

NO BARE KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract

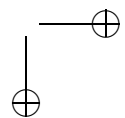
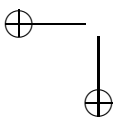
Just as Dummett famously argued that there is no such thing as bare predicative knowledge, this paper argues that there is no such thing as bare propositional knowledge: all such knowing is knowing in a specific way. It is first argued that seeing that so-and-so can be epistemically understood to constitute a way of knowing that so-and-so. Three arguments are then advanced in support of the stronger claim that there is no such knowing unless there is a way of knowing. Finally, four objections to these two claims are addressed.

I. *Predicative Versus Propositional Knowledge*

Dummett (1978: 125–127) argued that there could be no such thing as bare predicative knowledge. To say that a subject *S* has such knowledge is to ascribe to *S* knowledge of object *a* that it is *F*, and add that this is a complete characterization of this piece of knowledge on *S*'s part. Every piece of predicative knowledge rather rests on some piece of propositional knowledge in the sense that the truth of an ascription of the latter entails the truth of an ascription of the former. So, whenever *S* knows of *a* that it is *F*, *S*'s knowledge can always be further characterized by citing that piece of propositional knowledge on which *S*'s predicative knowledge rests. Of course not any true propositional knowledge ascription will do. The content of that ascription must both (i) explicate the independent way in which *S* identifies *a* and (ii) connect that way with *F*. *S* cannot know of *a* that it is *F*, unless for some *G* ($\neq F$), *S* identifies *a* as the *G* and knows that the *G* is *F*.¹

Take Dummett's example (*op. cit.*). The police know of Redwayne that he murdered Bexley, and this follows from the fact that the police know that Redwayne murdered Bexley. The content of that propositional knowledge ascription must both (i) make explicit the independent way in which the police identify Redwayne and (ii) connect that way with the property of murdering Bexley. In order for the police to know that Redwayne murdered

¹ For critical discussion on this point see Stalnaker (1999: 547).



Bexley, there must be some property G , e.g. hiding on the roof, such that they know both that Redwayne has G and that Bexley's murderer has G . Suppose (i) isn't satisfied: the police identify Redwayne only as Bexley's murderer. It follows that what the police know when they know that Redwayne murdered Bexley is merely that Bexley's murderer is the person who murdered Bexley. Suppose (ii) isn't satisfied: the police identify Redwayne as the man who hid on the roof, but they fail to know that Bexley's murderer hid on the roof. It follows that the police can't know that Redwayne murdered Bexley for that would just be to know what they *ex hypothesis* don't know, namely that the person who hid on the roof murdered Bexley.

That's not all. When S knows what is F , there is some x such that S knows of x that it is F , and that is just an existential generalization of the claim that S knows of a that it is F . In Dummett's example, the police know who murdered Bexley. This is so just in case there is an x such that the police know of x that (s)he murdered Bexley, and this is just an existential generalization of the claim that the police know of Redwayne that he murdered Bexley.

Let's call knowing who, where, etc, knowing-*wh*. Then we can sum up the foregoing by saying that knowledge-*wh* rests on predicative knowledge, which in turn rests on propositional knowledge. Given that Dummett's notion of resting on is that of being entailed by, it follows that knowledge-*wh* is entailed by propositional knowledge. We might elaborate on the latter claim by saying that necessarily if S has knowledge-*wh*, then there is a piece of propositional knowledge such that S has it, and necessarily if S has this piece of propositional knowledge, then S has the knowledge-*wh*. For S to have this piece of propositional knowledge is for S to have the knowledge-*wh*, not *simpliciter* but in a specific way. Moreover, it's possible to have the same knowledge-*wh* in virtue of having distinct pieces of propositional knowledge. The police know where to find Redwayne in virtue of knowing that Redwayne stays at the Hilton Hotel, but they might have had the same piece of knowledge-*wh* in virtue of knowing that Redwayne frequents the Cellar Bar.

