Topic: VSE and GISTE discussion on skepticism (2nd try)

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https://discordapp.com/channels/304060867384742664/659327633694496660/659615918473

Note: Quotations are selective, not complete. Messages may be grouped together if they appear to have a common theme/ idea. Only the most relevant lines of discussion in the original chat. Quotes may be indicated by "..." or by a new line. Unless indicated some other way in the original chat. Some nodes are: - Questions - Unanswered - feedback (alternative interpretations and criticism of my interpretations).

VSE: defend your view against a skeptic who denies knowledge

GISTE: We have computers and spaceships. We made those out knowledge.

VSE: The skeptic wouldn't deny that we think we have knowledge, and that we can do things like build computers. He would deny that any of us have any unwarranted beliefs.

GISTE: To that skeptic, I would explain what knowledge is. Cuz apparently he has a different view of what knowledge is.

VSE: how you would describe knowledge?

GISTE: http://fallibleideas.com/knowledge

VSE: There seems to be a strong emphasis on "good" and "useful". What criteria do you use to determine what is a good or useful piece of knowledge? Can you distinguish knowledge from beliefs?

GISTE: can you give an example of a belief that is not knowledge? Also, I'm not sure maybe it'll help more cuz discussion forward. If you don't know, can you please propose something and that you think might work. :)

VSE: I believe there are extraterrestrial creatures who live on other planets. I would not purport to know such a thing.

GISTE: Well, why do you believe it then? Maybe a better question is: in what sense do you believe that aliens exist?

VSE: In the sense that there are physical phenomena which I'm agnostic to things like their composition, likely they're carbon based but it seems possible they're not.

GISTE: I meant, how did you arrive at that belief? What ideas went into it? Aren't those ideas knowledge? If not, why not?

VSE: I think there is a clear distinction between beliefs and knowledge. I don't know how to define it but I think the claim they're synonymous. :)

GISTE: I'll explain my view about beliefs. maybe this will help clarify things. there is belief by faith (which is not knowledge) and there is belief by reason (which is knowledge). Do you agree with this?

VSE: What do you mean by faith?

GISTE: If you recall i asked you a couple of questions much earlier in our discussion: "what do you mean by belief?" or "what do you mean by knowledge?" Do you faith that post exists? I think that clarify what i mean by faith?

VSE: No. Can you give an analysis of "faith"?

GISTE: faith: believing stuff without or despite evidence. I believe it. ignoring critiques of the belief. ignoring rival theories of the belief. (to be clear, the word "belief" is not important. what matters is what the meaning of the word is what matters. it's common to use synonyms to mean the same thing.)

VSE: That's an example, but I don't understand the concept you are invoking. Can you give an analysis of the concept?

GISTE: Ok. e.g. of faith: "I have faith in God because my rabbi said so." Or "I have faith that my car has plenty of gas." But let's say that I have no reason to believe that. Let's say somebody else has been driving my car and I've been in it and I have no reason to believe that that person actually filled my car with gas. That would be a case of belief by faith.

VSE: Is faith an unjustified belief?

GISTE: No. You asked me earlier in this discussion what justification is. I said "justification means using positive argumentsevidence to show that a claim is true or probably true." This implies ignoring criticism of the theory and ignoring rival theories of that theory. (This is what beliefsbyearning and I were trying to explain to you earlier in this discussion.) So, justification - faith.

Arnell: You imply that faith ignores criticism of it and ignores rival theories to it. I don't know why you think that. Do you think that justification and faith are the same thing? I don't think that. "Means using positive arguments/evidence to show that a theory is true or probably true". Maybe you mean to say that justification is a way to judge a theory? That's different than saying they are the same thing.

GISTE: People that have faith that god exists are people who, when asked why they believe in god, often say things other than "I have faith in god". Or "God must be a god because the universe couldn't have been created without a god." Or they give a reason being used to believe a theory, and that belief is held while ignoring criticism and rival theories.

Arnell: It seems like those people are using both faith and justification. Someone just using faith would say "I believe in god" with no reasons given.

GISTE: I think those people are saying that people who use faith often also use some justification for their faith. I agree with that.

GISTE: ok i see your point i concede.

GISTE: i could change the definition of justification to "believing that a theory is true or probably true without consideration for criticism of the theory and without consideration for rival theories. (maybe the meaning just enough to include faith (as you see it). I'm not sure maybe that's a original definition of justification that I originally presented. Maybe it's not. Maybe it's one of categories, reason and non-reason. non-reason = "believing a theory is true or probably true without refuting (a) all known rival theories and (b) all known rival theories."

GISTE: justification and faith are each a type of non-reason.

Arnell: I don't see how justification necessarily implies ignoring rival theories. Don't people try to weigh theories against each other and thinking about how much justification they have for each theory?

GISTE: and justification and faith overlap in some cases instead of being distinct.

GISTE: maybe better to say "ignoring some or all rival theories"

Arnell: Couldn't someone say that their theory has more justification than all of the rival theories, and that therefore they don't ignore them? That seems like the kind of thing some people would say.

GISTE: they can do justification without doing that, so i don't see the point

Arnell: Yes, they can. The point is that you used the idea that justification implies ignoring rival theories to say that justification necessarily implies ignoring that justification doesn't imply ignoring rival theories.

GISTE: it ignores at least some cuz it doesn't require factoring in all of them.

Arnell: you should say something like:
This implies that you can ignore non-criticism of the theory and that theories to that theory

GISTE: oh i like that better thx