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February 15, 1999
Journal 2
Education 304 C

Knowledge is something that is difficult to define. Almost everyone knows what knowledge is, but when asked to put it into words they stumble and many people come up with many different explanations. Knowledge is what someone knows – but what is knowing? Knowledge can be described as the accumulation of facts, but this makes gives the impression that knowledge is something that can only be obtained from books. Knowledge can be obtained through life experiences. In fact, knowledge obtained through life is remembered better and is often more certain than book knowledge.

There are many different types of knowledge, and an attempt to categorize knowledge would probably prove useless. The two main types of knowledge are knowledge that is obtained through books. In the same category would probably be knowledge that is obtained through lectures and movies, and any type of knowledge that is removed from the one knowing it. Another way to define it is anything that can be taught.

The other type of knowledge is knowledge gained from experience. This knowledge can not be taught, or in some cases can only be partially taught. For instance, someone can be taught how to shoot a basketball, but until they learn to shoot a basketball by themselves, it can not truthfully be said of them that they know how to shoot a basketball.

This type of knowledge may include skills, such as knowledge of how to play a guitar, or how to drive a car, or how to play well in a soccer game. Another type of experience knowledge is social knowledge, knowing how to interact with people, how to read faces, how to get people to do what they would not otherwise ordinarily do. Social knowledge is arguably the most valuable of any kind of knowledge.

The difference between knowledge and opinion should be carefully noted. Something that can be proved objectively is knowledge, but something that is subjective is opinion. Also, many people have false notions that they claim as knowledge. For instance, one thousand years ago the idea that the world is flat was considered knowledge. Today we know that the world is round, so people who lived long ago really did not have the knowledge they thought they did.