Just as Dummett argued that there can be no such thing as bare predicative knowledge or bare knowledge-*wh*, we shall argue that there can be no such thing as bare propositional knowledge, where this would consist in ascribing to S knowledge that p , and add that this is a complete characterization of this piece of knowledge on S 's part.² All propositional knowing consists rather in either seeing, hearing, introspecting, reasoning, etc. Moreover, the relation between knowing and these ways of knowing is that of asymmetric

² By 'knowledge' we shall henceforth mean binary propositional knowledge unless otherwise stated, but everything said applies *mutatis mutandis* to alternative accounts such as Schaffer's contrastivism (2008) according to which propositional knowledge is a three-place relation: S knows that p rather than q , where q is a contextually salient contrast proposition.

necessitation: necessarily if there is a way of knowing Φ -ing such that Φ -ing is the way in which S knows, then S knows, but it is possible for S to know without Φ -ing being the way in which S knows. We shall proceed as follows. Section II clarifies the notion of a way of knowing, and then argues that seeing, epistemically understood, amounts to a way of knowing. Section III offers three arguments for the claim that there is no knowing unless there is a way of knowing. Finally, section VI responds to four objections.

II. *Ways of Knowing*

Let's work the claim that there are ways of knowing into shape by focusing on seeing. If seeing is a way of knowing, then seeing must not only constitute a belief-entailing, factive state in the way knowledge is, it must also instantiate those epistemically relevant properties that knowledge instantiates. Obviously, since there is widespread disagreement about which if any analysis of knowledge is correct, even if modestly understood as teasing out necessary conditions beyond truth and belief, not much consensus on what the correct analysis of seeing is should be expected. We argue for an account of knowledge and seeing that contains a safety-based component as well as a separate virtue-theoretic component, but much of what follows applies *mutatis mutandis* to alternative accounts.

Suppose that unknowingly S ends up in Barn County — a landscape populated predominantly with barn façades. Most of us agreed with Goldman that if S were to look at one of the rare real ones, S wouldn't know that there is a barn.³ One explanation is that S's belief is unsafely based: given that the reason for which S believes that there is a barn is her visual experience as of a barn, it isn't true that S would believe for that reason that there is a barn only if that were so. But S's ordinarily reliable, visual experience as of a barn is subjectively indistinguishable from the experiences S would have were S to look at barns in more conducive surroundings. Moreover, that visual experience is caused by a real barn, and accompanied by belief that there is a barn. So, S's experience seems to have all the trappings of being a seeing that there is a barn.

There is no question that S engages in objectual perception: S sees a barn. That is to say, S instantiates what Dretske (1969: 20) called *non-epistemic seeing* (*seeing_n*). Although S is unable to effectively discriminate between

³ Goldman (1976: 772–773) assumed that prior to seeing the first genuine barn S hasn't yet encountered any facsimiles. That might suggest S does know since the uncongenial alternative is therefore irrelevant. In order to boost the intuition that S lacks knowledge DeRose (http://fleetwood.baylor.edu/certain_doubts/?p=842) proposes that the case be modified such that prior to the first veridical sighting S has been fooled by a sufficiently large number of facsimiles.

real and fake barns, what is seen_n is visually differentiated from its environment by S in that the barn looks some way to her. S can see_n the barn just in case the barn looks some way to S, and for the barn to look some way to S is for S to visually experience the barn as being that way. S cannot see_n the barn unless there is a barn which S sees_n, but S can see_n the barn without believing that there is a barn, maybe due to not possessing the concept of a barn. If S happens to lack that concept, the barn will look the way it does to S even if it doesn't look like a barn to S. That, however, is not to say that seeing_n the barn is incompatible with having various beliefs about it. Typically S both sees_n the barn and believes that it is a barn.⁴

But in the fake barn case S fails to qualify for propositional perception. S doesn't instantiate what Dretske dubbed (1969: 82) *primary epistemic seeing*. Let's say S sees_{pe} that there is a barn iff:

- (1) There is a barn which S sees_n
- (2) The conditions under which S sees_n the barn are such that S would have a visual experience as of a barn only if there were a barn⁵
- (3) S's belief that there is a barn is true because based on her visual experience as of a barn

This departs from Dretske in three respects. (i) In place of (2) Dretske required roughly that the conditions under which S sees_n the barn are such that her visual experience is sensitive: S wouldn't have a visual experience as of a barn unless there were a barn. Neither the safety nor the sensitivity condition holds in the barn case, but they yield familiarly different results when being wrong isn't an easy possibility. (ii) Dretske required both belief that S sees_n the barn, and belief with the subjunctive conditional content of the sensitivity condition. The latter seems unduly intellectual. (3) suffices to rule out cases where S fails to believe what she sees_n due to, say, mistaken beliefs about her senses being deceived. (iii) (3) is absent in Dretske. Suppose a guardian angel unbeknownst to S quickly transforms the barn façades into genuine barns just as S is about to form visual beliefs, thus ensuring that S never forms any such incorrect beliefs despite the abundance of facsimiles.

