



EPISTEMOLOGICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE OPEN SOCIETY

University of Edinburgh

April 8th, 2008

Workshop Programme

All talks—with the exception of Professor Goldman's *Nature of Knowledge* lecture, which will take place in the Faculty Room South of the David Hume Tower—will take place room 4.18 on the fourth floor of the David Hume Tower.

10.00-10.30 Tea/coffee

10.30-12.00 ***Paul Faulkner (Sheffield)***
'Our Norm of Trust'

ABSTRACT. Different explanation can be given as to how testimony functions to transmit knowledge and justification. This paper identifies three—same-state, assurance and evidential—explanations, and argues these ostensibly conflicting explanations can be integrated within a genealogical account of how we have a certain way of life within which testimony is a source of knowledge and sharing what we know is central.

Commentator/First Discussant: Piers Turner (UNC, Chapel Hill)
Chair: Matthew Chrisman (Edinburgh)

12.00-1.00 Lunch

1.00-2.30 ***Klemens Kappel (Copenhagen)***
'Liberal Democracy and Epistemic Neutrality'

ABSTRACT. Controversies regarding the proper role of experts and expertise in liberal democracy in part concern what attitude to take to cases of conflicting knowledge claims—i.e., cases where two or more groups of experts (or purported experts) disagree about what is known. There are two crucial questions, or so I shall argue. First, should the liberal state aim to remain neutral in such *epistemic conflicts*, just as the liberal state aims to be neutral with respect a variety of value questions over which we disagree? Adopting this stance, *epistemic neutrality*, as I will call it, may seem required for the same reasons that justifies value neutrality. No doubt, most people think that epistemic neutrality is not required by the liberal state, but there is a non-trivial question as to why not. Second, if the liberal state is not committed to epistemic neutrality, there is a question about what justifies the liberal state taking the particular stance that most people favour: that of established science. Why can the state prefer a scientific outlook over others, say religious outlooks

(when these are in conflict)? What sort of reasons can the state appeal to when a choice between two groups of scientific experts has to be made?

Commentator/First Discussant: Michael Brady (Glasgow)

Chair: Jesper Kallestrup (Edinburgh)

2.30-3.00 Tea/coffee

3.00-4.30 ***Open Session: Funding Opportunities***

ABSTRACT. This session will examine the prospects for pan-European funding for a project cast along the general lines of the topic for this workshop. Klemens Kappel (Copenhagen) will open the discussion with a short presentation on a recent funding proposal that he has put together, in collaboration with Igor Douven (Leuven), Erik Olsson (Lund) and Duncan Pritchard (Edinburgh).

Chair: Duncan Pritchard (Edinburgh)

5.00-6.30 ***2008 Nature of Knowledge Lecture***

Alvin Goldman (Rutgers)

‘Externalism and the Architecture of Justification’

ABSTRACT. What determines the justificational status of a person’s belief? Are such determinants internal matters, external matters, or a combination of the two? These questions have generated the controversy between internalism and externalism in contemporary epistemology. In addressing these issues, several definitional options must be considered. What exactly is meant by a determinant of justification (a “justifier”), and what qualifies a factor as an internal or external factor? Taking alternative definitional options into account, the paper argues for a predominantly externalist approach to justifiedness. A natural architecture for justification holds that a token belief (or other doxastic state) is justified just in case it conforms to the right system of justificational rules, where justificational rules provide guidance or instruction for forming or retaining doxastic states. The paper inquires into the kinds of conditions that would be specified by right justificational rules. It argues that some of these conditions are likely to be internalist but others externalist. Moreover, which rules are right is itself (plausibly) a determinant of justifiedness, but this is also likely to be an external state of affairs. Finally, the criterion or standard of rightness is also (plausibly) a determinant of justifiedness, but it too is likely to be an external factor.

Chair: Duncan Pritchard (Edinburgh)