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THE VALUE PROBLEM

John Greco

The problem of explaining epistemic value (or explaining the value of knowledge) has been with us for a long time. It is one of the perennial problems of philosophy, going back at least as far as Plato's *Meno*. Besides being important in its own right, the problem is related to other issues in epistemology (or the theory of knowledge).

For example, Jonathan Kvanvig has argued that the value problem is closely tied to another perennial problem in the theory of knowledge: that of explaining what knowledge is. Specifically, if an answer to the question "What is knowledge?" makes it difficult to see why knowledge is valuable, then that very fact counts against that answer. On the other hand, if an answer to the "What is knowledge?" question makes it easy to see why we value knowledge, then that counts in favor of that answer. Ideally, an adequate account of knowledge will explain both *what knowledge is* and *why knowledge is valuable* (Kvanvig 2003). (Linda Zagzebski (1996) makes the point in even stronger terms, arguing that any adequate theory *must* explain the value of knowledge. In contrast, Duncan Pritchard (2007, 2008b) makes the point in weaker terms, arguing that an adequate theory must explain only *the intuition* that knowledge is valuable. Accordingly, Pritchard allows for "revisionary" answers to the value problem; i.e. answers that explain why we think knowledge is valuable, even if that thought ultimately harbors an illusion.)

Relatedly, Linda Zagzebski has argued that the value problem makes trouble for many contemporary theories of knowledge. She argues that, in principle, a popular version of externalism in epistemology cannot account for the value of knowledge. This is the so-called "Swamping Problem" for reliabilism (Kvanvig 2003; Zagzebski 1996). Duncan Pritchard has also argued that thinking about the value problem throws light on the internalism/externalism debate in epistemology, but in a different way. Specifically, Pritchard argues that externalist theories do not give knowledge the sort of value that internalists want knowledge to have. This explains internalist dissatisfaction with externalist theories, Pritchard argues, as well as the skeptical inclination of many internalist philosophers (Pritchard 2008a).

Some philosophers have argued that reflection on the value problem motivates a radical shift in the focus of epistemological theorizing. The thought here is that, properly understood, knowledge does not in fact have the special value that epistemologists presuppose. Thus Mark Kaplan argues that distinctive epistemic value resides in justification rather than knowledge, and so epistemology ought to focus on the former rather than the latter (Kaplan 1985). In a similar vein, Kvanvig and Pritchard argue that understanding rather than knowledge has a distinctive epistemic value, and so the focus of epistemology ought to be understanding (Kvanvig 2003; Pritchard 2009).

Finally, Timothy Williamson suggests that reflection on epistemic value motivates a different sort of shift in epistemological theorizing. Since the advent of "Gettier problems," which show that traditional accounts of knowledge are inadequate, epistemologists have offered more and more complicated analyses of what knowledge is. Williamson's thought is that these complicated analyses can all be rejected, and precisely because they make it hard to see why knowledge should be valuable. The moral of post-Gettier epistemology, Williamson argues, is that we should give up trying to analyze knowledge at all. Better to take knowledge as a primitive of epistemological theorizing, and to explain other epistemic concepts, and presumably epistemic value, in terms of knowledge (Williamson 2000).

A Problem from Plato's Meno

Recent controversies notwithstanding, there is a strong presumption among philosophers and non-philosophers alike that knowledge is especially valuable. But why should that be? Why is knowledge valuable? According to a popular slogan, "Knowledge is power." This slogan suggests that knowledge is valuable because it allows us to *do* things. For example, knowing "how the world works" allows us to manipulate things, or perhaps even to manipulate people. More generally, knowledge helps us to achieve our goals. The suggestion in the popular slogan, then, is that knowledge has *practical* value.

That much seems perfectly right, but it does not fully explain the value that we think knowledge has. One reason is that the slogan remains vague. Even if knowledge does have practical value, we want to know why and in what sense. We want to know the details. But a second reason the slogan falls short is that we think knowledge has value *over and above* the value of mere opinion, and even mere true opinion, which also have practical value. Plato makes this point in the *Meno*. The man who wants to go to Larissa, Plato tells us, gets there just as well by having a true opinion about which road to take as by having knowledge about which road to take. But we think that, even so, knowledge is more valuable than true opinion. But then why should that be so? Why should knowledge be more valuable than true opinion, if their practical value is the same? Again, we do not yet have a complete answer to our question about the value of knowledge. Put somewhat differently, we do not yet fully understand why we value knowledge in the way that we do.