⁴ Objectual perception could well encompass the object instantiating certain perceptual properties: seeing object o having F; or as Williamson (2000: 38) puts it, "seeing a situation in which p".

⁵ Suppose S finds herself in Kripke-style Barn County where most barns are fake except for the red ones. Then it looks like epistemic seeing isn't closed under known entailment: S sees_{pe} that there is a red barn, but not that there is a barn. The remedy is to extend safe basis to seeing: if S sees_n the barn as a result of having an experience as of a red barn, then S sees that there is a barn only if: S would have *that* experience only if there were a barn. Similarly, safely based belief ensures that closure holds for knowledge: if the reason for which S believes that there is a barn is her experience as of a red barn, then S knows that there is a barn only if: S would believe for *that* reason that there is a barn only if there were a barn.

Using Sosa's terminology (2007: 28–29), S's belief is safe, but not apt, i.e. "successful because competent". So, just as an archer's shot is apt only if accurate because adroit, S sees_{pe} only if her belief is true because competent, where competence is a matter of that belief being true as a result of being based on the relevant visual experience.

The foregoing is extendable to more complex ways of knowing. Let's dwell for a moment on Dretske's notion (op. cit.) of *secondary epistemic seeing* (seeing_{se}). Departing from the details of Dretske's account, S sees_{se} that she is speeding by looking at the speedometer iff:

- (4) S sees_{pe} that the speedometer says that she is speeding
- (5) The conditions under which S sees the speedometer are such that it would say S is speeding only if S were speeding
- (6) S's belief that she is speeding is true because based on her visual experience as of the speedometer saying that she is speeding

Note that seeing_{se} entails seeing_n, because seeing_{se} entails seeing_{pe} and seeing_{pe} entails seeing_n. In our example, if S sees_{se} that she is speeding, then S sees_n the speedometer. Likewise we can define notions of (objectual) hearing_n, (propositional) hearing_{pe} and (displaced) hearing_{se}. Moreover, some ways of knowing are non-perceptual as when S knows by reasoning that the Generalized Continuum Hypothesis has counterexamples. Other ways of knowing are amalgamations of more basic ways of knowing. Indeed a vast amount of S's knowledge is such that an intricate mixture of perceptual and non-perceptual elements constitutes the way in which S has it. Such complex ways undoubtedly lack names in our language, but as Williamson notes (op. cit.), S could always introduce names by pointing to them as paradigms. Further, while there may be only one, possibly privileged, way in which particular propositions are actually known, most if not all propositions are such that there exist more than one possible way of knowing them. If innateness is a way of knowing of God's attributes, then so is potentially reasoning — maybe augmented by so-called religious experiences. Failing that, S might defer to others in the know. Being-testified-to is for S a potential way of knowing most of what she knows yet gaining knowledge by such inter-personal transmission ultimately originates in intra-personal knowledge acquisition.⁶ Still, knowledge of at least some propositions pertaining to phenomenal consciousness seems in principle non-testimonial. In particular, if knowledge of the phenomenal character of experience requires the possession of experience-dependent phenomenal concepts, then demanding constraints on the ways in which S can possess phenomenal knowledge are in place. But it could still be the case that even if S has had no visual

⁶Barring exceptional and not uncontroversial cases where an unreliable believer's reliable testimony generates knowledge rather than transmitting existing knowledge. For examples see Lackey (1999).

experience of red_{21} , S can triangulate her way to knowledge that Θ is what it's like to see red_{21} , where Θ is the phenomenal concept that picks out the associated phenomenal character. Assuming S has had visual experiences of red_{20} and red_{22} all S needs is the combined use of imagination, recreation, and memory.

