

The Intersection of Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind

Med epistemologijo in filozofijo duha

XXIIIrd Bled Philosophical Conference

<http://www.bled-conference.si>

June 1st – June 5th, 2015

Bled, Hotel Lovec

Slovenian Society for Analytic Philosophy / Department of philosophy, Faculty of Arts,
Maribor

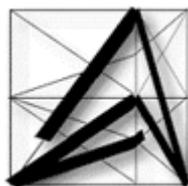
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▪ GENERAL INFORMATION

Philosophical conferences at Bled (Slovenia) were initiated, on the suggestion by *John Biro*, in 1993 at first as a continuation of the IUC – Dubrovnik postgraduate course in philosophy but they gradually started a life of their own, with the help of *Eugene Mills*, *Mylan Engel Jr.*, *Wayne D. Riggs* and *Alistair Norcross*. The first week of June is traditionally reserved for a conference dedicated to various topics in the field of analytical philosophy. *The Intersection of Epistemology and Philosophy of Mind* is the twenty-third Bled Philosophical Conference. All events take place in Hotel Lovec, Ljubljanska cesta 6, Bled (*Panorama*).

The **2015** conference is organized by a team consisting of **Jack Lyons** (*University of Arkansas*), **Matjaž Potrč** of the University of Ljubljana, **Nenad Miščević** and **Danilo Šuster** of the University of Maribor. Co-organizer: Department of philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Maribor (with the support of Slovenian Research Agency, project P6-0144 and ARRS-BI-US 2015/16)



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Monday, June 1st

Panorama I

Panorama II

Welcoming remarks

9:00-10:00	<i>Lisa Miracchi</i> Perception First	<i>Karsten Stueber</i> Knowledge of Other Minds and the Reality of Normative Reasons
10:05-11:05	<i>Philippe Chuard</i> Temporal Projectivism & the Epistemology of Introspection	<i>Darrell Rowbottom</i> On the Epistemological Consequences of the Nature of Belief
11:05-11:25 (break)		
11:25-12:25	<i>Jeroen de Ridder</i> Representations and Robustly Collective Attitudes	<i>Zoe Jenkin</i> Rational Evaluability and the Perceptual System
12:25-2:25 (lunch)		
2:25-3:25	<i>Richard Fumerton</i> Epistemology and the Mind: First Things First	<i>Christoph Jäger</i> Disagreeing With Epistemic Authorities
3:25-3:45 (break)		
3:45-4:45	<i>Rene van Woudenberg, David Widerker</i> The Epistemic Status of Belief in Free Will	<i>Emily McWilliams</i> Epistemic Oppression(s) and Ameliorative Epistemology
4:50-5:50	<i>Robert Cowan</i> Emotions and Justification	<i>Mikael Janvid</i> Objectual Understanding and A Priori Warrant. A Comparison

Tuesday, June 2nd

Panorama I

Panorama II

9:00-10:00	<i>Jessie Munton</i> Reliability, Confidence and Perceptual Justification	<i>Guido Melchior</i> Knowing and checking: explaining the skeptical puzzle
10:05-11:05	<i>David Chalmers</i> Two (or Three) Externalist Responses to Skepticism	<i>Igal Kvat</i> Cognitive Risk Bias and the Threat to the Semantics of Knowledge Ascriptions
11:05-11:25 (break)		

11:25-12:25	<i>Sarah Sawyer</i> Contrastivism and Anti-Individualism	<i>Daniel Breyer</i> Cognitive Agency, Practical Identity, and the Extended Mind
12:25-2:25 (lunch)		
2:25-3:25	<i>Robert J. Howell</i> Anonymous Experience, Impersonal Self-Knowledge	<i>Mikkel Gerken</i> Folk Epistemology and Salient Alternatives
3:25-3:45 (break)		
3:45-4:45		<i>Patrick Greenough</i> Is the Concept of Knowledge Incoherent?
4:50-5:50	<i>Anya Farennikova</i> Unexpected Perception	<i>Peter Baumann</i> Brains in Vats? Don't Bother!

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9:05-10:05	<i>William McNeil</i> Epistemic Emergence and Basic Beliefs	<i>Ralph Wedgwood</i> Plato's Theory of Knowledge
10:05-10:20 (break)		
10:20-11:20	<i>Christopher Hill</i> The A Priori and the Structure of Concepts	
11:25-12:25	<i>Friderik Klampfer</i> How Moral Psychology Informs Moral Epistemology	<i>Kate Nolfi</i> Why Evidence (and only Evidence) Can Justify or Rationalize Belief

Thursday, June 4th

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9:00-10:00	<i>Nico Silins</i> The Evil Demon Inside	Symposium: Ernest Sosa, Judgment and Agency
10:05-11:05	<i>Martina Fuerst</i> Introspection, Phenomenal Contrast, and Cognitive Phenomenology	9:00-9:40 <i>Danilo Šuster</i>
11:05-11:25		9:40-10:20 <i>Katalin Farkas</i>
11:25-12:25	<i>Mark Kaplan</i> Jeffrey's Challenge	10:20-11:00 <i>Paul Horwich</i>
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2:25-3:25	<i>Brent Madison</i> The Conceptual Connections Between Justified Belief and Truth	11:15-11:55 <i>Nenad Miščević</i>
3:25-3:45 (break)		11:55-12:35 <i>Paul Boghossian</i>
3:45-4:45	<i>Dustin Stokes</i> Attention and the Cognitive Penetration of Perception	12:35-2:00 (lunch)
4:50-5:50	<i>Kelly Becker</i> Burge and McDowell on Disjunctivism	2:00-2:40 <i>Ralph Wedgwood</i>
		2:40-3:30 <i>Ernest Sosa</i>
		Symposium: general discussion
		<i>Kurt Sylvan</i> Why Knowledge Is Not Normative
EVENING	Conference dinner, Hotel Lovec	

Friday, June 5th***Panorama I******Panorama II*****9:00-10:00***Mary Salvaggio*

A Capacity Account of Constructive Memory

Boran Berčić

On Active Subject: An Essay in the Philosophy of Perception

10:05-11:05*Tim Crane*

Acquaintance and Demonstrative Thought

Sarah Wright

Epistemic Authority, Intellectual Humility, and Eudaimonia

11:05-11:25 (break)**11:25-12:25***Robert Beddor*

The Role of Certainty in Epistemology

Mona Simion

No Epistemic Norm for Action

12:25-2:25 (lunch)**2:25-3:25***Joe Cruz*

Attention and Reason

Christoph Kelp, Fernando Broncano-Berrocal

Virtues, Safety, and Lotteries

3:25-3:45 (break)**3:45-4:45***Matjaž Potrč et al*

Epistemic Quasi-Agency in the Space of Reasons

Maja Malec

Yet Another Look at the Conceivability and Possibility of Zombies

4:50-5:50*Nikolaj Nottelmann*

Relativistic Epistemology vs Relativistic Doxastic Ethics

Katalin Farkas

Knowing That, Knowing How, Knowing Where

Closing remarks

A B S T R A C T S

Peter Baumann (Swarthmore College): Brains in Vats? Don't Bother!

