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Throughout this essay I ~~will~~ be defining The Theory of Knowledge as a Justified True Belief. By breaking down each of the three conditions and taking a closer look at how combining them could be considered to be knowledge. Once an understanding of the JTB Theory has been made, I ~~will~~ then apply the Gettier style counter examples to show the affects the ultimately had on The JTB Theory of knowledge.

be specific
The standard definition of knowledge is fairly vague and quite circular. Ranging from definitions such as “the sum of what is known” to “acquaintance with facts, truths or principles, as from study or investigation”¹. While these definitions may be adequate for day-to-day life, they could do not offer us much explanation to what it is we actually know. Enter into the world, The Theory of Knowledge as Justified True Belief. A possible way for epistemologist to know what it is to know or even what we think we know, but actually do not.

The first condition of the JTB theory is justification. In order for someone to have knowledge they ought to have a reason they are believing what it is they believe. So what is it that makes a belief justified? According to the theory, this justification comes from truth. (Since it is assumed that our belief is true, I will primarily be focusing on the Justification and Belief conditions, as we would not consider it to be knowledge if it were a false belief). So according to the definition, it could be said that the justification is a type of evidence for the true belief one is having. So that, belief to the knower, can be described as something that they are aware of that exists in reality. One could possibly have a belief that does not exist, but without the other conditions of justification and truth, it would only remain a belief.

So as you can see on the surface the theory of knowledge as JTB seems to be a reasonable account for knowledge. However, Edmund Gettier in 1963 released a paper that turned this theory on its head with his counter examples to the JTB theory.

Mainly, Gettier used his counter examples to show that there and be cases of justified true beliefs that in-fact would not actually be considered knowledge. In both Case I and II, Gettier provides two separate intendances where Smith has a JTB, but turns out he

Not correct
 → the belief is true is a JTB

ends up being wrong. So as I had mentioned in my definition of The JTB Theory, one could have a JTB and it could be considered knowledge, but why? The Gettier Counter examples would suggest that luck might have something to do with it. But can we consider luck to be knowledge? Many others and myself would agree that it is not. "Even a justified belief, understood as a belief based on good evidence, can be true because of luck"². Or to say that accidental truth is not grounds for knowledge. While all the necessary conditions are present for one to have knowledge, they actually do not. Many other have attempted to solve this problem over the years, but it has been one tough task to defeat.

Robert Nozicks "Subjunctive account", in which he makes the claim that "knowledge is a belief which is true, and which the believer would have so long as it is true, and one would not have had if it had been false"³. But the subjunctive account, with respect fails here. The account begs the question why would Smith have believe it had it been false? Thus ineffectively being able to solve the problem of the justification of a true belief. Therefore only adding to the problem of the JTB Theory.

Amongst many other philosophers, who were taking aim at Gettier's counter-examples, Colin Radford was also doing his best to make sense of it all. He was making an attempt to prove that knowledge without belief is possible. Stating that it is possible to have once learned something, forgotten it, but somehow recalled it when it was needed even though the subject did not believe they had known the information. So if the subject does not believe he has knowledge, he certainly has no justification for his belief. It would merely be another case of luck. Which as was stated previously, luck is not something we would consider to be knowledge.

So as it may seem the Gettier Counter-Examples had caused philosophers to rethink what it is that we call knowledge and how it is that we obtain it. The Theory of Knowledge as a Justified True Belief had been a cornerstone of what it was we were talking about when we refer to knowledge. But with these new ideas as to how we would classify knowledge it had exposed many weaknesses of the JTB theory. By coming up

with a few simple cases Gettier was able to take what we had thought we knew and show us that we may not know at all. Simply put, maybe we were just getting lucky.

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- ① The paper does not set any where.
- ② you fail to analyze why Smith lacks knowledge in the Gettier CX.

Bibliography

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