Now, there are two individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for a state Φ -ing to constitute a way of knowing: (i) Φ -ing asymmetrically necessitates knowing, and (ii) Φ -ing and knowing instantiate the same generic, epistemic properties. Thus $\text{seeing}_{\text{pe}}$ entails knowing, but knowing doesn't entail $\text{seeing}_{\text{pe}}$. Necessarily, if S sees_{pe} , then S knows, but it's possible for S to know without $\text{seeing}_{\text{pe}}$. And both $\text{seeing}_{\text{pe}}$ and knowing instantiate roughly the same safety and virtue-theoretic properties. $\text{Seeing}_{\text{pe}}$ and knowing are also both factive, belief-entailing states, but these properties aren't additional necessary conditions on a state qualifying as a way of knowing. For if the state of Φ -ing were neither factive nor belief-entailing, Φ -ing wouldn't (asymmetrically) necessitate knowing. Here is why (i) and (ii) are individually insufficient. Take first Unger's examples (1975: 158–162) of regretting, admitting and revealing. Each of these states entails knowing, knowing is consistent with not being in any of them, yet neither of them constitutes a way of knowing. In these cases, (i) is satisfied but (ii) isn't. For instance, when S regrets that p, p isn't true because based on some epistemic, virtue-theoretic ability to regret. S is skillful at regretting only if S regrets only what is regrettable, but there is nothing distinctively epistemic about possessing or manifesting that skill. Now take Cassam's example (2007: 348) of knowing as a state that isn't a way of knowing. In this case, (ii) is trivially satisfied, but (i) isn't. Knowing doesn't asymmetrically necessitate itself. One might think knowing that Mary went swimming is a way of knowing that someone went swimming. But while the proposition that Mary went swimming asymmetrically necessitates the proposition that someone went swimming, S might know the former proposition without believing, hence without knowing, the latter proposition. Given our stipulation that ways of knowing asymmetrically necessitate knowing, knowing that Mary went swimming fails to constitute a way of knowing that someone went swimming.⁷

⁷ In particular, we incur no commitment to what Cassam (2007: 339) calls *the entailment view*: Φ -ing is a way of knowing iff ' $S \Phi$ s that P' entails ' S knows that p'. Entailment is insufficient for a state to count as a way of knowing.

III. *No Bare Propositional Knowledge*

Given our take on what ways of knowing amount to, we have shown that seeing_{pe} is a way of knowing, hence that there exist ways of knowing. In general, the claim is that necessarily for all ways of knowing Φ -ing, if Φ -ing is the way in which S knows, then S knows, and possibly for some Φ -ing, S knows but Φ -ing isn't the way in which S knows. This section offers three arguments for the stronger claim that necessarily if S knows, then there is a way of knowing Φ -ing such that Φ -ing is the way in which S knows.

The first is *the argument from cases*. When examining a range of examples of S knowing there is in each case a way in which S knows. This furnishes at least inductive support for the claim that there can be no knowing in the absence of a way of knowing. Here are some examples to fix ideas. The Police saw_n Redwayne in the garage at the time of the murder, and on that basis formed the belief that he was there at that time. Assuming the conditions under which the Police saw_n him involved no knowledge-undermining luck, they knew what they believed. In this case, seeing_{pe} constitutes the way in which the Police know. Alternatively, the Police could have heard_n him there, or received reliable testimony from a witness, or inferred his presence from seeing_n him entering the garage just prior to the fatal stabbing and then leaving again immediately thereafter. In these cases, there will be correspondingly distinct ways of knowing that Redwayne was in the garage at the time of the murder. It surely couldn't be that the police know without there being any way in which they know. Likewise if we turn to propositions pertaining to our mental lives or abstract matters. Thus Sarah knows that she felt jealous when her boyfriend danced with Jill. Here a combination of introspection and memory, epistemically understood, constitutes the way in which Sarah knows. And Martin knows that arguments which affirm the consequent are deductively invalid. In this case, Martin's reasoning, epistemically understood, that arguments of the form 'if p then q, q, therefore p' have counterexamples constitutes the way in which he has that knowledge.

