IN SEARCH OF JUSTIFIED TRUE BELIEF

The aim of the preceding exercise was to arrive at a formula that guarantees that something is true. This involves both truth and some means of justifying (or proving) that it is true: hence the term "justified true belief" Let us review those steps. WHEN IT SAW I KNOW X, IT MEANS

Attempt #1: *I know x and I believe that I know it*

Example: Somebody says that the earth is flat and they sincerely believe this
Problem: knowing and believing are two different things. In this case the belief is not justified

Attempt #2: *I know x, I believe x, and x Is in fact true*

Example: Although I have not talked to my brother in two weeks, I believe that he is well, and in fact it is true that he is well.
Problem: It is a coincidence that my belief in my brother being well and the fact that he is well coincide. Just because I want to believe he is doing well, it does not follow that know that he in fact is doing well. My belief turned out to be true, but it was still not justified

Attempt #3: *If I know x, it means that I believe x, that x is in fact true, and I accept x as true not simply because I would like this to be the case, but because my belief in x is based on my goal of learning the truth and avoiding error.*

Example: The philosopher Democritus believed that all matter was made of atoms, which combined in different ways to form various substances. Problem: While Democritus' belief was something that was true (as it later turned out), and although he believed not because he wanted to, but because he sought truth and wished to avoid error, the belief is still not justified, since he was at that time unable to prove the existence of atoms.

Attempt #4: *I believe x to be true, x is true,I accept x with the purpose of learning the truth and avoiding falsity,and I am justified in my acceptance of x*

Example: Someone looks, precisely at noon as it happens, at a clock which, unbeknownst to him or her, is not working and has for some days shown the same time, 12 o'clock. So the person accepts that it is 12 o'clock, they are justified, in that it is twelve o'clock by consulting others, and he believes it is twelve o'clock so that he will know the right time and avoid being late for something

<u>Problem</u>: Although the person was reasonably carefully in checking his reasons for believing it was 12 o'clock and also attempted to verify that fact independently, his belief turned out to be based upon something that was false, namely the belief that the clock was working when it showed him the time.
Conclusion: In order to have knowledge of x, the following conditions must be met

- **the person in question accepts x to be true**
- **that x is in fact true**
- **that the person is justified in accepting x (ha sverified it independently)**
- **that the person accepts x because they wish to know the truth and to avoid error**
- **that the person's acceptance of p does not depend on any factor that is false**

Only under these conditions can be be said to have justified true belief

Understanding Propositions

Propositions may be categorized according to

- **what they refer to, or the <u>subject matter</u> of the proposition**
  - **empirical: refer to statements of fact**
  - **normative: refer to value judgments**
  - **metaphysical: refer to a world view**
- **what <u>type of knowledge</u> they involve**
  - ***a priori*: truth is knowable prior to any experience (logical truths, geometry)**
  - ***a posteriori*: truth is known only by investigation(induction, science)**
- **what <u>type of knowledge they produce</u>**
  - **analytic propositions: true by virtue of the meaning of their parts (deduction)**
  - **synthetic propositions: give knowledge that is not reducible to its parts**

How they go together

- **empirical statements are always *a posteriori* and synthetic**
- **normative statements can be either *a priori* or a posteriori, and are usually synthetic**
- **metaphysical statements are usually *apriori* and can be either analytic or synthetic**