Contemporary discussions of epistemological skepticism - the view that we do not and cannot know anything about the world around us - focus very much on a certain kind of skeptical argument involving a skeptical scenario (a situation familiar from Descartes' First Meditation). According to the argument, knowing some ordinary proposition about the world (one we usually take ourselves to know) requires knowing we are not in some such skeptical scenario S; however, since we cannot know that we are not in S we also cannot know any ordinary proposition. One of the most prominent skeptical scenarios is the brain-in-the-vat-scenario: An evil scientist has operated on an unsuspecting subject, removed the subject's brain and put it in a vat where it is kept functioning and is connected to some computer which feeds the brain the illusion that everything is "normal". This paper looks at one aspect of this scenario after another – envatment, disembodiment, weird cognitive processes, lack of the right kind of epistemic standing, and systematic deception. The conclusion is that none of these aspects (in isolation or in combination) is of any relevance for a would-be skeptical argument; the brain-in-the-vat-scenario is irrelevant to and useless for skeptical purposes. This paper also offers a brief sketch of an error-theory which would explain why the brain-in-the-vat-scenario can, in contrast, seem so utterly relevant to discussions of epistemological skepticism. Given that related scenarios (e.g., involving evil demons) share the defects of the brain-in-the-vat-scenario, the skeptic should not put any hopes on Cartesian topoi.

Kelly Becker (University of New Mexico): Burge and McDowell on Disjunctivism

In a series of recent papers, Tyler Burge and John McDowell have debated the merits of McDowell's disjunctivist conception of perceptual experience. Burge offers several quite distinct lines of criticism, but insists that one, in particular, constitutes the most important mistake. It is that disjunctivism is incompatible with what we know empirically about perception. In this paper, I aim to make clear Burge's central criticisms, and then argue or at any rate assert the following claims. 1) McDowell is right that Burge fails either to understand or to take seriously McDowell's bigger picture and its key conceptual components. 2) Burge's failure is entirely excusable, as McDowell tends to use crucial terms in obviously non-standard ways. 3) Therefore, this entire debate, while intellectually soaring and manifestly interesting, looks to be little more than two people speaking past each other. 4) Yet even if we set aside Burge's central empirical criticism, and we look past the sources of merely verbal dispute, there remain epistemological and metaphysical grounds, some of them "Burgean", for finding fault with McDowell's disjunctivism.

Robert Beddor (Rutgers University): The Role of Certainty in Epistemology

In recent years, many epistemologists have tended to dismiss certainty as an unattainable ideal, focusing their attention on knowledge instead. I argue that this is a mistake: attending to certainty attributions "in the wild" suggests that much of our everyday knowledge qualifies as certain. Not only is certainty within our grasp, it also has explanatory payoff: a variety of epistemic phenomena – from evidential probability to epistemic modals – are better analyzed in terms of certainty rather knowledge.

Boran Berčić (University of Rijeka): On Active Subject: An Essay in the Philosophy of Perception

Author analyzes well widespread and popular philosophical thesis that subject is active in the process of cognition. He draws a distinction between different senses of the thesis and analyzes implications of these senses. In particular, author tries to show that contemporary cognitivist theories of perception do not support general metaphysical antirealism. On the contrary, realism makes a much better general framework for understanding the theories of perception. Author tries to show that: 1) cognition is not and should not be a projection but rather a detection. 2) Mirror metaphor is a good metaphor because it grasps our intuitions about the criteria of the correct cognition. 3) Alleged subjective contribution in cognition is nothing good and desirable but simply an error that has to be eliminated. 4) We do not see

our mental representations of things, we see things themselves. 5) We have to make a distinction between the process of cognition and the content of the cognition, that is, between how do we know and what do we know. 6) Mind does not synthesise experience in accordance with its own rules, but in accordance with the physical reality that it represents. 7) Cognitive subject is and should be active on the (i) volitional and conscious level, no (ii) subconscious and automatic level, but it is not and it should not be active on the (ii) general metaphysical level.

Daniel Breyer (Illinois State University): Cognitive Agency, Practical Identity, and the Extended Mind

In previous work, I have defended two accounts of cognitive agency: the Structuralist model and the Taking Responsibility model. In this paper, I reconsider both models in light of recent work on the extended mind hypothesis. I argue that cases of extended cognitive agency force us to answer difficult questions about practical identity in addition to questions about agency and that this fact suggests an important distinction between cognitive agency in a narrow epistemic sense and cognitive agency in a robust narrative sense. I conclude by suggesting that credit theories of knowledge, in particular, require only that we adopt the narrow sense of cognitive agency, whereas the extended mind hypothesis requires that we adopt the robust sense.

David Chalmers (Australian National University): Two (or Three) Externalist Responses to Skepticism

How does externalism about mental content bear on skepticism about the external world? Hilary Putnam has offered two different arguments from externalism to anti-skepticism. These arguments are often run together but need to be kept distinct. The first (and the mostly widely discussed) uses externalism to argue that brains in vats cannot think that they are brains in vats, and that therefore we can know we are not brains in vats. The second uses externalism to argue that brains in vats have true thoughts about the entities that are causing their thoughts, so that the hypothesis that we are brains in vats is not a skeptical hypothesis. I discuss each of these arguments in turn. I argue that for either of them to have much power against the global external-world skeptic, they require a sort of global externalism that goes far beyond what is established by standard arguments for content externalism and is highly implausible. However, a counterpart of the second argument that appeals to structuralist considerations (going beyond standard content externalism) offers a more powerful response to the global external-world skeptic.

Philippe Chuard (Southern Methodist University): Temporal Projectivism & the Epistemology of Introspection

The Lockean conception of temporal experiences insists there are successions of short-lived experiences or instantaneous experiential states, and that's it: everything else completely supervenes upon successions of such experiential states, their phenomenal and representational properties, as well as their temporal relations. Hence, we don't really sensorily perceive temporal relations (succession, duration, change, etc.) between worldly events, strictly speaking, since no experiential state in successions thereof represents any such relation. It may well appear as though we can introspect having experiences of temporal relations of this sort, but that's a mistake, the Lockean argues. And the mistake, it seems, can be explained as a projective one: in introspection, a feature of successions of experiences is confused for a represented feature. I attempt to provide some account of the form of projectivism at play here, and of the sort of projective mechanism Lockean need to posit. I then try to address the objection that this sort of temporal projectivism begets introspection of the relevant experiences with massive systematic error: it does indeed, though not in too bad a manner, I try to suggest, and the alternatives are worse anyway.

