

Education, Knowledge & Curriculum

June 2, 2015

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EDST 403

blogs.ubc.ca/edst403



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Agenda

- Mindfulness
- Belief and knowledge
- Formative assessment
- Next class (guest: Myron Medina)
- Assignments – questions?

How curriculum and pedagogy are connected to ideas about knowledge

- Pedagogical content knowledge (subject matter + pedagogy)
- Core knowledge (or not) – social values
- Wisdom hierarchy
- Digital media
- Belief and knowledge

Learning objectives

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Describe at least 3 mindfulness exercises and reflect on your experience of doing/trying these exercises.
- Articulate some differences between knowledge and belief
- Describe some tensions that can arise between knowledge and belief in educational contexts and consider how you might address some of these tensions in your practice.

Belief, (truth) and knowledge

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Guiding Questions

- What are some differences between belief and knowledge?
- What tensions can arise between knowledge and belief in educational contexts?

See: Smith, M. U. & Siegel, H. (2004). Knowing, believing, and understanding: What goals for science education? *Science & Education*, 13(6), 553-582.

Agree or Disagree?

We want education to result in student knowledge. (among other things)

If so, what conditions are necessary and sufficient for something being, or counting as, an item of knowledge?

Philosopher's definition:

“Knowledge is justified true *belief*”

“Mary knows that the Earth revolves around the Sun, but she does not believe that it does.”

Would you think, on the basis of this remark, that Mary **knows** that the earth revolves around the sun?



one can know only what one believes

“Knowledge is justified *true* belief”

“Could Mary know that the Earth revolves around the Sun, if the Earth did not in fact so move?”



Philosophers would say:

If p. is false, I cannot know that p.

“Knowledge is justified *true* belief”

Could Amira know that [*brown coloured cows produce chocolate milk*], if these brown coloured cows did not in fact do so? [p]



Philosophers would say:

If p. is false, I cannot know that p.



(Note: Justified false belief is when I believe, falsely, that p. is true, when p. is false.)



“Knowledge is *justified* true belief”



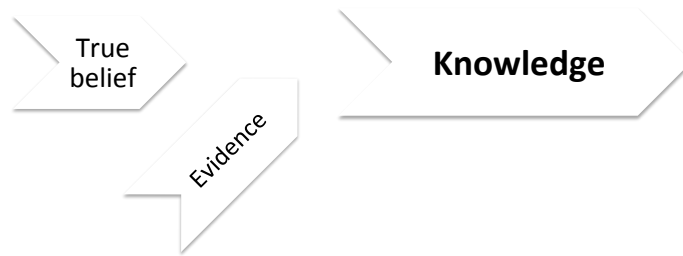
<http://www.janesville.k12.wi.us/ContactUs/SchoolPrincipalContacts.aspx>
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“Knowledge is *justified* true belief”



Not knowledge, but “lucky” true belief.

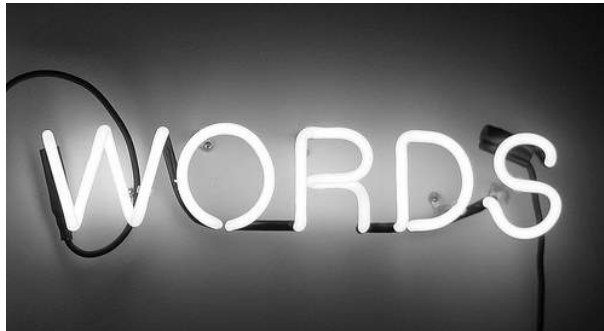
“Knowledge is *justified* true belief”



Uncontroversial

- a knowing subject can know something only if she believes it.
- belief is not a sufficient condition of knowledge, i.e., that believing something is not tantamount to knowing it.

Turn to a neighbour and describe your own understanding of the words “knowledge” and “belief”. What characteristics/ideas do you associate with each of these words? Make a list.



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KNOWLEDGE	BELIEF
Objective	Subjective
Rational	Irrational
Public	Personal
Verified	Unverified
Verifiable	Unverifiable
Certain	Tentative
Static	Dynamic
Not a basis for action	Basis for action
Implying low commitment	Implying high commitment

KNOWLEDGE	BELIEF
Objective "I know the planets travel around the sun"	Subjective "I believe that girls are better at math than boys"
Rational "I know it is not dangerous to hug someone with AIDS"	Irrational "I believe fortune tellers can accurately tell one's future"

KNOWLEDGE	BELIEF
Public I know that the Official Languages Act came into force in 1969 and that it gave English and French equal status in the government of Canada.	Personal (including religious) I believe that there is no god but Allah.
Certain I know that $1 + 1 = 2$	Unverified I believe I was 5 when that happened.



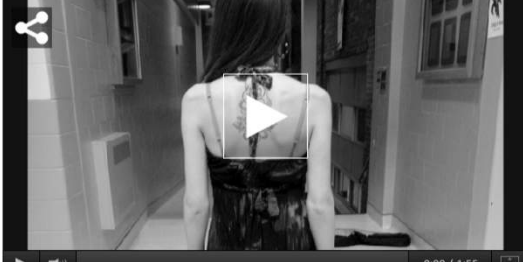
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Lauren Wiggins, Moncton teen, takes stand against 'unjust' school dress code

'Enough is enough,' Harrison Trimble student, 17, says about policy she calls sexual discrimination

CBC News Posted: May 12, 2015 4:13 PM AT | Last Updated: May 14, 2015 8:17 AM AT


School dress code sexist?



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Vancouver School Board revises gender identities policy

ALEXANDRA POSADZKI
The Globe and Mail
Published Tuesday, Jun. 17 2014, 8:56 PM EDT
Last updated Tuesday, Jun. 17 2014, 8:56 PM EDT

5 comments  386  371  15  0  +1  2  



When Julia O'Dwyer met with the vice-principal at Lord Byng Secondary School six years ago to inform him that her 13-year-old daughter would be transitioning into a boy named Cormac, there was no policy outlining how to accommodate transgender kids at Vancouver schools.

"The staff was really supportive but they really didn't know how to go about

With a partner

- Take turns sharing your story of a tension between knowledge and belief.
 - What happened?
 - How did this affect you?
 - What have you learned?
 - What (if anything) would you do differently next time?
- As you reflect on the above, refer to—and share-- the sentences in the text that helped you better understand the tension

June 9, 2015

- Myron Medina on Embodied Ways of Knowing
- Required reading: **Parsons & Beauchamp, Chapter 3** (see June 1 announcement for details)