

VALUE-THEORETIC EPISTEMOLOGY

Workshop on *Epistemic Value*
University of Stirling

1. Two Inter-Related Sub-Projects

Take our over-arching question to be: “What is the value of knowledge?” Two inter-connected sub-questions emerge:

- (1) *All* knowledge, or only certain types of knowledge?
- (2) Granted the value of (certain types of) knowledge, what *kind* of value does it have?

2. Sub-Project One: The Possibility of Epistemic Value Pluralism

Epistemic Value Pluralism

Different types of knowledge are valuable in different, and philosophically interesting, ways (e.g., perhaps all knowledge is instrumentally valuable, but certain kinds of knowledge are in addition intrinsically valuable; or perhaps not all knowledge is valuable, but certain kinds of knowledge are instrumentally valuable).

Possible Ramifications

- Implications for the focus, or foci, of epistemological theorising.
- Implications for specific epistemological debates (e.g., scepticism, externalism/internalism distinction etc.).

3. Sub-Project Two: Delineating Varieties of Epistemic Value

Some Possible Types of Extrinsic Epistemic Value

- *Instrumental Value*—The value that something has because it is productive of, or is a means to, some further value (e.g., money).
- *Teleological Value*—The value that something has in virtue of being “aimed at” something else of value (e.g., when an act aims at some good, such as the relief of suffering).
- *Contributory Value*—The value that something has in virtue of being an essential part of something else that is valuable (e.g., the parts of a heart monitor).
- *Indicative Value*—The value that something has in virtue of being indicative of something valuable (e.g., the ‘good’ X-ray that indicates that I will live after all).
- *Functional Value*—The value that something has in virtue of performing a valuable function (e.g., the life-support machine).