Robert Cowan (University of Glasgow): Emotions and Justification

Proponents of the Perceptual Theory of the Emotions (Doring 2003) claim that there is a robust epistemic analogy between emotional and perceptual experience: emotions (like perceptual experience) can apparently provide immediate justification for beliefs, and, emotional justification (like perceptual justification) supposedly enjoys a privileged epistemic status. In a recent book (2013) Michael Brady argues that the Perceptual Theory, so construed, faces serious objections. Brady argues that emotions are, at best, 'Proxy' justifiers for evaluative beliefs, i.e., they are temporary epistemic stand-ins for 'Genuine' justifiers of evaluative beliefs. Further, Brady thinks that subjects are under normative pressure to access Genuine justifiers such that emotional experience is rendered epistemically otiose. There is apparently no analogue for this in the case of perceptual experience. Thus there are significant epistemic differences between emotion and perceptual experience, contra- the Perceptual Theory. In this paper, I critique Brady's argument and provide a limited defence of the Perceptual Theory. In the first part, I clarify Brady's argument against the Perceptual Theory, distinguishing between what I call the 'Self-Justification' and 'Double-Counting' objections. I argue that Brady's positive proposal - emotions as Proxy justifiers - fails to address the Self-Justification objection, before briefly suggesting a way of dealing with it. In the second part, I argue that the Double-Counting objection can be resisted and that there are, in any case, at least some cases where emotions are not Proxy justifiers.

Tim Crane (University of Cambridge): Acquaintance and Demonstrative Thought

It is a familiar claim in recent philosophy of mind that acquaintance with objects makes demonstrative thought about them possible. While there is significant debate about the nature of acquaintance and demonstrative thought, few philosophers have called their existence into doubt, as data with which philosophising about the mind should begin. In this talk, I challenge this consensus. I assume that those who believe that acquaintance makes demonstrative thought possible mean more by this than the truism that sometimes we can think about things because we can perceive them. However, once they try and go beyond this truism in their talk of acquaintance and demonstrative thought, philosophers often make assumptions that have dubious psychological plausibility. In particular, I will question whether anything can be salvaged from Russell's idea of acquaintance, and I will question the psychological reality of the familiar distinction between demonstrative and 'descriptive' thought.

Joe Cruz (Williams College): Attention and Reason

Theories of epistemic justification are dominated by two images of the relation between persons and reasons: the first treats reasoning as active, reflective, and explicit, where we have access to our reasons and draw conclusions on the basis of them. The second treats reasoning as a process to be evaluated as adaptive, reliable, or apt, where reflective access is not central. Both of these images hold some sway over our intuitions, and our epistemic theorizing is drawn variously to each. I propose that the psychology of attention sheds light on how to understand personal and subpersonal reasoning and why they each have played and need to play a role in epistemology. Naturalized epistemologists should be much more attuned to the dynamics of attention in trying to understand how rationality works.

Jeroen de Ridder (VU University Amsterdam): Representations and Robustly Collective Attitudes

One argument against the existence of robustly collective cognitive states such as group belief or group knowledge is that there are no collective representations, i.e., representations held by groups rather than individuals. Since belief requires representation, so the argument goes, there can be no collective belief. In this paper, I reply to this argument. First, I'll scrutinize the assumption that belief requires representation and point out that it is in fact a substantive and controversial issue whether belief indeed requires representation and, if it does, how so. Secondly, I'll argue that even if we grant the above assumption, the argument can be resisted, since there is a natural way to make sense of collective representations. By drawing on the ideas of the extended mind and distributed cognition, I'll outline how we can conceive of collective representations and thereby undermine the argument against group cognitive states.

Anya Farennikova (University of Bristol): Unexpected Perception

According to Bayesian approaches to perception, presence of bias optimizes perception. This raises a question about the epistemic status of perception of the unexpected. Perception of the unexpected occurs when we encounter novel or atypical events. Because this form of perception is triggered by incorrect expectations, it might be thought to be a case of suboptimal perception: it decreases accuracy and amplifies uncertainty. I argue that we need to rethink the notion of optimality for the perception of unexpected. Focusing on two forms of perception of the unexpected – experiences of change (noticing a new building on the way to work) and of absence (seeing an elephant vanish in a circus trick) - I show that both can be understood as involving optimal decisions. I then explain why optimization is harder to achieve for perception of absence than it is for the perception of change.

Katalin Farkas (Central European University): Knowing That, Knowing How, Knowing Where

Defenders of the “anti-intellectualist” position about knowledge-how claim that some cases of knowing how to do something are distinct from propositional knowledge. In this talk, I will argue that some cases of knowledge-wh (knowing where, knowing which, knowing how much, etc) are as good candidates for a non-propositional type of knowledge as cases of knowledge how. I shall also ask what sort of mental states are involved in non-propositional knowledge.

Elizabeth Fricker (University of Oxford): Folk Psychology and the Receipt of Testimony

I argue that a recipient of testimony is very often placed to make an empirically informed estimate of the likelihood that the speaker is trustworthy with respect to her assertion, by making an inference to the best explanation of her utterance. The inference deploys background general knowledge (often tacit) of folk psychology, ad hominem knowledge of the particular speaker, and an appreciation of the nature of telling, including its governance by the norm: One must: Tell that P only if one knows that P. I argue that the availability of such explanations is a case-study favouring Explanationism, the view that inference to the best explanation is a major source of our empirical knowledge; and adds to a persuasive case against Fundamentalism about testimony.

Richard Fumerton (University of Iowa): Epistemology and the Mind: First Things First

I argue that our knowledge and understanding of the mind is fundamentally parasitic upon a first-person perspective informed by phenomenological awareness. Because this is so, science will never answer the fundamental philosophical questions that concern us. Furthermore, given what I take to be the correct epistemology, it is not the mind or its states that should be viewed as philosophically problematic or puzzling. It is, instead, the physical world.

Martina Fürst (University of Graz): Introspection, Phenomenal Contrast, and Cognitive Phenomenology

According to the cognitive phenomenology thesis (CP-thesis), conscious cognitive states possess a phenomenal character that is individuating of those states. There is significant controversy about how to characterize this phenomenal character. Defenders of a strong CP-thesis claim that introspection delivers a sui generis, proprietary, cognitive phenomenology. Proponents of a weak CP-thesis, in contrast, hold that introspection only reveals the familiar kind of sensory phenomenology. Thus, cognitive phenomenology can be reduced to sensory-phenomenal properties (e.g. visual imagery, bodily responses, etc.). This disagreement is puzzling since phenomenology is often seen as being directly revealed by introspection. To convince their opponents, defenders of a strong CP-thesis put forward arguments from phenomenal contrast. These arguments aim to elicit introspective data that support the existence of a proprietary cognitive phenomenology. I demonstrate that arguments from phenomenal contrast fail to yield such introspective evidence. To argue for a proprietary cognitive phenomenology, we rather have to search for arguments that are not introspection-based.