This is "the *Meno* problem," or the problem of explaining why knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. We may also think of the problem as a kind of puzzle. The puzzle begins by noting three plausible thoughts (employed already above) that we have about knowledge:

1. The value of knowledge resides in its practical value: we value knowledge because it gives us power to do things.
2. But true opinion has all the practical value that knowledge has: believing the truth is just as good as knowing the truth, as far as getting things done is concerned.
3. And yet knowledge seems to be *more* valuable than true belief—we think that knowledge has value *over and above* the value of true opinion.

The puzzle is that not all three of these thoughts can be true: at least one thought needs to be revised, but it is not obvious which we should choose.

Philosophers have endorsed each of the options available here. Denying (1), some philosophers have argued that knowledge has a non-practical value that mere true belief and other close relatives of knowledge lack (for example, Greco 2003, 2008, 2009; Riggs 2002; Sosa 1991, 2007). We will look more closely at a version of this approach below, when we consider the position that knowledge is a kind of achievement, and that, as such, knowledge is "valuable for its own sake."

Denying (2), some philosophers have argued that knowledge does, after all, have greater practical value than mere true opinion. This seems to be Socrates' answer in the *Meno*, when he suggests that knowledge is "tethered" or "tied down" in a way that mere true opinion is not. A more recent defense of this position is found in Williamson, when he argues that knowledge is more stable than mere true belief. Consider again the man who wants to get to Larissa. If the man merely believes that a particular road will get him there, he might give up and turn around if things start to look otherwise. That is, even if his belief is *true*, he might give up on it if he gets misleading evidence that the road does not go to Larissa, for example if the road takes an unexpected turn. The man who knows, however, is less likely to be fooled by such misleading evidence (Williamson 2000).

Finally, other philosophers have denied that knowledge really is more valuable than mere true opinion (hence they deny (3)). Some who have taken this third option have argued that true opinion has all the value we want (Sartwell 1992). Others who have taken this third option have argued that something else, rather than knowledge, really does have special and greater value over both knowledge and true opinion. As we have already seen, Kvanvig and Pritchard take this option (e.g. Kvanvig 2003; Pritchard 2009).

Refining the Meno Problem

Problems about epistemic value tend to multiply. In fact, we have already seen various versions of the problem and hinted at some others. Thus we may ask:

> The General Value Problem: Why (how, in what way) is knowledge valuable?
> The *Meno* Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable than true opinion?
> The Secondary Value Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable than *any* of its proper parts? Why is knowledge more valuable than that which falls short of knowledge?
> The Tertiary Value Problem: Why is knowledge *distinctively* valuable? That is, why does knowledge have a special value, over and above its practical value?

In addition to these, one might think that there is a fourth problem:

> The Quaternary Value Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable than anything in the neighborhood?

Notice that the different value problems above share a common structure. Each of them asks a question of the form:

> Why is *knowledge* of greater value than *non-knowledge of some sort*?

Different versions of the value problem can be generated, then, by substituting different *contrast classes* into the above structure. Thus we have:

The General Value Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable *than non-knowledge in general*?
The *Meno* Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable *than true opinion*?
The Secondary Value Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable than *any of its proper parts*?
The Quaternary Value Problem: Why is knowledge more valuable than *anything in the neighborhood*?

Further disambiguations of our questions are possible as well. Thus we can disambiguate along all of the following dimensions:

a. by contrast class (as above)
b. by quantity or quality:

Why is knowledge more valuable *by degree* than . . .?
Why is knowledge more valuable *in kind* than . . .? (this is the Tertiary Value Problem)
Why is knowledge of more *"over-all"* value than . . .?

c. by quantifier:

Why is *all* knowledge more valuable than . . .?
Why is knowledge *typically* more valuable than . . .?
Why is *some* knowledge more valuable than . . .?

d. by distribution:

Why is knowledge *as a class* more valuable than non-knowledge of some sort *as a class*?
Why is knowledge *that p* more valuable than non-knowledge of some sort *that p*?

