November 2016 – Essay Title Discussion

1. “The acquisition of knowledge is more a matter of recognition than of judgment.” Evaluate this claim with reference to two areas of knowledge.

   • Unpack recognition and judgment
   • Judgment will involve reason as a way of knowing
   • Recognition seems to suggest elements of familiarity. Will likely include intuition & memory?
   • Judgment seems to be a good fit for the Natural Sciences- reasonable decisions about what you see. Limited in terms of recognition
   • We must be a careful to avoid a situation where Natural Sciences is all about judgment and Arts is all about recognition
   • The idea of recognizing beauty was raised
   • Is Judgment is much more reductionist?
   • In the Arts judgment is important – the role of the critic. Possible to get counter claims and claims. Recognition leads to judgment and Judgment can lead to recognition. The acquisition of knowledge is a dynamic process it is not a linear process.
   • Could judgment be considered to be what is described as “application” in the knowledge framework.
   • There is a note in the exam report to suggest that new items such as the knowledge framework and personal vs shared knowledge should be a part of the essays.

2. **Is the availability of more data always helpful in the production of knowledge?** Explore this question with reference to two areas of knowledge.

   • Using the words always pushes the students to disagree
   • The obvious attack is to talk about Human Sciences & Natural Sciences
   • But what kind of data? Statistics
   • What about the less data driven areas like The Arts. Would make for a useful contrasting AoK
• If you say the data is not useful then you need to look perhaps at how emotions produce knowledge

• How is data helpful in building personal and shared knowledge?
• Eg – data about Vietnam – what do we know about the USA as country

• Data in the in the arts may actually impeded knowledge

• In the Natural Sciences you may have too much data. And then there are issues with selectivity of data.

• Reliability of data is a also a critical issue. There can be instrument errors and human error etc.

3. “Conflicting knowledge claims always involve a difference in perspective.” Discuss with reference to two areas of knowledge.

• Definitions of perspective are tenuous

• The statement is a truism which then makes it different to craft an adequate counterclaim.

• Another way of looking at different perspectives may be to look at different AOKs as the lens for looking at different knowledge issues. – within the AOKs there may be consensus.

• Within AOKs there can be conflicting knowledge claims

• One piece of advise might be to look at a variety of RLSs that help to justify the question

• It has to be stronger than different – a contrasting perspective would be necessary.

4. “Error is as valuable as accuracy in the production of knowledge.” To what extent is this the case in two areas of knowledge?

• What exactly is meant by the term error?

• Are there different types of errors? Are there useful errors? Eg. Procdual error may not be useful.

• Natural Sciences and History seem to apply
• History requires one to be precise about the events so that there is consistency in the narrative.

• Errors in Art may result in the development of a new skill.

• In biology there is a much larger margin for error than in Chemistry. (??)

• How do you weigh the equality of error and accuracy?

• Do you unpack the word value?

• Does it count as an error if the error is discovered after some time?

• At the conclusion of the essay, make note that knowledge evolves.

• The need to be right can cause paralysis.

• Is Error happenstance?

5. “Metaphor makes no contribution to knowledge but is essential for understanding.” Evaluate this statement with reference to two areas of knowledge.

• Metaphors can be defined in a broad manner. The entire question is a fairly broad one. Maps for example can be defined as metaphors.

• Metaphors suggest a comparison and wide variety of knowledge tools such as models can therefore be described as metaphors too.

• The question requires that a distinction be made between a contribution to knowledge and mere understanding.

• One of the key ideas was that metaphors are often used in teaching. We use metaphors to communicate understanding. This led to the idea that metaphors are deeply connected to shared knowledge. This led to the question; What role do metaphors play in personal knowledge?

• How do we define contribution to knowledge. Can this include the pursuit of knowledge? Knowledge acquisition vs Knowledge production?

• Very broad question that allows for a lot of scope for students.

• Metaphors can describe taste and smells

• Metaphors that we are in taught in our youth do not translate. Metaphors change over time.
• Can metaphors be described as patterns? Can this be linked to the patterns in mathematics and knowledge production? Can this idea of metaphors be transferred to the art and knowledge production?

• Language can cause issues because the metaphor does not translate.

• Any knowledge claim is a metaphor – we capture that through metaphors consistently

• Must one have metaphors to have knowledge?

• Recommended text: *Metaphors we live by* – George Lakoff

6. “Ways of knowing operate differently in personal and shared knowledge.” Assess this claim

• What does it mean to operate?

• Is there a suggestion of interplay between Ways of Knowing and Personal and Shared Knowledge?

• Shared Knowledge is highly structured while Personal Knowledge is not. What implications does this have for the WoKs operating within these.

• There are different stages to knowledge production – initially it is about generating possibilities – what are the WoKs involved in the initial stage? At the later stage knowledge production becomes about communication and clarification – what are the WoKs involved?

• Seek out a good contrasting AOKs

• The instruction refers to a “claim”. What does it mean to assess? Make sure that students do not write a one sided essay