Mikkel Gerken (University of Copenhagen): Folk Epistemology and Salient Alternatives

I will present some key ideas from a monograph-in-progress tentatively entitled 'On Folk Epistemology.' My overarching thesis is methodological: Epistemologists should be very cautious about arguing straightforwardly from patterns of intuitive judgments to substantive conclusions – even when there is empirical evidence for such patterns. I exemplify this thesis by considering a “salient alternatives effect” on folk knowledge ascriptions. Roughly, this is the effect that we are intuitively less inclined to ascribe knowledge if an error-possibility is made salient. It is puzzling, in part, because it generates skeptical problems. After reviewing the empirical and philosophical evidence for assuming that there is such an effect, I consider the nature of the intuitive judgments underlying it. On this basis, I propose a psychological account of the salient alternatives effect – the focal bias account (a development of Gerken 2012, 2013). This account is consistent with non-skeptical strict invariantism. I differentiate this account from some superficially similar proposals (Hawthorne 2004, Williamson 2005) and I defend it against some criticism (Nagel 2010). Finally, I develop it by invoking some further considerations from psychology as well as some from (cognitive) pragmatics.

Background papers:

Gerken, M. (2012b). On the Cognitive Bases of Knowledge Ascriptions. In *Knowledge Ascriptions*, (eds. J. Brown and M. Gerken), Oxford University Press: 140-170.

Gerken, M. (2013c). Epistemic Focal Bias. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 91, (1): 41-61.

Harmen Ghijzen (KU Leuven): Introspection and Basic Belief

Current versions of modest foundationalism tend to focus on ordinary perceptual beliefs as paradigm instances of epistemically basic beliefs, i.e., beliefs that do not depend on other beliefs for their prima facie justification. However, externalist foundationalist views would be greatly strengthened if they paid more attention to a class of epistemically basic beliefs that were the focus of classical foundationalism: introspective beliefs. The externalist foundationalist account of introspection is (1) analogous to its account of perception, (2) empirically plausible, and even (3) phenomenologically apt. On all of these fronts it scores better than internalist counterparts. What's more, with the help of a good account of introspective beliefs, externalists become capable of accounting for what I call the Accessibility Intuition and the Clairvoyance Intuition. Even though our perceptual beliefs are epistemically basic, the externalist can allow that we usually have access to some evidence for those beliefs in the form of justified introspective beliefs that one is currently perceiving that such-and-so is the case. This type of evidential support is absent in cases of Clairvoyance, and so can be used to explain why clairvoyants are epistemically worse off than us.

Patrick Greenough (University of St. Andrews): Is the Concept of Knowledge Incoherent?

The various puzzles and paradoxes surrounding knowledge might suggest that the concept of knowledge is incoherent. Such Incoherentism about Knowledge can take many different forms and be motivated in manifold ways. The goal of this talk is four-fold: (1) To articulate why such Incoherentism is an (initially) attractive view. (2) To distinguish a number of different kinds of Knowledge-Incoherentism - some much less theoretically committed than others. (3) To isolate five motivations for the broad view. (4) To show that each of these motivations is found wanting.

Christopher Hill (Brown University): The A Priori and the Structure of Concepts

I will argue that Quine's revisability thesis is called into question by certain claims about the nature of concepts. The most important of these claims are as follows: (i) Concepts serve cognitive interests, and in some cases, these interests are largely non-empirical. This is true, for example, of the concepts that belong to pure mathematics. (ii) Generally speaking, where C is a concept, there are propositions containing C that must be believed if C is to serve the cognitive interests that shape its use. (iii) Believing these propositions is constitutive of C. (iv) If the interests that shape the use of C are largely non-

empirical, then the beliefs that are constitutive of C are immune to empirical revision. I will be concerned to develop and defend these claims.

Terry Horgan (University of Arizona), Matjaž Potrč (University of Ljubljana), Vojko Strahovnik (University of Ljubljana), and Mark Timmons (University of Arizona): Epistemic Quasi-Agency in the Space of Reasons

Episodes of belief-formation normally are not experienced as passively occurring within oneself, but instead have a phenomenal character with some (but not all) core aspects of prototypical agentive phenomenology. Their phenomenal character is situated midway on a spectrum between the phenomenology of prototypical agency and the phenomenology of passively occurring conscious experiences; i.e., they have *quasi-agentive* phenomenal character.

Robert J. Howell (Southern Methodist University): Anonymous Experience, Impersonal Self-Knowledge

Numerous philosophers hold that there is a “for-meness” or subjective character to all conscious experience. Some even hold that there must be such a thing in order to ground basic self-knowledge and self-reference. This paper surveys some of these claims and finds them wanting. Instead it suggests an “anonymous” picture of conscious experience and suggests a model of self-awareness that avoids commitment to subjective character.

Christoph Jäger (University of Innsbruck): Disagreeing With Epistemic Authorities

I discuss Linda Zagzebski’s preemptionist account of believing on authority and defend my recent objections to it against her reply (Jäger forthcoming, Zagzebski forthcoming). Linda’s preemption thesis says that “the fact that the authority has a belief p is a reason for me to believe p that replaces my other reasons relevant to believing p and is not simply added to them” (Zagzebski 2012, 107). This thesis runs into trouble, e. g., if you encounter multiple epistemic authorities who disagree with each other, or if you have independent good reasons for believing what the authority believes. Zagzebski rejects such worries because, in her view, they don’t raise problems for the preemption thesis but at best for one of her claims about conscientiously judging someone to constitute an epistemic authority in the first place. However, the problem of competing authorities and related cases, as well as the preemptionist’s view that encountering an epistemic authority requires the agent to debase good reasons do pose serious problems for a “Hobbesian account” of epistemic authority. Instead, they support an alternative, “Socratic model” according to which epistemic authorities foster the agent’s overall understanding of the topic in question.

Mikael Janvid (Stockholm University): Objectual Understanding and A Priori Warrant. A Comparison

The aim of this talk is to investigate understanding by selecting a fruitful object of comparison: a priori warrant. Aside from being an interesting endeavor in its own right, current accounts of both states characterize them in ways so similar as to give rise to the question whether these two epistemic states really are distinct. In particular, both understanding and a priori warrant pose similar intellectual requirements on the subject. Since parsimony is not desired in this case, such an outcome would count against those accounts of understanding. I shall here argue that despite some similarities and joint cases of understanding and a priori warrant, these two epistemic states do not merge. There are cases of understanding that do not consist in a priori warrant and conversely there are cases of a priori warrant that do not amount to understanding.