Finally, we might disambiguate our questions in yet another way: by interpreting the sort of "why question" that they are asking. Thus one kind of why question asks for what Aristotle called a "formal" cause. This sort of question asks about a thing's nature or essence. A different sort of why question asks for what Aristotle called an "efficient" cause—it asks for how a thing is related to other things. Notice that the two kinds of "why question" ask for different kinds of explanation. Thus we have the following disambiguation:

e. by "why question":

What sort of thing is knowledge, such that knowledge is of greater value than non-knowledge of some sort?
How is knowledge effectively related to other things, such that knowledge is of greater value than non-knowledge of some sort?

Looking at these various ways in which we can disambiguate the value problem, we might note that there is both bad news and good news. The bad news is that our various distinctions cut across each other, and so the value problem quickly multiplies into a fairly large number of distinct questions. But there is good news as well. First, the answers to some of our questions quite clearly depend on the answers to others. Perhaps most obviously, any answer that explains why *all* knowledge has value of a sort, will also explain why *some* knowledge has value of that sort. So not all of our distinctions generate distinct value problems in the sense that each requires a distinct solution.

Second, not all of the value problems that we have identified are equally compelling or pressing. For example, consider the question: Why does knowledge typically have a special value over and above that which falls short of knowledge? It seems that this question deserves an answer—that it is a compelling question in that sense. But this is not clearly the case for all of our questions. For example: Why are all cases of knowledge that p more practically valuable than all cases of non-knowledge that p? We might think that this question is not compelling at all, for we might think that it is not *true* that all cases of knowledge that p are more practically valuable than all cases of non-knowledge that p. For example, consider my recently acquired knowledge that the phrase "coffee shop" has ten letters. This knowledge is of little if any practical value, and so is plausibly not *more* practically valuable than a mere true belief that "coffee shop" has ten letters.

What makes a version of the value problem more or less compelling? Notice that each problem takes the form of a question, and that each question has a presupposition. For example, the question "Why is knowledge valuable?" carries the presupposition that knowledge *is* valuable. The question "Why is knowledge more valuable than any of its proper parts?" carries the presupposition that knowledge is more valuable than any of its proper parts. A version of the value problem will be more or less compelling, I want to suggest, depending on whether its presupposition is more or less plausible.

Consider now an interesting and potentially disturbing phenomenon: A person's intuitions about how to answer the value problem might affect how he or she goes on to disambiguate the problem on further analysis. For example, suppose you think, pre-theoretically, that knowledge is more valuable than non-knowledge because it is of more *practical value*. In that case, you are likely to interpret relevant quantifiers as being about typical cases. Why so? Because it is implausible that *every* case of knowledge has more practical value than every case of non-knowledge, or that *every* case of knowledge that p has more practical value than every case of non-knowledge that p.

But suppose you think, pre-theoretically, that knowledge has some *distinctive* value that non-knowledge lacks. In that case, you are more likely to interpret the relevant quantifiers as universal. For it will be natural to think that distinctive value goes with knowledge *as a kind*. And if knowledge does have distinctive value as a kind, then it is at least plausible that every instance of its kind will have that value.

Here is another example of how initial judgments can affect subsequent theorizing. Suppose again that you think (pre-theoretically) that knowledge is more valuable than non-knowledge because it is of more *practical value*. In that case you are likely to interpret the "why question" as asking for an efficient cause: *How is knowledge effectively related to other things*, such that knowledge is typically of greater practical value than non-knowledge? On the other hand, suppose you think (pre-theoretically) that knowledge is more valuable *in kind* than non-knowledge? In that case you are likely to take the "why question" as asking for a formal cause: *What sort of thing is knowledge*, such that knowledge is more valuable in kind than non-knowledge?

Is this disturbing, implying that philosophers must inevitably talk past each other, depending on their original pre-theoretical intuitions about how to solve an ambiguous problem? Or is this just one more instance (no more disturbing than any other) of a more general hermeneutic circle? In either case, it is mistaken to think that we are moving from less refined to more refined versions of the same question as we move, for example, from the General Value Problem to the *Meno* Problem, or from the Secondary Value Problem to the Tertiary Value Problem. Rather, we are at least sometimes shifting questions, or asking different questions altogether. Perhaps a better understanding is this: There are many versions of the value problem, many of which are compelling enough to deserve an answer. A fully adequate answer to "the value problem" will have to say something about all of these.

