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RECOVERING THE ROLE OF EXPLANATORY KNOWLEDGE IN EXPERTISE

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Abstract

While it is a view that philosophy has largely ignored since Gilbert Ryle's work in the 20th century, we ought to recognize that explanatory knowledge serves a valuable role in expert behavior. With developments that arise in the 20th century, we experience a radical shift in understanding expertise that would have us believe explanatory knowledge, and propositional knowledge generally, simply does not play a role in skilled performance. According to the contemporary literature,¹ while having explanatory knowledge may be relevant to the novice person who is acquiring a skill, having such knowledge in no way manifests in behavior that we generally distinguish as being expert. Only until very recently, many philosophers have come to agree that explanatory knowledge is merely inoperative as it relates to skilled performance, and while considering such knowledge may be useful to a beginner who is learning a new skill, such knowledge is in no way operative once the person has become well-acquainted with the skill.

However, simply because philosophers have concentrated on examples involving expertise in which explanatory knowledge does not occupy a central role, we ought to deny the premature conclusion being made that would have us believe explanatory knowledge is always a mere aside to a person's displaying expertise. Ultimately, in analyzing cases involving expertise where explanatory knowledge makes an essential contribution to a person's displaying expert behavior, we ought to see why exactly the Rylean account of skilled behavior

¹ Surely there is literature today that contradicts the predominant view in contemporary philosophy regarding expertise, but generally speaking, most philosophers today support the predominant view that ultimately we ought to see is inadequate.

is inadequate, and in what ways explanatory knowledge is in fact valuable and is made manifest in a person's displaying expertise.²

I. Introduction

Dating back to Aristotle and Plato's work in epistemology, philosophers have been particularly interested in expertise and in what ways we ought to conceive expert behavior. The expert's knowing how to ϕ at an especially sophisticated level engages with philosophy both ancient and contemporary, but the extent to which we have understood exactly what this type of knowledge consists in has been laden with controversy. With very recent developments made in the 20th century, however, particularly in Gilbert Ryle's work on skilled behavior, it would appear philosophers have come to consensus in saying that the expert's knowledge consists in an ability, a skill that is inextricably linked to action and performance. Ryle's account in the 20th century would have us believe that as a result, we ought to distinguish the expert's knowledge how as radically different than the person's explanatory and propositional knowledge, which is characterized in the Rylean account as being behaviorally inoperative.

Using physical and perceptual skills as paradigm examples, the Rylean³ would argue that such cases show us that explanatory knowledge simply lacks having a relevant relationship

² To be clear, while I am seeking to revive the ways in which explanatory knowledge shows up in the expert's behavior, I am not committing my work to the potentially implicit conclusion that in all cases, explanatory knowledge must then be present in a person's displaying expertise. I only aim to show that through investigating particular cases, we cannot ignore, as we are currently in the literature, the valuable role explanatory knowledge serves in these cases.

³ As a note, I move between calling those who support Ryle's work "Rylean" and "anti-intellectualist" philosophers. The two are meant to be treated as the same with respect to their philosophical commitments. Also, I use the term "intellectualist" to describe any philosopher who sides with the intellectualist tradition in its broadest sense, but as we will see, being an intellectualist does not commit a person to any particular view with respect to the tradition.

to skilled behavior. In considering a sports player, let's say, an anti-intellectualist may argue that whether the player is able to explain why he made a particular move does not bear on whether he in fact possesses expertise. In the case where the player is successful in the game and is able to successfully demonstrate superior skill in performance, why should it matter to us whether he is able to explain what he is doing – that is, whether he is able to explain why he makes particular moves? Of course, this is a rhetorical question that the Rylean presents us with — given the example, it is convincing that such a question is merely irrelevant to whether the player possesses expertise. But the issue with philosophy regarding skilled behavior is the fact that we currently use examples involving physical and perceptual skills to make broad generalizations about those who possess and display expert behavior. The fact is, there are many examples that would suggest the opposite is true — that having explanatory knowledge is essential to a person's expertise and that it in fact shows up in the expert's behavior.

The truth is there are many cases that the Rylean account simply cannot accommodate, because these cases show us that explanatory knowledge is in fact playing an indispensable role in expert behavior. In response to these cases, we ought to see why philosophy is adopting the wrong approach in understanding expertise, and what ways we ought to envision skilled behavior. In order to amend philosophy's mistaken approach, we ought to recover the role that explanatory knowledge serves in expert behavior and the way in which such knowledge manifests in displaying expertise. These are the cases we will be investigating here, as these examples will show us that explanatory knowledge cannot be dismissed as it is being currently in contemporary philosophy.