Zoe Jenkin (Harvard University): Rational Evaluability and the Perceptual System

I’ll sketch a framework for thinking about the epistemology of perception according to which perceptual experiences inherit their justificatory force from the way they are formed. I’ll argue that our perceptual

systems involve states and processes that share the features of the states and processes involved in cognition that make belief-formation rationally evaluable. I'll also argue that this take on the scope of rational evaluability is compatible with a very low-level sort of moderate evidentialist foundationalism, on which in at least some cases, the earliest representational states within the perceptual system function as the ground-level of justification.

Mark Kaplan (Indiana University): Jeffrey's Challenge

In 1953, Richard Rudner published a paper called, "The Scientist Qua Scientist Makes Value Judgments." There he argued that since it is part of the business of a scientist to decide what hypotheses to accept, and because a scientist's decision as to whether she ought to accept a hypothesis is a consequential one, it is part of the business of a scientist to look at what the consequences of her accepting a given hypothesis might be, evaluate (from a moral and prudential point of view) the significance of these consequences, and decide whether she ought to accept the hypothesis in the light of that information. Thus it is that the scientist qua scientist makes value judgments.

In 1956 Richard Jeffrey published a response to Rudner's article. He argued, by appeal to Bayesian decision analysis, that what a scientist accepts has no role to play in her decision-making, and so it is a mistake to suppose that what she accepts could be of any moral or prudential consequence. But, far from concluding from this that a scientist is (pace Rudner) free to pursue the business of deciding what hypotheses to accept without paying attention to anything outside the epistemic realm, Jeffrey drew a very different, and surprising, moral: that it is in fact no part at all of a scientist's business to decide what hypotheses to accept. By 1970, Jeffrey had extended his moral: it is also no part of an inquirer's business to decide what she ought to believe.

In this talk, I will (i) explain by what line of reasoning Jeffrey arrived at his surprising moral, (ii) explain why I think this line of reasoning issues a critical challenge to any epistemology and/or philosophy of science that would trade in talk of acceptance and/or belief, (iii) suggest one way in which I think this challenge can be met, and (iv) explain how this way of meeting the challenge provides insight into what is going wrong in the paradoxes of the lottery and preface.

Christoph Kelp and Fernando Broncano-Berrocal (KU Leuven): Virtues, Safety, and Lotteries

A widespread intuition in epistemology has it that one does not know that one's ticket won't win a fair lottery with one million tickets and exactly one winner, say, if all the evidence one has is that it is very probable that one's ticket won't win. We argue that safety-based accounts of knowledge as well as popular versions of virtue epistemology either fail to account for the intuition or if they do, they run into a variety of problems elsewhere.

Friderik Klampfer (University of Maribor): How Moral Psychology Informs Moral Epistemology

There is a long-standing debate in moral epistemology about both the frequency and merits of appeals to intuitions in resolving disputes between rival ethical principles and theories. While some find such appeals not just valuable and informative, but also indispensable, for moral inquiry, others increasingly view them with suspicion or even suggest completely abandoning them. And yet, strangely enough, and in stark contrast to the golden age of ethical intuitionism at the turn of the twentieth century, until recently discussions over the epistemic worth of moral intuitions were rarely informed by a corresponding account of either their character or etiology.

The renewed interest of psychologists and empirically-minded philosophers in the psychological underpinnings of ordinary moral judgments promises to change all that. As we learn more about the psychological mechanisms that either directly produce or indirectly shape our moral judgments, as more data are gathered and explanatory hypotheses (Green's original dual- or Cushman, Young & Green's updated multi-system theory, Haidt's social intuitionist account, Mikhail, Hauser & Dwyer's linguistic analogy, Sunstein's moral heuristics, and many other) to account for them advanced, we seem to be better able to ground our trust in, or doubt about, moral intuitions on somewhat firmer empirical grounds.

In the paper, I assume a broadly reliabilist account of moral knowledge (or competence, or justification) and ask whether the psychological mechanisms and forces (putatively) operative in spontaneous production of our everyday moral judgments (computations over mental representations of agent- and action-properties, use of prototypes and heuristics, type 1 cognitive processes, emotional processes, flashes of evaluative feelings, affections, and so on) qualify as reliable belief-producing mechanisms or not. Regarding the particular type of moral judgments on which I focus, namely those of the agent's moral responsibility (i.e. ascriptions of moral praise and blame), the available evidence is rather dismal. Such judgments are typically made rapidly, often in a 'hot', intemperate, epistemically suboptimal mood, lack justification even by the cognizer's own standards, exhibit poor consistency and robustness across a variety of situations (coupled with a high degree of confidence or 'obviousness'), are resistant to contrary evidence and easily manipulated. Even worse, expert intuitive judgments seem to be vulnerable to the same errors and distortions that pretty much disqualify lay intuitions, and reflection, while not completely powerless, corrects few of them. This might, eventually, cast some doubt even on philosophers' favourite candidate for moral knowledge, Rawls's considered moral judgments.

I end by qualifying my conclusion threefold: firstly, my disillusionment with ethical intuitionism rests primarily on evidence about one particular (albeit central) type of moral judgments and may fail to generalize to others; secondly, deep divisions over the correct normative moral theory make it difficult, if not impossible, to provide a noncontroversial set of criteria for assessing moral cognizers' performance as success or failure; and, lastly, the jury assessing the merits of competing psychological accounts of intuitive moral judgment is still out.

Igal Kvat (Hebrew University of Jerusalem): Cognitive Risk Bias and the Threat to the Semantics of Knowledge Ascriptions

In this paper, I propose to recognize a new, although pervasive, *cognitive bias* – which I call the *Risk Bias*. On the Risk Bias, in its core form, subjects in a deliberative situation, after they have settled on a p-course they have expected to prevail, and then become aware of a new significant risk associated with an alternative contingency, assign an *exaggerated* likelihood to the new risk, and accordingly lower the likelihood of the previously (incompatible) expected course. This is a bias, an epistemically faulty reaction, since the awareness of the risk in question is not accompanied by information that bears on the likelihoods of the contingencies in question -- the previously expected course, and the alternative, risky contingency.

When exposed to a new significant risk as above, a subject suffers a confidence loss regarding 'p'. When sufficient, he is no longer in a position to assert that p. Yet confidence loss regarding 'p' (so long as it is above a certain level) is *compatible* with the subject's knowing that p.

Further: The locution 'I don't know that p' in colloquial use is ambiguous between its literal construal and a colloquial shorthand for 'I can't tell whether I know that p'. In our type of case, when the subject denies that he knows that p in view of the new risk, he should be construed in the latter sense. In this sense, he is very often warranted in asserting this denial of knowledge *given* his inappropriate loss of confidence.

This cognitive bias thus explains the puzzling aspects of cases akin to the Bank case. The subject, when becoming aware of a risk of which he previously has been unaware, *loses confidence* in the previously expected course due to the *unwarranted exaggerated* likelihood he now assigns to the new risk. Consequently, the subject is *appropriately* no longer in a position to assert what he previously has asserted, consequently is no longer in a position to act on it, and is in a position to assert the denial of the self knowledge-ascription. In view of this, accounts introducing pragmatic intrusions into the semantics of 'know', characteristic of Epistemic Contextualism and SSI, are unwarranted and not called for.