A Virtue-Theoretic Solution to the Value Problems

We turn now to a recently popular solution to the value problem, or the problem of explaining the value of knowledge (e.g. Greco 2003, 2009; Riggs 2002; Sosa 1991, 2007). The proposed solution employs two important ideas. The first is that knowledge is a kind of success from ability. Put differently, knowledge is a kind of achievement. Hence:

> In cases of knowledge, S has a true belief *because* S's belief is produced by ability.

Alternatively:

> When S knows that p, S's having a true belief that p (rather than a false belief or no belief at all) is to be explained by S's cognitive abilities. More exactly, it is to be explained by the fact that S has exercised some cognitive ability, such as reliable perception, or reliable memory, or sound reasoning.

The second important idea is that, in general, success from ability is more valuable than lucky success. Put differently, we value achievements over lucky successes. What is more, we think that achievements have a distinctive value that mere lucky successes lack. Achievements have "final value," meaning that they are *valuable for their own sake*.

Putting these two ideas together, we get elegant solutions to both the *Meno* Problem and the Tertiary Value Problem: Knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief, in that knowledge has a final value that mere true belief does not. Additionally, we get a solution to the Secondary Value Problem: Knowledge is more valuable than *any* of its proper parts, and even more value than *the sum* of its parts. This is because belief that is true and produced by ability is not as valuable as belief that is true *because* produced by ability. Only achievements (knowledge included) have this latter structure.

The proposed account has at least two major advantages. First, it is extremely elegant, both in the way that it explains the value of knowledge, and in the way that it explains the relationship between the value of knowledge and the nature of knowledge. In effect, the explanation is simply this:

1. Achievements are finally valuable.
2. Knowledge is a kind of achievement.

Therefore,

3. Knowledge is finally valuable.

The second advantage of the account is that it places knowledge in a broader, familiar normative domain. In any arena in which human beings are capable of success from ability, we will find similar practices of crediting, criticizing, evaluating for success, etc. To the extent that we understand these broader practices, our account of knowledge and its value is thereby informed by that understanding.

Knowledge, Understanding and Wisdom

Is every case of knowledge more valuable than anything in the neighborhood? Intuitively, the answer is "No," because understanding that p is more valuable than merely knowing that p. More generally, understanding is more valuable than knowledge and wisdom is more valuable than understanding.

We can accommodate these intuitions on the "Knowledge as Achievement" account by wedding it to a traditional (Aristotelian) account of understanding and wisdom. Specifically, understanding has been traditionally understood as knowledge of causes, or knowing the answer to "Why" and "How" questions. In this same tradition, wisdom is understood as understanding of the highest (or most important) things.

Wedding this tradition to the present account of the value of knowledge, we can say the following: Understanding and wisdom are also achievements, and therefore have final value. But wisdom has more final value than mere understanding and understanding has more final value than mere knowledge. That is, in each case the former is more valuable *for its own sake* than the latter. Understanding and wisdom are *greater* achievements. We might still say, however, that *some* knowledge is more valuable than anything in the neighborhood. That is, understanding and wisdom are.

Some Objections to the Knowledge as Achievement Account

Duncan Pritchard has raised the following objection to the proposed account of the value of knowledge.

> [T]he real weak point for this proposal lies with the achievement thesis. In particular, on closer analysis it turns out that knowledge is not a cognitive achievement at all. This is because one can possess knowledge without exhibiting a cognitive achievement, and exhibit a cognitive achievement while lacking knowledge.
>
> (Pritchard 2008a; see also Pritchard 2008b and 2009)

Some Cognitive Achievements Are Not Knowledge

The argument that some cognitive achievements are not knowledge comes in two steps. First, Pritchard asks us to consider the following case of Archie, who seems to exhibits a genuine achievement.

> Archie . . . selects a target at random, skilfully fires at this target and successfully hits it because of his skill . . . Suppose, however, that unbeknownst to Archie

> there is a forcefield around each of the other targets such that, had he aimed at one of these targets, he would have missed. It is thus a matter of luck that he is successful, in the sense that he could very easily have not been successful.
>
> (Pritchard 2009)

According to Pritchard, Archie's success in hitting the target is from ability, even if (unknown to him) he hits the one genuine target in the area.

