

Gettier: Issues with the tripartite theory

1. JTB are necessary **but not sufficient conditions for knowledge**
2. **Some beliefs are inferred from false beliefs.**
3. **JTB is open to infinite regress**

Gettier cases

Smith and Jones:: Case of lucky, true, belief.

Smith and Jones are both going for a job. Smith has evidence that Jones will get the job (the boss of the company told him). Smith also has evidence that Jones has 10 coins in his pocket (he counted them). Smith forms the belief that the man with 10 coins in his pocket will get the job. Smith (not Jones) gets the job. By coincidence, Smith had 10 coins in his pocket, so Smith's belief that the man with 10 coins in his pocket would get the job was a) belief, b) true, c) justified (to some extent) So smith has JTB..

But, luck was involved, so Smith did not have knowledge, he was unlucky that his belief about Jones getting the job was wrong, and he was lucky that he also had 10 coins in his pocket.

But we do not want to say Smith had knowledge as it was based on luck.

Brown in Barcelona:

Smith thinks Jones owns a ford, and he has evidence to believe this. Smith has another friend Brown, he does not know where Brown is at the moment but on the strength of his first belief he forms a new belief that Brown is in Barcelona. By coincidence Brown is in Barcelona so his belief was justified, and true. But did he know it? No, lucky true belief.

Zagzebski: JTB will always leave a gap between justification and truth.

A doctor believes a patient has virus X. the tests show this, so the evidence backs up the doctors diagnosis.

However, the symptoms are actually caused by a new, unknown virus Y (The doctor was unlucky with their prior justification)

But, it turns out, the patient does have virus x too, but at a stage where it is too early to show up in tests (so her belief was luckily true).

This is like the Gettier examples, and so people would say the doctor did not have knowledge that the patient had virus X.

Zagzebski: Only by linking the justification to the truth of the belief can we avoid Gettier-style cases like above and to the left. Only when true beliefs are held because of the justification should we claim knowledge.
(VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY HAS THIS APPROACH)



Fake barns

Barney is driving through fake-barn county, lots of fake barns have been built consisting of just a barn front. Barney looks to the side and sees a big red barn. On the basis of this he believes there is a big red barn by the road. However, it just so happens that this is the only real barn in the whole area! Does Barney know there was a big red barn there?

Barney saw a real barn with his eyes, believed there was a real barn, and there was a real barn. The luck involved is that it happened to be the only real barn for miles and he had no idea the other barns were fake this relies on the wider context making the belief seem luckily true.

So we can define the two types as:

1. Gettier counter-examples involving luck, the justification being unluckily not applying but the belief luckily being true anyway.
2. Fake barn cases. The justification is not false in any way, but the believer does not know that they are in an unusual context which makes their belief seem luckily true

If these examples of JTB do not count as knowledge, then it seems that JTB cannot be the sufficient conditions for knowledge.