Jack Lyons (University of Arkansas): Causal Narratives, Folk Theories, and the Epistemology of (Some) Causal Judgment

I propose a psychological mechanism by which we form some beliefs about causal relations. We sometimes form such beliefs by constructing a "causal narrative" and using imagination to determine the plausibility of the resulting story. Even though the new causal beliefs that result from

this process are psychologically immediate (i.e., not the result of an introspectable train of reasoning) and, broadly speaking, intuitive, they are causally dependent on a host of background information encoded in folk physics, folk psychology, and so on. I then consider various epistemological treatments of these intuitive beliefs and their epistemic relation to that background information. In the end, I argue that these cases favor a “reliabilist dogmatism,” which holds that the beliefs are epistemologically basic and thus not *evidentially* dependent on the background information, but that the background information is relevant insofar as it affects the reliability of the overall process, thus distinguishing the view from an internalist form of dogmatism.

Brent Madison (UAE University): The Conceptual Connections Between Justified Belief and Truth

What individuates epistemic justification, from the other types of justification, is some connection to truth. Epistemic externalists have a straightforward explanation of the truth-connection, which is an advantage of their view. For example, a simple process-reliabilist holds that a belief is justified IFF it is the product of a reliable belief-forming process. So the connection between justified belief and truth is taken to be actual, de facto truth-conduciveness: justified beliefs are likely to be true.

But what about epistemic internalists? Internalism, as I shall construe it, holds that a necessary condition of having epistemic justification is that an awareness condition is satisfied, and that factors external to such awareness cannot contribute to, or detract from, justification. But if factors external to a subject's awareness, such as whether his experiences are veridical, do not affect what a subject has justification to believe, then internalists look to face a serious problem: if on their view it is possible to be fully reasonable and justified in holding one's beliefs, even if they happen to be for the most part false, then what does justification have to do with truth? If the truth-connection cannot be accounted for, there is a danger that perhaps such justification should not be thought to be genuinely epistemic after all.

My aim in this paper is offer an account of justification's truth-connection that is consistent with internalism and New Evil Demon cases. I shall argue that the connection between justification and truth is *conceptual*. That is, certain entailments hold between the concepts of epistemic justification and truth, and that grasping the concept of epistemic justification is sufficient to appreciate these entailments a priori. I shall argue that this account of the truth-connection is substantial enough to ensure that the kind of justification we are concerned with is genuinely epistemic, while still being consistent with the strongest versions of epistemic internalism

Maja Malec (University of Ljubljana): Yet Another Look at the Conceivability and Possibility of Zombies

Since 1996, when David Chalmers introduced the Zombie Argument against physicalism in *The Conscious Mind*, numerous works of ever more increasing technical complexity and nuanced argumentation have been written on conceivability and possibility of zombies. In this paper, I will not follow this suit, but rather take a quite subjective approach. I will try to determine why I am unable to decide whether or not zombies are conceivable by comparing this case with that of water being XYZ. In this, I will rely on the recent literature on modal epistemology. Next, I will join many others in questioning whether the suggested kind of conceivability of zombies leads to the kind of possibility that disproves physicalism.

William McNeill (University of York): Epistemic Emergence and Basic Beliefs

Suppose you have a warranted belief that P. And suppose that given your background beliefs, the proposition that P is epistemically emergent. In other words, suppose that given your background beliefs the truth of P would be surprising or unexpected. Then the warrant for your belief that P would be inexplicable in terms of your background beliefs. So your belief must be epistemically basic.

In other words we should accept the following conditional: If a belief B is epistemically emergent then B is epistemically basic or foundational.

The question is whether this conditional is of any use. Specifically (1) is it ever triggered? And (2) can it help us to work out whether a particular class of beliefs is basic? Is it a means of answering

questions of delineation? Here I argue that we should expect positive answers to both of these questions. I argue that the strategy I recommend here is more promising than two alternatives - experientialism and psychologism.

Emily McWilliams (Harvard University): Epistemic Oppression(s) and Ameliorative Epistemology

Epistemic oppression, as I understand it, is something that happens to us when external conditions impinge on our flourishing qua epistemic agents, in a way that is non-incidental. Accordingly, being epistemically oppressed constitutes a harm that befalls a person in her capacity as an epistemic agent. It can happen in different ways, and to varying degrees. Miranda Fricker's work on epistemic injustice gives us two examples of epistemic oppressions; namely, *testimonial injustice* and *hermeneutical injustice*. But these are two phenomena among many, and to a large extent, contemporary analytic epistemology still lacks the vocabulary for analyzing the myriad phenomena that constitute epistemic oppression. In the paper, I suggest a way forward, via a particular philosophical methodology.

In her work on social construction, Sally Haslanger has distinguished three different methodologies that we can use for conducting philosophical inquiry about some concept: *conceptual inquiry*, *descriptive inquiry*, and *ameliorative inquiry*. In inquiring about normative epistemic concepts, epistemologists have focused their efforts disproportionately on the first two types of inquiry. The third type - ameliorative inquiry - is unique in that it begins not with what we accept as given about our concepts or about the world, but rather with the normative question of what legitimate reasons we have for wanting those concepts in the first place. I argue that in doing the first two types of inquiry, epistemologists have implicitly assumed particular answers to this normative question, and that those assumptions have been problematically limiting. In particular, they have often precluded us from seeing the sorts of phenomena that constitute epistemic oppression as epistemically-relevant; that is, as being the kind of thing that we ought to take into account in building our normative epistemic theories. I argue that doing ameliorative inquiry in epistemology can help us to move past these limitations.

Guido Melchior (University of Graz): Knowing and checking: explaining the skeptical puzzle

This paper aims to explain a particular version of the skeptical puzzle. On the one hand, perceptual knowledge is intuitively immediate. Given this immediacy, it is hard to see why we should not know via Moorean reasoning that we are not BIVs. On the other hand, Moorean reasoning is intuitively a defective response to the skeptical challenge. One strategy of explaining this (alleged) defectiveness is in terms of sensitivity. According to sensitivity accounts of knowledge, Moorean reasoning is defective because it would indicate that we are not BIVs, if we were BIVs. However, sensitivity accounts of knowledge face two major problems. First, sensitivity is plausibly not necessary for knowledge. Second, sensitivity is not closed under known entailment. I will argue that sensitivity is not necessary for knowing but for checking. Thus, cases of insensitive knowledge are cases of knowing without checking. Moreover, checking is plausibly not closed under known entailment. Accordingly, Moorean reasoning is a method of coming to know that we are not BIVs, but it is not a method of checking whether we are BIVs. However, when doubting our own beliefs in philosophical contexts, we intend to check whether our beliefs are true. For this reason, we regard Moorean reasoning as a flawed response to the skeptical challenge.