The second step in Pritchard's argument is to draw an analogy to standard Barn Façade cases. In those cases, epistemologists tend to agree, the person in question does not know that he sees a real barn. Thus consider the following Barn Façade case from Pritchard.

> Barney forms a true belief that there is a barn in front of him by using his cognitive abilities . . . The twist in the tale, however, is that, unbeknownst to Barney, he is in fact in "barn façade county" where all the other apparent barns are fakes. Intuitively, he does not have knowledge in this case because it is simply a matter of luck that his belief is true.
>
> (Pritchard 2009)

Since the archery and barn façade cases are in all relevant respects analogous, Pritchard argues, we must allow that Barney's success is from ability and that he exhibits a genuine achievement. But then, of course, Pritchard's first conclusion follows: there are cases of cognitive achievement that are not cases of knowledge.

Some Cases of Knowledge Are Not Cases of Achievement

A number of philosophers have argued that some cases of knowledge are not cases of achievement. Here we may consider a case of testimonial knowledge from Jennifer Lackey.

> Having just arrived at the train station in Chicago, Morris wishes to obtain directions to the Sears Tower. He looks around, randomly approaches the first passerby that he sees, and asks how to get to his desired destination. The passerby, who happens to be a Chicago resident who knows the city extraordinarily well, provides Morris with impeccable directions to the Sears Tower.
>
> (Lackey 2007)

The argument is straightforward: Morris's true belief in the Sears Tower case is best explained by the cognitive abilities of the testifier, and to that extent the achievement is his rather than Morris's. Testimonial knowledge, then, gives us knowledge without achievement in the relevant sense.

Pritchard's Anti-luck Virtue Epistemology

In the face of objections to the Knowledge as Achievement account, Pritchard offers an alternative explanation of the value of knowledge. On Pritchard's account, knowledge

remains a kind of success from ability, but this does not have the result that knowledge is always an achievement or that knowledge is always valuable (see Pritchard 2008a and 2009).

There are two elements to Pritchard's account of knowledge: an anti-luck condition and an ability condition. We need the anti-luck component, Pritchard argues, in order to rule out the sort of luck that is present in standard Gettier cases and in Barn Façade cases. Once we have incorporated an appropriate anti-luck condition, however, we only need a modest ability condition. According to Pritchard, knowledge requires that true belief is "in substantial part due to ability" but not necessarily "because of ability." The idea here is that ability must be involved in the production of true belief, but need not play the central role in explanation that the Knowledge as Achievement view requires. According to Pritchard, then, knowledge is non-lucky cognitive success that is in substantial part due to ability.

It should now be clear how Pritchard's account handles the cases we saw in the previous section. Since the present account weakens the ability condition, it can allow that there is knowledge in the Sears Tower case and in many other cases of belief from testimony. Since the account includes a separate anti-luck condition, it continues to handle standard Gettier cases and Barn Façade cases. Therefore, Pritchard argues, his account of knowledge solves both of the problems raised for the Knowledge as Achievement account. Moreover, Pritchard argues, this new account of knowledge yields a compelling explanation of the value of knowledge. In short, we may reject the presupposition that *all* knowledge is valuable, and replace it with the idea that all cognitive achievement is valuable. Our pre-theoretical intuitions about the value of knowledge are thus explained but not preserved. That is, we have an explanation of why we might *think* all knowledge is valuable—we are apt to confuse knowledge with cognitive achievement. Closer consideration convinces us that not all knowledge is cognitive achievement and not all cognitive achievement is knowledge, although knowledge is typically a cognitive achievement, and therefore typically has the associated distinctive value. Moreover, Pritchard argues, there is something in the neighborhood—a species of understanding—that *is* a kind of cognitive achievement and therefore always has a distinctive value (Pritchard 2009).

Pritchard's alternative account of knowledge and its value has much to recommend it. However, it does have a significant disadvantage when compared to the Knowledge as Achievement account. Namely, the account is less elegant in two ways. First, Anti-luck Virtue Epistemology invokes independent ability and anti-luck conditions. Moreover, within that account the two conditions lack any unifying theoretical motivation. Rather, they are proposed because they are needed to handle different kinds of cases. In that respect, the account is *ad hoc*. Second, Anti-luck Virtue Epistemology must adopt a revisionary solution to the value problem. That is, it requires that we *explain away* various pre-theoretically plausible intuitions about the value of knowledge, including the intuition that all knowledge is distinctively valuable.

