

4th online meeting
Asian Epistemology Network
February 22, 2021
7 - 10pm (Shanghai)

1st session: Skills as Knowledge

Speaker: Bob Beddor (National University of Singapore)

Commentator: Yuri Cath (La Trobe University)

Abstract: What is the relation between skills and knowledge? According to most philosophers, the answer is "very little": practical intelligence is largely separate from theoretical intelligence. This paper questions received wisdom on this front. We develop and defend an intellectualist account of skills, according to which skills are identical to know-how, which in turn can be reduced to states of propositional knowledge. We argue that this account has a number of explanatory advantages that have thus far gone unrecognized. In particular, it provides an elegant explanation of the fact that all skillful actions are intentional; it also accounts for the close connection between skills and know-how. We go on to compare our account with more mainstream dispositionalist accounts of skills - including a recent proposal due to Stanley and Williamson (2017) - and show that dispositionalist approaches lack these explanatory virtues. (Joint work with Carlotta Pavese (Cornell))

2nd session: Epistemic Paternalism and Fake News

Speaker: Shane Ryan (Nazarbayev University)

Commentator: Michel Croce (University College Dublin)

Abstract: My paper offers an account of epistemic paternalism according to which the epistemic paternalist act is one in which the paternalist actor acts irrespective of what she believes the wishes of the target of her action are and the paternalist actor acts because she has a positive epistemic standing that the act may or will improve the epistemic welfare of the target of her action. A notable feature of this account is that epistemic paternalist acts needn't interfere with the autonomy of the object of the paternalist act. Having made the case for the foregoing, I consider the appropriateness of adopting an epistemic paternalist approach to popular social media sites where fake news circulates. I make the case that in principle such epistemic paternalism is permissible, although I elaborate on a number of obstacles to the permissibility of such an intervention. One such obstacle is the identity of the paternalist actor. I make the case that the businesses that own the sites should not alone decide whether and how to make such an intervention. I also discuss what an epistemic paternalist action with regard to fake news on social media might involve. Here I examine the epistemic environmentalist framework in order to provide guidance.