Lisa Miracchi (New York University): Perception First

The dominant view in contemporary philosophy of perception is experience-first: having a perceptual experience that represents the world to be a certain way is both metaphysically and explanatorily prior to perceiving things as they are. This approach has serious explanatory appeal. It seems to be able to (i) positively characterize the nature of perceptual states, (ii) explain other perceptual states in terms of experiences, and (iii) provide a programmatic framework for scientifically investigating the natural facts in virtue of which perceptual states obtain. In contrast, perception-first views, such as disjunctivism and naive realism, have failed to generate such explanatory promise, and so have failed to gain widespread support. In this talk, I develop a perception-first theory that can rival the dominant view in explanatory power. Instead of appeal to representation as the central theoretical tool, I appeal to competences, and use this tool to deliver on all three of the above explanatory criteria in a perception-first way.

Jessie Munton (Yale University): Reliability, Confidence and Perceptual Justification

This paper proposes a partial solution to the generality problem in the field of visual belief. The debate around visual perception and reliability has overlooked resources available to the reliabilist to accommodate variation in justification. The main claim of this paper is that variation in degree of justification enjoyed by visual belief stems in part from differences in the visual states which mediate the process of perceptual justification. I argue that visual states include confidence levels associated with their contents. These confidences mediate the degree of justification which perceptual experience transmits to belief. Understanding that this is a potential source of variation in justification opens the way for a broader typing of visual process types than is otherwise plausible. I argue that, when understood in this way, broad visual processes offer both a plausible and attractive typing, resulting in a visual epistemology capable of claiming the virtues of apparently opposed approaches to perceptual justification. Appreciating the factors which privilege broader perceptual process types makes the generality problem as a whole more tractable.

Kate Nolfi (University of Vermont): Why Evidence (And Only Evidence) Can Justify or Rationalize Belief

It is relatively uncontroversial that, at least from the epistemic perspective, only evidential considerations can rationalize or justify belief. Only evidential considerations can confer positive epistemic status on a subject's belief that *p* by constituting the reasons for which she believes that *p*. And we ought to expect an account of epistemic normativity to explain why this is. Extant accounts appeal (in various different ways) to the idea that, put roughly, belief aims at truth in an effort to explain this evidentialist constraint on epistemic reasons. However, there are grounds for doubting that belief, in fact, aims at the truth in the way that these accounts presume. Thus, I pursue a different strategy here, one that does not rely on any sort of substantive normative relationship between belief and truth, in order to explain why it is that non-evidential considerations cannot serve as epistemic reasons.

Nikolaj Nottelmann (University of Southern Denmark): Relativistic Epistemology vs Relativistic Doxastic Ethics

Famously, figures like Richard Rorty have urged that we diagnose apparent wide discrepancies between cultures w.r.t. accepted epistemic standards as evidence that at bottom there are no universal epistemic norms. As many authors have keenly pointed out, this proposal runs into deep problems, not least w.r.t. defending its own epistemic legitimacy. However, as the seminal work of David Wong reflects, moral relativism may hope to avoid some of the great problems grounding epistemic normative relativism. In this talk, I discuss whether there is any hope for a relativistic theory of doxastic norms in a wider moral sense, and whether such a relativistic ethics of belief may gain momentum from the ethnographical data traditionally harnessed in support of a relativistic theory of epistemic normativity.

Darrell Rowbottom (Lingnan University): On the Epistemological Consequences of the Nature of Belief

How should one's position on the nature of belief constrain one's epistemological views? And how should one's position on the nature of degrees of belief, analogously, constrain one's formal epistemological views? In this paper, I will make a start at tackling these questions by considering the epistemological consequences of accepting a dispositionalist account of beliefs, such as that championed by Eric Schwitzgebel. What then might be the aim of belief, or the form and structure of justification, for instance?

Mary Salvaggio (Rutgers University): A Capacity Account of Constructive Memory

In this talk, I motivate understanding memory as a cognitive capacity with memory beliefs as the results of exercising this capacity. Memory beliefs have traditionally been understood as either stored and retrieved content with a certain causal history or content with a particular phenomenal character. First, I show that

these conceptions are not extensionally equivalent and they disagree on cases of special interest to epistemologists. Then, I argue that the capacity conception can best accommodate the psychological discovery that memory is radically constructive, focusing on cases of false memory. Finally, I claim that Kourken Michaelian's attempt to capture constructive memory with a causal account does not go far enough to include many of the central cases of interest.

Sarah Sawyer (University of Sussex): Contrastivism and Anti-Individualism

A subject *S*'s contrastive knowledge of the proposition that she *ys* that *p* requires there to be a *positive contrast class*—the set of propositions in contrast to which *S* knows that she *ys* that *p*—and a *negative contrast class*—the set of propositions in contrast to which *S* does not know that she *ys* that *p*. In this paper, I argue that the existence of a negative contrast class requires an anti-individualistic understanding of representational mental kinds, states and events. Consequently, contrastive self-knowledge entails anti-individualism.

Nico Silins (Cornell University/Yale NUS): The Evil Demon Inside

How mistaken can we be about our current mental states? I begin by briefly examining Descartes' evil demon and Descartes' case for the claim that he can achieve some certainty about his own mind no matter how an evil demon has interfered with him. I then examine more generally whether you could be radically deceived about your current mental states. Here I evaluate psychological as well as philosophical literature. Finally, I argue that we can have justified beliefs about our current mental states whether or not we are reliable about our current mental states.

Mona Simion (KU Leuven): No Epistemic Norm for Action

One central debate in recent literature on epistemic normativity concerns the epistemic norm for action. This paper argues that this debate is afflicted by a category mistake: strictly speaking, there is no such thing as an epistemic norm for action. To this effect, I introduce a distinction between epistemic norms and norms with epistemic content; I argue that, while it is plausible that norms of the latter type will govern action in general, epistemic norms will only govern actions characteristically associated with delivering epistemic goods.

Dustin Stokes (University of Utah): Attention and the Cognitive Penetration of Perception

One sceptical rejoinder to those who claim that sensory perception is cognitively penetrable is to appeal to the involvement of attention. So, while a phenomenon might initially look like one where, say, a perceiver's beliefs are influencing her visual experience, another interpretation is that because the perceiver believes and desires as she does, she consequently focuses her attention so as to change what she senses visually. But, the sceptic will urge, this is an entirely familiar phenomenon (we intentionally direct and shift our attention all day long, and this of course changes how we see and hear and so on), and it hardly involves some special or theoretically important cognitive effect on sensory perception. The sceptic is correct about cases that are accurately described in this way. But the rejoinder oversimplifies the possible roles that attention may play in mediating cognition and perception. This paper aims to identify these different roles, partly by emphasis on art appreciation and partly by emphasis on recent empirical research in perceptual psychology and suggests that there are plausible cases of cognitive penetration of perception where attention is involved. And these kinds of cases, by contrast to the majority of those emphasized in extant cognitive penetration literature, are plausibly effects of expertise and, accordingly, epistemically good rather than epistemically pernicious. The paper offers the modest conclusion that, at the very least, the burden of proof is shifted to the sceptic, as he then must show that there are no mental phenomena involving attention in the more nuanced ways described here.