Neither of these liabilities constitutes an objection to Anti-luck Virtue Epistemology. Rather, they are theoretical costs that might or might not be offset by advantages elsewhere.

In light of these costs, however, we should see what can be said for the Knowledge as Achievement account in response to the objections that were raised against it earlier.

Knowledge as Achievement Revisited

First, what can be said in face of the objection that some cases of knowledge are not cases of achievement? More specifically, what should we say about the Sears Tower case? Some philosophers have not found the case convincing, and in particular they have suggested that the case is under-described (for example, Greco 2009; Riggs 2009). Most significantly, are we to understand the case so that Morris is exercising his cognitive abilities in evaluating the testimony he receives? Or does Morris simply accept "willy-nilly" whatever the testifier says? In either case, we seem not to have a counter-example to the Knowledge as Achievement thesis. More specifically, either Morris's abilities regarding the evaluation of testimony are involved or they are not. If they are, then Morris's true belief is from ability and constitutes an achievement on his part. If they are not, then we should reject the claim that Morris has knowledge in the case.

The preceding diagnosis of the Sears Tower case seems available but not demanded. But considering other cases of achievement supports the diagnosis made here. Thus consider the following case from soccer.

> Ted receives a brilliant, almost impossible pass, and then scores an easy goal as a result. In the case we are imagining, it is the athletic abilities of the passer that stand out. The pass was brilliant, its reception easy.

Now compare this case with another:

> Ted is playing in a soccer game, but not paying attention. Never seeing the ball, a brilliant pass bounces off his head and into the goal.

In the first case, we are happy to say that the goal constitutes an achievement on Ted's part. Not so in the second case. Here Ted was involved in the goal in a way, but not in the right sort of way. The principled explanation is this: Credit for an achievement, gained in cooperation with others, is not swamped by the able performance of others. It is not even swamped by the outstanding performance of others. So long as one's own efforts and abilities are appropriately involved, one gets credit for the achievement in question. And now the application to the testimony case is obvious: The fact that Morris's true belief is produced in cooperation with the testifier should not undermine our judgment that Morris's true belief is an achievement on his part. So long as Morris's cognitive abilities are involved in the right sort of way, he gets credit for the achievement in question (Greco 2009).

In response to this sort of consideration, Pritchard offers a different analogy that he thinks is more apt: An expert archer puts his arms around the novice to help aim and shoot the arrow. In this sort of case, Pritchard argues, it is wrong to say that the novice gets credit for an achievement (Pritchard 2009). In response, I do not see how this analogy is more apt than the soccer analogy. But in any case, it is not obviously more apt. At the very least, a diagnosis of the various cases that preserves the Knowledge as Achievement account is available.

What about the claim that not all cognitive achievement amounts to knowledge? Strictly speaking, this claim is irrelevant, since the view only requires that knowledge is *a kind* of cognitive achievement. It would not matter that there are other cognitive achievements as well. Thus, consider again our explanation that all knowledge has final value:

1. Achievements are finally valuable.
2. Knowledge is a kind of achievement.

Therefore,

3. Knowledge is finally valuable.

Premise 2 does not identify knowledge with cognitive achievement, but rather makes it an instance of that kind. Nevertheless, Pritchard claims that Barn Façade cases present examples where S exhibits a cognitive achievement that *falls short of* knowledge. If he is right, then the present account does not answer a version of the Tertiary Problem—it won't be the case that knowledge has a distinctive value over anything that falls short of knowledge.

Several strategies for preserving the Knowledge as Achievement account remain available, however. First, one might adopt a revisionary strategy similar to Pritchard's: Deny the presupposition that knowledge is always more valuable than that which falls short of knowledge, in favor of the presupposition that knowledge is typically more valuable than that which falls short of knowledge. Barn Façade cases could then be plausibly considered as atypical. Alternatively, one might admit that there is achievement and final value in the Barn Façade case, but insist that we value knowledge *more* for its own sake than we value cognitive achievement that falls short of knowledge for its own sake. Knowledge would then stand to true belief from ability as (a) understanding stands to knowledge and (b) wisdom stands to understanding.