The second is *the argument from the how-question*. Take S1's knowledge that naïve set theory is inconsistent. How does S1 know that? By relying on the axiom of unrestricted comprehension, S1 derived a contradiction using rules of first-order logic. S2 shares S1's knowledge but lacks sufficient logical acumen. How does S2 know? By soliciting reliable testimony from S1. In each case the true answer to the how-question yields the way in which they know. This lends support to the following:

(WoK) If S knows that p, then the question 'how does S know that p?' has at least one direct true answer 'by Φ -ing' which articulates that the way in which S knows that p is that S Φ s that p

If there were any pieces of bare knowledge, the how-question would lack such an answer, but that, we submit, never happens. Take S's avowal that she currently suffers a needle-stick pain. How does S know that? By introspectively attending to her pain. But if S were distracted or otherwise inattentive, S might revert to observing her own physical or verbal behavior. This example highlights two caveats. Firstly, the how-question may be conversationally inappropriate if addressed to S in a context in which the answer is too obvious. However, when S's epistemic situation is probed from a third-person perspective, posing that question is never misplaced. Secondly, (WoK) requires neither that the subject nor the attributor be capable of answering the how-question, but merely that as a matter of fact it always has an answer. Since there are propositions of which neither the subject nor the attributor has any recollection as to the way in which they are known, in those cases neither will be able to produce answers to how-questions.

The third is *the argument from ability*. Knowledge ascriptions are made true partially by the successful exercise of cognitive abilities, and these abilities issue deliverances that are more or less domain specific; or so we are currently assuming.⁸ The propositions that are knowable as a result of exercising one such ability are typically distinct from, or maybe a proper subset of, the propositions that are knowable as a result of exercising another such ability. Over and above the specific abilities to see, hear, introspect, reason, remember, etc., there is no overarching *sui generis* ability to know. S can be good at seeing in particular ways, e.g. seeing-through-a-telescope. Practice makes S a skillful observer, but never a skillful knower as such. The reason S cannot excel at knowing *simpliciter* is that there isn't any corresponding ability to exercise, but such ability ought to exist if some knowing outstripped knowing in a specific way. Otherwise, the truth of some knowledge ascriptions wouldn't even in part be down to the manifestation of cognitive abilities. Hence, there isn't any knowing in the absence of specific ways of knowing. If there are propositions for which there is in principle no specific way of knowing them, then these are unknowable too.

We have argued that necessarily if S knows, then there is a way of knowing Φ -ing such that Φ -ing is the way in which S knows. The epistemological significance of this claim is that knowledge states are never self-standing but always grounded in more fundamental epistemic states. In Dummett's terminology, to say that S knows is never a complete characterization of S's epistemic state, but can always be further characterized by citing the way in which S knows. Given that ways of knowing asymmetrically necessitate

⁸ Some epistemologists reject that assumption, but two points are worth bearing in mind: (i) we are not assuming what Pritchard (2010, Chapter 3) calls a *robust virtue epistemology*, but merely that among the necessary conditions on knowledge is one pertaining to virtue-theory, and (ii) the dispute between epistemological virtue-theorists and their opponents is orthogonal to the dispute over the relationship between knowing and ways of knowing.

knowing, it follows that all knowledge states are necessitated by such more specific epistemic states. Put differently, ways of knowing determine every piece of knowledge, or conversely, every piece of knowledge is dependent on ways of knowing. Note that such determination/dependency relations are consistent with the irreducibility of knowledge states. The more modest but still interesting implication for the architecture of knowledge is that tight modal connections obtain between knowing and ways of knowing.

IV. Responses to Objections

Let's take stock. We argued in section I that ways of knowing exist, and then we offered three arguments in section II for the stronger claim that ways of knowing are necessary for knowing. We will now finally first consider two objections to the weaker claim and then two objections to the stronger claim.