Karsten Stueber (College of the Holy Cross): Knowledge of Other Minds and the Reality of Normative Reasons

My talk will address the vexing question of how to account for the reality and objectivity of normative reasons, a topic that has received sustained attention in contemporary philosophy. Normative reasons are objective considerations that oblige an agent in a variety of dimensions. Yet such obligations are not to be understood as impositions from an external perspective but are obligations that directly address or arise from within the agent's perspective. In order to understand the notion of an objective normative reason we therefore have to understand the conditions under which an agent *owns* those reasons and the conditions in which it is appropriate to judge him or her accordingly. In order to make progress in this respect I will argue that it is necessary to transcend the constraints of the contemporary debate by linking the debate about the nature of normative reasons to a philosophically satisfying account of the central epistemic features of our causal explanatory practice of making sense of each other, in terms of our reasons for acting. Taking my cues from Adam Smith in this respect, I want to suggest that we conceive of the notion of a normative reason as emerging from within our practices of negotiating the intersubjective intelligibility of our own agency through empathic and simulative perspective taking. It allows us to understand how those practices commit us to a notion of the impartial spectator perspective, a commitment that also explains why we are committed to care about morality but also about epistemic virtues such as curiosity and open-mindedness

Kurt Sylvan (University of Southampton): Why Knowledge Is Not Normative

If reasons are the fundamental units of epistemic normativity, we cannot understand what it takes to possess a reason in normative terms, on pain of circularity or regress. Yet the most obvious non-normative accounts of reason possession are implausible: it is hard to believe that one can possess P as a reason simply in virtue of believing that P or in virtue of P's seeming true to one. So how should friends of a reasons-first approach to epistemic normativity understand the relation of possession? I argue that they should understand possession in terms of knowledge and maintain that knowledge is not normative at all but rather a non-normative precondition for standing in the space of reasons. I argue that this view is independently defensible, and sketch a new bi-level approach to epistemology on which it splits into a normative half (understandable in terms of reasons) and a non-normative half (to which knowledge belongs).

Rene van Woudenberg (VU University, Amsterdam) & David Widerker (Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv): The Epistemic Status of Belief in Free Will

What is the epistemic status of belief in (libertarian) free will? Drawing on various things that Alston has said in a different context, this paper argues, first, that belief in free will is *practically rational*. However, this argument is limited in that a belief's being practically rational is not evidence that it is true. We next argue, in a Reidian vein, that belief in free will can be, for most of us at least, *properly basic*, which is a stronger status. Belief in free will, however, has an even stronger epistemic status. For, or so we argue inspired by Lehrer, this belief can be based on sound empirical evidence. We finally take a look at Vargas' claim that belief in (libertarian) free will fails a certain standard of natural plausibility. We argue that if our earlier arguments are any good, Vargas' claim is false.

Jona Vance (Northern Arizona University): Bayes and Basing in Perceptual Processes

Cognitive states--such as a subject's personal level beliefs and desires--can influence perceptual processing. This paper advances the view that some kinds of cognitive influence on perceptual processing and subsequent belief formation implement a form of epistemic basing or grounding. The view is oriented in a Bayesian framework for perceptual processing, where some of the inputs to perceptual inference are personal level states. On the view I offer, the cognitively influenced perceptual processing in question is subserved by sub-personal processes, but not descriptively exhausted by them. Rather, such cognitive influence and subsequent belief formation can instantiate personal level processes. Within the Bayesian framework, such processes are comparable to other forms of implicit causal learning that

instantiate epistemic grounding. I then argue that the view correctly predicts and explains several intuitive claims concerning cognitively influenced perceptual processing; these include the claims that (i) the influence of desire on perceptual experience and subsequent belief can be epistemically inappropriate and (ii) the justification status of an influencing state (if it has one) can help fix the justification status of a belief proximally based on a cognitively influenced perceptual experience. I conclude by highlighting that the view I offer has a putative advantage over reliabilist accounts in the epistemology of cognitive penetration, since my view is compatible with internalist mentalism about justification--the claim that justification supervenes on properties of mental states of the subject.

Ralph Wedgwood (University of Southern California): Plato's Theory of Knowledge

This talk gives an interpretation of the theory of knowledge that Plato sketches in three middle-period dialogues: Meno, Phaedo, and the Republic. Traditional interpreters are right to read Plato as claiming that all genuine knowledge is a priori knowledge of necessary truths – or as Plato would think of it, of aspects of the Forms. In contemporary terminology, his view is all genuine knowledge satisfies the conditions of adherence and safety to the maximum degree: that is, all genuine knowledge is indefeasible and infallible. However, Plato is also a kind of contextualist about the terms that refer to knowledge: all knowledge involves some degree of appreciation of the explanation of truth that is known; but how much appreciation of this explanation is required for it to be true to say that one “knows” varies with context. Moreover, Plato also recognizes a good kind of belief – more-or-less-reliably true belief – and sometimes seems willing to use some (but not all) of the Greek words for ‘know’ to pick out this kind of belief. In this way, Plato’s theory of knowledge is much less extreme and more defensible than generally supposed.

Sarah Wright (University of Georgia): Epistemic Authority, Intellectual Humility, and Eudaimonia

How should those exhibiting intellectual humility respond to the beliefs of those they take to be in an epistemically better position than themselves? Linda Zagzebski argues that we ought to take the beliefs of those we judge to be our epistemic authorities as a preemptive reason to believe the same. After exploring Zagzebski’s specific formulation of a preemptive reason, I argue that we should not treat the beliefs of even recognized authorities as preemptive in that sense. Such preemption is an extreme reaction to the relevant information, and is epistemically disruptive at the levels of individual belief, the epistemic virtues, and the overall good epistemic life. While it might seem that rejecting preemption is intellectually arrogant, I argue that intellectual humility, as a virtue, should instead aim for a mean between extremes. A focus on the mean can be motivated within a neo-Aristotelian virtue epistemology of the sort that Zagzebski has developed; it can also be motivated within a more neo-Stoic approach.

Symposium: Ernest Sosa, *Judgment and Agency* (OUP 2015)

Paul Boghossian (New York University)

Katalin Farkas (Central European University)

Paul Horwich (New York University)

Nenad Mišćević (University of Maribor, Central European University)

Danilo Šuster (University of Maribor)

Ralph Wedgwood (University of Southern California)

Ernest Sosa (Rutgers University)