Varieties of knowledge

- Knowledge of persons, places, and things
- Knowledge how
- Knowledge that, or propositional knowledge

Propositional knowledge

Relation between subjects and propositions; expressed using `S knows that p`

What kinds of subjects can have propositional knowledge?

*Yes:*
- Persons: sentient human beings, angels, gods, demons (if there are any)
- 'Higher' animals

*Maybe:*
- People in comas? Infants?
- 'Lower' animals? Plants?
- Computers? Simple machines?
- Groups?

Propositions are meanings of complete declarative sentences. Propositions can be true or false. True propositions are (or refer to) facts. "Propositional attitudes" = belief, desire, regret, hope

Analyses and counterexamples

Analysis of X = attempt to define precisely what X is. E.g.: M: A mother = a woman who has given birth

Counterexample: case where something is X but not A, or vice versa. E.g.: Adoptive mothers are apparent counterexamples to M.

There are always three ways to respond to a counterexample:
- Add something to X. (E.g., add 'biological' to the left side of M)
- Add something to A. (E.g., add 'or adopted a child' to the right side of M)
- Reject the counterexample. (Deny that adoptive mothers are really mothers)

First part of this class: considering possible analyses of propositional knowledge
The JTB analysis of knowledge

The oldest analysis of knowledge, going all the way back to Plato:

JTB: S knows that p = S has a justified true belief that p

(1) p is true
p is true = (roughly) it is a fact that p
Evidence that what is known must be true: it's bizarre to say that S knows that p, yet p is false.
If p is false, S may think she knows that p, but she doesn't

(2) S believes that p
S believes that p = (roughly) S accepts that p is true
Evidence that what is known must be believed: it's bizarre to say that S knows that p, yet S doesn't believe that p

(3) S is justified in believing that p
S is justified in believing that p = (roughly) S believes that p for good reason(s)

Some seemingly good reasons for believing p (usually):
   You saw that p
   A reliable source told you that p
   You have a proof that p
   You know that there's a 99.999% chance that p

Some seemingly not so good reasons for believing p (usually):
   You want p to be true
   You had a dream where you saw that p
   The magic 8-ball said that p
   You know that there's a 50% chance that p

Next class: more on (1) and (2), and a famous counterexample to JTB