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Inquiry, Knowledge, and Understanding. By CHRISTOPH KELP. (Oxford: OUP, 2021. Pp. viii + 212. Price £55.00.)

This book attempts to revolutionise epistemology. A traditional goal of epistemology is to provide an analysis of knowledge in terms of more basic things. But the post-Gettier literature has made some philosophers like Timothy Williamson suspect that knowledge cannot be analysed. Kelp claims that both the traditional project and Williamson's knowledge-first project are misguided. He provides an alternative: Knowledge is an item in an inquiry-related network and can thereby be analysed in terms of its relations to other items in the network, rather than of things that are more basic than knowledge.

Kelp begins his book by distinguishing two types of inquiry: inquiry into specific questions (such as whether Plato's *Republic* advocates totalitarianism and when World War I took place) and inquiry into general phenomena (such as the rise of the Roman Empire and the origins of species). Chapter 1 argues that the goal of inquiry into specific questions—Kelp's discussion focuses on whether questions—is knowledge. This is because even if the inquirer into whether p acquires a Gettierised justified true belief that p, she has not achieved the goal of inquiry, for the question of whether p has not been properly closed for her: she can be sensibly asked to do more research.

Chapters 2 and 3 offer an analysis of knowledge. Following Peter Strawson, Kelp distinguishes two models for analysis: (1) The Dismantling Model: An analysis of X is to dismantle X into simpler elements till you reach the 'atoms' that cannot be further dismantled. Kelp claims that dismantling analyses must be non-circular, for the simpler elements must enjoy explanatory priority over X. (2) The Network Model: An analysis of X in an elaborate network or system is to show X's connections with the other items, as well as its place, in the system. Kelp suggests that network analyses may be circular, for elements in the network need not enjoy explanatory *priority* over the phenomenon to be analysed.

Kelp proposes a network analysis of knowledge where 'the network relates knowledge, belief, and inquiry in the sense that knowledge is the constitutive

aim of inquiry and belief is the result of the kind of move in inquiry that closes it in the affirmative or negative' (p. 52). His analysis states that one knows that p only if two conditions are satisfied: '(K1 =) one's belief that p is produced by an exercise of an ability to know propositions in range R and relative to conditions C such that p∈R, and (K2 =) the constraints on the environment of the ability to know that produced one's belief that p are satisfied' (p. 87). Here, the constraints on the environment refer to conditions C. Kelp claims that both Gettier cases and the skeptical scenarios are cases, where K1 is satisfied but K2 is not: One's belief is produced by an exercise of an ability to know in certain conditions (i.e., the normal conditions), but one is not in such conditions. When K1 is satisfied but K2 is not, one's belief is justified, as Kelp writes, 'A belief is justified if and only if it is produced and perhaps sustained by an ability to know, whether or not the environment is also suitable' (p. 78).

Chapter 4 argues that the goal of inquiry into general phenomena is understanding, which is systematic knowledge of the phenomena in question: e.g. you not only know some facts about the phenomena but also know the connections between these facts. Some connections are explanatory while others are not. Kelp is among the philosophers who hold that understanding without explanation is possible, for (say) I can attain an understanding of the layout of my house without having any answers to why—questions like why there is a kitchen to the left, why there are three bedrooms on the first floor, etc.

Chapter 5 addresses the question of why knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. This question was first raised in Plato's *Meno* and has been in the focus of the epistemological debate since 1990s. Kelp argues that knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief not just as a matter of degree but as a matter of kind. This is because, as *the* goal of inquiry, 'knowledge is a central value in the epistemic domain, it is valuable for its own sake, relative to the epistemic domain' (p. 143), while mere true belief does not enjoy the status of a central value in the epistemic domain. Kelp's account implies that true belief is not epistemic better in itself than false belief. But he suggests that true belief is of more instrumental epistemic value than false belief, for 'present true belief makes future knowledge more likely than present false belief' (p. 157).

Finally, Chapter 6 discusses the skeptical argument that rests on two premises: (P1) You don't know that you are not a handless BIV; (P2) If you know that you have hands, then you know that you are not a handless BIV. P2 is motivated by an epistemic closure principle: If you know that p, and you come to believe that q based on your competent deduction of q from p, then you come to know that q. Kelp challenges P2 by arguing that the closure principle is false: Even if you come to know that the animal is a zebra via the way it looks, you may still sensibly wonder whether it is a cleverly disguised mule, and you cannot settle this question by deducing that it is not a cleverly disguised mule from your perceptual knowledge that it is a zebra, for that is question-begging. Also, Kelp argues that P1 is false, for 'we have an epistemic

ability that enables us to recognise whether certain possibilities could not easily enough obtain. . . and it is just this ability that . . . enables us to come to know the denials of sceptical hypotheses' (p. 177). This response is different from what Kelp takes to be the Moorean response: We know that we are not a handless BIV on the basis of competent deduction from our knowledge that we have hands.

Overall, Kelp has written an ambitious and engaging book sprinkled with new ideas and arguments. Here, I'd like to raise two worries about Kelp's argument for the thesis that knowledge entails K1 and K2. This argument rests on two premises: (1) The constitutive goal of inquiry into whether p is to properly close this question for oneself, that is, to believe that p (or ∼p) according to the constitutive norms of inquiry such as K1 and K2; (2) The constitutive goal of inquiry into whether p is to know whether p. My first worry is about Premise 1: Why are K1 and K2 the *constitutive* norms of inquiry? Kelp compares inquiry to games like chess and archery, which have constitutive norms in the sense that if you do not follow such norms, you are not playing the game. But I tend to think inquiry is more like non-sport hunting. Such activities have constitutive goals (e.g. non-sport hunting aims at killing animals for food), but they do not have constitutive norms (e.g. one engages in non-sport hunting even if one is not skilled at doing so or violates all the guidelines offered by authorities). An unskilled or careless inquirer might luckily achieve the goal of inquiry, just like an unskilled or careless hunter might luckily achieve the goal of hunting.

This brings us to the second worry, which is about Premise 2 of Kelp's argument: the view that knowledge is the goal of inquiry makes it hard to explain epistemic luck. Intuitively, you are epistemically lucky, if you acquire a (significant) true belief via guesswork or Gettier—like conditions. But a person failing to achieve the goal of inquiry cannot be considered epistemically lucky. By contrast, the traditional view, which states that the goal of inquiry is to acquire true beliefs (and avoid false beliefs), can nicely explain why acquiring a true belief via guesswork or Gettier—like conditions is epistemically lucky.[1]

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