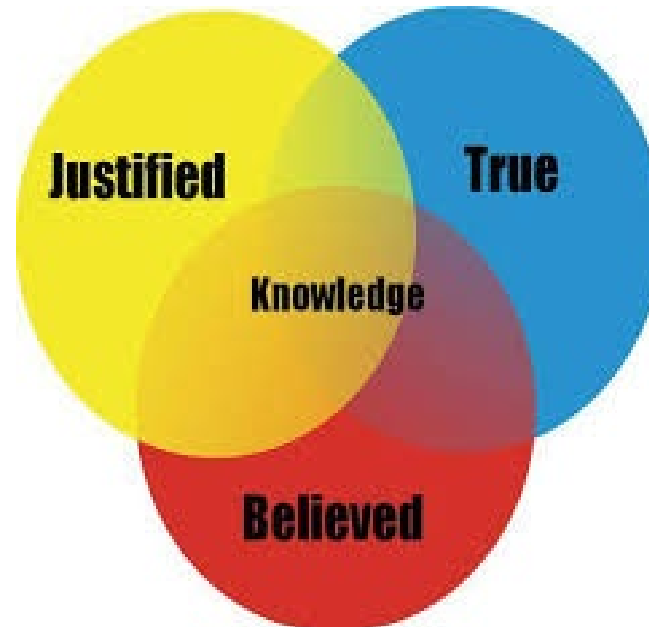
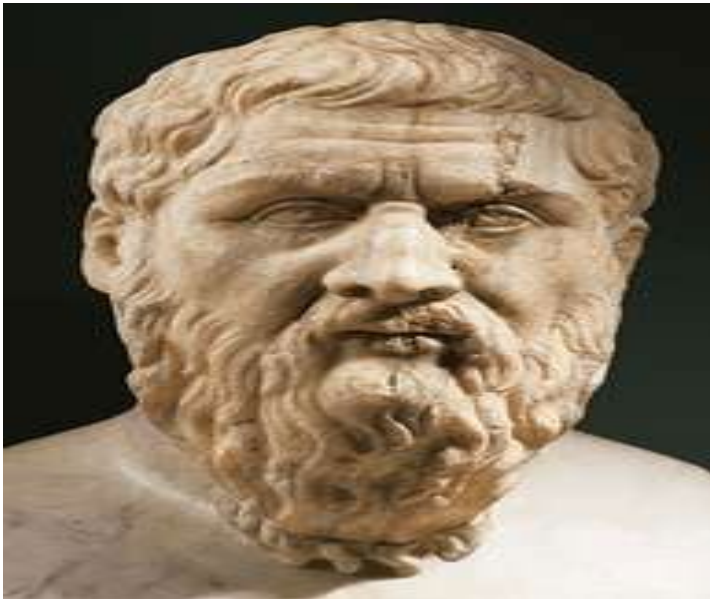
Plato states that if my beliefs are true, then they are just as useful to me as 'knowledge'.

But we value knowledge more, as it is backed up by reason or evidence, therefore, it is more dependable than a belief.

The evidence gives us good reason to continue to believe what we do. Where as, if there is no evidence then we have nothing which convinces us of our belief, therefore, knowledge is to have a true belief secured by reason.

The evidence though must be rational, as otherwise we cannot say it is knowledge, for example a jury may find a man guilty for poor reasons, but we would not want to say the jury had knew the man was guilty.

So he comes to the conclusion that knowledge is justified, true, belief.



Issues with JTB: Are the conditions individually necessary?

Can you have knowledge without the belief condition?

It is plausible to know a proposition without believing in it. No one would say it is raining without believing it. But beyond asserting, belief may not be needed for knowledge.

Some say knowledge is about successful action, for example, you might, hesitatingly get a quiz answer right as you have been taught it, but you cannot remember it. So in this case, you knew it, even though you did not truly believe you did.

Knowledge and belief are different mental states. As knowledge is infallible, but beliefs can be fallible, so knowledge must involve going beyond belief.

Can you have knowledge without the truth condition?

We can know things that can later be found to be false, e.g. the earth being flat.

But, people did 'know' things in the past, things that we no longer count as knowledge now. The concept of truth was bound by their time, not the time now. Some say the earth being flat was never knowledge in the first place and so people never 'knew' it.

But, both views still require knowledge to be true.

Can you have knowledge without justification?

Most would say you do need justification for knowledge, however, if your knowledge comes from a reliable source then justification is not necessary., therefore justification may not always be necessary for knowledge.