The strategy I prefer, however, is to insist on a disanalogy between the Archery case and the Barn Façade case. On this alternative, we deny that Barney's success is from ability and that it thereby constitutes a genuine achievement.

But how can we plausibly deny the analogy between the two cases? The first step is to note that abilities are always understood as being relative to an environment. When we say that Jeter has the ability to hit baseballs, for example, we mean that he has this ability relative to environments typical for playing baseball. Presumably, Jeter *lacks* the ability to hit baseballs relative to some environments, such as in war zones where he would be too distracted. Once we are clear about this point, however, we might insist that, relative to Barn Façade County, Barney does not have the ability to perceptually discriminate barns from non-barns. And if he does not *have* the ability relative to that environment, then his success in that environment is not *from* ability.

The second step is to note that abilities are always understood in terms of the interests and purposes associated with the ability in question. For example, the ability to hit baseballs is understood in terms of the interests and purposes involved in playing baseball—the sorts of manifestation conditions that are relevant, and the sorts of results that are relevant, must be understood in those terms. But then there is a relevant difference between the Archie case and the Barney case: The interests and purposes at play in archery do not require the ability to discriminate between targets with forcefields and "genuine" targets. So long as you have the ability to hit the target you are aiming at, you have the relevant ability. But then Archie *does* have the relevant archery abilities, even relative to his odd environment. And so Archie's success in hitting his target *is* success from ability.

By contrast, the interests and purposes associated with knowledge attribution do require that one be able to discriminate between cases that p and cases that not-p. But

then Barney does *not* have the relevant cognitive ability, relative to his odd environment. And so Barney's success in believing the truth is not success from ability.

Finally, consider a different sport, Archery*. In Archery* the goal of the contest is to first identify a good target and then shoot it. Suppose Archie lacks the first ability but picks out a good target by luck and shoots it with skill. In this case we would *not* credit him with an Archery* achievement, and precisely because he lacks the sort of ability we are interested in when evaluating for Archery* success. Or suppose he is properly skilled but running out of time. He randomly picks out a target, which lucky for him is a good one, and shoots it. Again, in this case we might properly withhold credit for an achievement, and precisely because he has not manifested the right sort of ability (Greco 2009).

Pritchard responds to this sort of consideration by, in effect, insisting that there will be cases of "lucky" achievement, and therefore cases of cognitive achievements that fall short of knowledge.

> [W]hile it is undoubtedly true that abilities should be understood relative to suitable environments, however that point is to be understood it must be compatible with the fact that it can be a matter of luck *that one is in a suitable environment to exercise one's ability in the first place* [my emphasis]. Critically, however, that is just to allow that the presence of environmental luck is compatible with one exercising one's normal abilities . . . hence however one relativizes abilities to suitable conditions one must allow that environmental luck —and thus environmental *epistemic* luck—is compatible with the exercise of the target ability.
>
> (Pritchard 2009)

But this last does not follow. From the premise that *environmental* luck is compatible with the exercise of cognitive ability, it does not follow that environmental *epistemic* luck is so compatible. That is, it does not follow that the sort of environmental luck that is compatible with the exercise of ability (i.e. luck that one is in a suitable environment to exercise one's ability in the first place) will also be the sort of luck that excludes knowledge. In effect, this is just what the Knowledge as Achievement account denies, when it claims that the sense in which luck is incompatible with knowledge *just is* the sense in which, more generally, luck is incompatible with success from ability. More specifically, luck regarding what environment one is in, and whether that environment is suitable to the exercise of one's ability, does not exclude achievement once in a suitable environment.

Do the replies to objections in this section make the Knowledge as Achievement account less elegant? No, because they do not *add* conditions to the previous, beautifully elegant account. Rather, they merely *explicate* those conditions in independently motivated ways—ways that we would have to anyway to understand what it is to have an ability, and what it is for success to be from ability, more generally.

Accordingly, we may conclude that the Knowledge as Achievement account of the nature and value of knowledge remains viable. It has resources to plausibly address various kinds of counter-example regarding the nature of knowledge, and can at the same time explain the value of knowledge in a non-revisionary way. It also remains the most *elegant* explanation of both the nature and value of knowledge, and of understanding and wisdom as well.

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