(A) The first objection draws on temporal disanalogies between knowing and seeing_{pe}. If on day₁ S knows in virtue of seeing_{pe}, then in the normal course of things S retains her knowledge on day₂ — even if S undergoes no further visual experiences. On day₂ S might remember how things looked, but retaining her knowledge isn't a matter of basing her belief on memorial seemings in the way her visual belief on day₁ was based on her visual experience.⁹ The problem is now that if seeing_{pe} is the way in which S knows on day₂, S must see_n on day₂. Seeing_{pe}, remember, entails seeing_n. But since S can retain her knowledge on day₂ without seeing_n on day₂, seeing_{pe} cannot be the way in which S knows on day₂. Seeing_{pe} is therefore not a way of knowing, but rather a way of coming to know. And what goes for seeing_{pe} goes for hearing_{pe} and so on.¹⁰

In reply, it should be conceded that if S doesn't see_n on day₂, then seeing_{pe} cannot constitute the way in which S knows on day₂. The objection doesn't

⁹The received view — to which Lackey (2005) offers putative counterexamples — has it that memory never generates knowledge for the first time. But if S knows, then forget for a while, and then remember again, there is some derivative sense in which remembering can be a way of coming to know. There may also be ways of ceasing to know as when S forgets the proposition, or cease to believe it.

¹⁰This objection owes much to Cassam (2007: 350–351). Note that seeing_{pe} can be a way of knowing even though seeing_{pe} instantiates properties not instantiated by knowing. Unlike knowing, seeing_{pe} can occur at specific times and places. And seeing_{pe} may be associated with characteristic phenomenological characters that aren't associated with knowing. The content of the perceptual state S is in when she sees_{pe} is typically much richer than the content of the corresponding knowledge state. These properties are, however, irrelevant for seeing_{pe} to qualify as a way of knowing. The properties that render seeing_{pe} a way of knowing are precisely those encapsulated by the subscript _{pe}. Likewise, blue is a way of being colored, but not all properties of blue are properties of color. Being the color of the sky is a property of blue, but not a property of color.

show that seeing_{pe} cannot be the way in which S knows on day₁. Then the question is: what is the way in which S knows on day₂? Take our fake barn case, and assume that S only sees_n the barn on day₁. Then we can say that on day₂ S remembering-on-the-basis-of-having-seen_{pe} that there is a barn constitutes the way in which S knows that there is a barn iff:

- (1*) There was a barn on day₁ which S saw_n
- (2*) The conditions under which S saw_n the barn on day₁ were such that S would have a visual experience as of a barn only if there were a barn
- (3*) S's belief on day₂ that there was a barn is true because on day₁ that belief was based on her visual experience as of a barn

To be sure, the foregoing doesn't imply that there aren't any ways of coming to know, indeed unless some knowledge is innate it could well turn out that for every piece of knowledge there must be a way of acquiring that knowledge. All we insist on is that seeing_{pe} isn't one of them. Bear also in mind that Φ -ing may be the way in which S knows even though S has now forgotten that this is so. For a vast amount of knowledge, neither the attributor nor the subject need be in a position to know, or even to have justified beliefs about, the way in which the latter has that knowledge. Still, we submit, for each piece of knowledge, there is going to be a way of having that knowledge.

(B) The second objection is a *reductio* of the claim that ways of knowing exist. Assume that seeing_{pe} is a way of knowing. Then presumably seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope and seeing_{pe}-through-a-telescope are distinct ways of seeing_{pe}. And seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Tuesdays and seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Thursdays are distinct ways of seeing-through-a-microscope. And on we go. But since perceivers are finite beings who can only be in a fairly limited number of such states, our initial assumption is false.

In order to resist the claim that the descending chain of Φ -ing and ways of Φ -ing goes on forever, a distinction must be drawn between fully epistemic and partially epistemic ways of Φ -ing. Seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope is a fully epistemic way of seeing_{pe}, because it marks out specific strengths of justification, degrees of certainty, epistemic sources, types of epistemic defeat, etc. So is seeing_{pe}-through-a-telescope, because it marks out such specific, albeit possibly distinct, epistemic features. However, seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Tuesdays is merely partially epistemic. There is no epistemic difference between seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Tuesdays and seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Thursdays. The qualification 'on-Tuesdays' doesn't fix any additional epistemic features. If seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Tuesdays is a way of seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-weekdays, then that qualification fixes additional non-epistemic features. So,

seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Tuesdays and seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope-on-Thursdays differ, but not in respect of being distinct fully epistemic ways of seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope. Maybe some fully epistemic ways of seeing_{pe}-through-a-microscope exist, e.g. due to functional differences between optical and electron microscopes, but the descending chain of such fully epistemic ways will come to an end sooner rather than later. In so far as the links composing this chain are fully epistemic it stops exactly when the difference no longer corresponds to the fixation of additional epistemic features.¹¹

(C) The third objection pertains to (WoK) as deployed in the second argument for the stronger claim. How-questions are requests for information about a way that lead from one state to another. For instance, 'how does S make ravioli?' is asking for a way that turns some raw ingredients into ravioli. Likewise, 'how does S know?' is asking for a way that leads from not knowing to knowing. So, true answers to our how-question yields ways of coming to know rather than ways of knowing.

True, some how-questions pertain to processes that lead from one state to another, and their true answers yield ways of coming to be in that other state. But other how-questions bear on the states themselves as in 'how does your pain feel?' And since knowing is a state, indeed if Williamson (2000: 34) is right, the most general factive stative attitude, the how-question must be a request for information about a way of being in that state. 'By seeing that p' conveys the information that seeing_{pe} is the state that constitutes the way in which S knows. If instead seeing_{pe} were to constitute the way in which S comes to know, seeing_{pe} would have to be a process leading from one state to another.

(D) The final objection also pertains to (WoK) as deployed in the second argument for the stronger claim. Following this principle, any direct true answer to the question 'how does S know?' explains how S knows, and so yields the way in which S knows. Hearing in the testimonial sense may well be a direct true answer to that question, but unlike (perceptual) hearing_{pe}, testimonial hearing is non-factive, and so cannot be a way of knowing.

In response, a distinction between conditional and unconditional ways of knowing should be invoked. If Φ -ing is an unconditional way of knowing, then 'S Φ s that p' entails 'S knows that p', but if Φ -ing is a conditional way

¹¹ Recall Dummett's argument from section I that propositional knowing is a way of having predicative knowledge, which in turn is a way of having knowledge-*wh*. Our objector might then argue that ways of knowing are humanly unattainable, because there is going to be an infinite ascending chain of such states. But the same reply is available. Cognizing or representing may count as ways of knowing-*wh*, but these states are not fully epistemic. This ascending chain terminates precisely at the point when the state in question is no longer fully epistemic.

of knowing, then this entailment holds only in conjunction with the obtaining of additional conditions. Seeing_{pe} is an unconditional way of knowing, where the subscript encapsulates exactly those conditions. In contrast, testimonial hearing is a conditional way of knowing.¹² Such hearing merely issues in opaque explanations of how S knows where some but insufficient explanatory information is provided to deduce that S knows. But seeing_{pe} facilitates transparent explanations where knowing the *explanans* puts you in a position to infer the *explanandum*. For instance, hearing-on-BBC-News opaquely explains your knowing. In order for your testimonial hearing to transparently explain your knowing, you need further explanatory premises pertaining to truth, etc., sufficient to infer your knowledge. We need a qualification:

(WoK*) If S knows that p, then the question ‘how does S know that p?’ has at least one direct true answer ‘by Φ -ing’ which specifies that the possibly conditional way in which S knows that p is that S Φ s that p

In contrast, unreliable ways of Φ -ing, e.g. hearing-from-a-fortuneteller, fall short of constituting even conditional ways of knowing. In fact, conditional ways of knowing needn’t even be propositional attitudes. If ‘by feeling my needle-stick pain’ is the direct true answer to the how-question, then feeling-my-needle-stick-pain is the conditional way in which S knows — conditional on S believing that she undergoes such a pain, etc.¹³

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¹²Cassam (2007: 340–347) thinks that satisfactory explanations of how S knows needn’t entail that S knows. Given his view that whatever satisfactorily explains how S knows is the way in which S knows, then it may be that Φ -ing is a way of knowing even though ‘S Φ s that p’ fails to entail ‘S knows that p’. Moreover, Cassam (op. cit.) contends that some ways of knowing, e.g. Seeing_n, aren’t even propositional attitudes. This makes sense if ways of knowing are conditional. It’s true that some instances of ‘I read that p’ fails to entail ‘I know that p’, but these instances aren’t unconditional ways of knowing either. Only if Φ -ing is an unconditional way of knowing does ‘S Φ s that p’ entail ‘S knows that p’.

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