II. What We Are Meant to Overcome in the 20th Century

We largely inherit the way we understand expertise today through Gilbert Ryle's work on skilled behavior in the 20th century. In "Knowing How and Knowing That: The Presidential Address" (1945),⁴ Ryle's account comes in response to what he calls the "intellectualist legend", the prevailing view preceding the 20th century which argues that in exercising knowledge how (i.e. knowing how to ϕ), a person must bring to mind the relevant propositional knowledge relevant to its exercise (8). According to intellectualism, at least as Ryle characterizes it, in playing chess, let's say, the intelligent player is the person who brings to mind the appropriate rules when the game presents situations that require their usage, and then goes on to act according to these rules. In a person rationally engaging with the world and displaying skilled behavior, the intellectualist would argue that a person's action must be permeated with reasons, and the way in which these reasons bear on a person's action is through that person explicitly bringing to mind propositional knowledge relevant to the situation. However, Ryle believes that such an understanding regarding skilled behavior is crucially misguided. The argument that an action is only intelligent when a person explicitly brings to mind the right propositional knowledge is simply false according to Ryle's account.

Although he does not explicitly address its origins in Cartesianism, it is quite clear that Ryle's attack against intellectualism is a response to its being laden with Cartesian influence. The intellectualist model that Ryle discusses, as we will see, relies on a Cartesian dualism regarding the ways in which we skillfully engage with the world. In Jennifer Hornsby's work,

⁴ Gilbert Ryle (1945), "Knowing How and Knowing That: The Presidential Address," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, New Series, 46, 1-16. JSTOR.

“Ryle’s *Knowing How, and Knowing How to Act*”,⁵ she discusses the fact that Ryle’s work in the 20th century largely consists in an anti-Cartesian message attacking what we see manifest in the intellectualist legend.⁶ According to the intellectualist legend, skilled behavior consists in “two [separate] processes running in parallel”, which is meant “to achieve a separation [between mind and body]” (97). While the body’s responsibility consists in merely physical movement and registering the world through perception, the mind’s responsibility is to steer and guide bodily activity so as to make it intelligent. It is through the mind (i.e. the propositional knowledge we bring to mind) that causes the body to react and move in intelligent ways in response to what it sees in the outside world. In envisioning knowing how to ϕ as a separate type of knowledge, then, Ryle is meaning to overcome a dualism between mind and body through establishing a type of knowledge that allows us to skillfully engage with the world without perpetuating these two separate processes (i.e. a process that involves mental states and operations and a separate process that involves bodily movement).

In overcoming the intellectualist narrative, Ryle uses a regress argument in order to show that in accepting the intellectualist's story, "no intelligent act... could ever begin" (2). Ryle's regress argument is essentially the puzzle Lewis Carroll investigates in “What the Tortoise Said to Achilles.”⁷ Ryle begins with the obvious difficulty that merely having propositional knowledge in no way guarantees its appropriate usage. That is to say, simply because we have

⁵ Hornsby, Jennifer. “Ryle’s *Knowing How, and Knowing How to Act*”. *Knowing How: Essays on Knowledge, Mind, and Action*. (eds. John Bengson and Marc Moffett). New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

⁶ It is important to note that the intellectualist legend is merely a single account amongst many that intellectualists subscribe to. As we will see later, being an intellectualist does not require that we commit ourselves to the account that Ryle is attacking here.

⁷ Here, I will only be discussing the way in which Ryle makes use of the regress argument, but it is important to note that he makes explicit mention of the fact that the argument here is identical to the one being made in Lewis Carroll’s puzzle.

learned the relevant knowledge that may be appropriate in knowing how to ϕ , merely having learned that material in no way ensures that we exploit such knowledge at the appropriate time, in the appropriate way. As a result, in accepting the intellectualist narrative that tells us skilled behavior relies on bringing the right propositional knowledge to mind, while admitting the Rylean insight that bringing such knowledge to mind is dependent on that process being intelligently executed, Ryle argues we become open to a gap between considering propositional knowledge in the mind and going on to apply that knowledge in the world.

The issue arises in the exact moment that we become open to this gap. Let's assume we know a proposition that is relevant to knowing how to ϕ . The only way to then bridge the gap between that proposition's being brought to mind and its successful application in practice is through appealing to an additional proposition, namely one that tells us the original proposition is a reasonable one to apply in the situation at hand. However, keeping in mind that we are able to bring a proposition to mind intelligently and unintelligently, that means that this additional proposition meriting the original proposition's use is likewise able to be applied intelligently and unintelligently — and so we see the regress arise in the fact that no matter the extent to which we give a person additional propositions, the next proposition will always require an additional one.

This issue with the intellectualist story is something made manifest in Ryle's example involving the poor reasoner. The poor reasoner, a student who is given two propositions that logically result in a given conclusion, cannot see why exactly the conclusion results. Ryle goes on to say that in giving the student an additional proposition (namely, that when the first two premises are true, then the conclusion must be true), despite this additional proposition the

student is unable to see why exactly the conclusion results (i.e. why he is logically obligated to accept the conclusion). Ryle argues that such a case demonstrates to us that propositional knowledge is unable to secure us knowledge how because the student, no matter the extent to which he is given additional propositions, will never understand why the conclusion logically results. The fact is, as Ryle articulates it, despite the student considering reasons, he is unable to see that the conclusion results because he is not exercising reason, which is the same exact issue Lewis Carroll's work, "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles", presents us with.

III. Skilled Behavior According to Ryle

Ryle argues in response that having knowledge how is simply different than having propositional knowledge. According to Ryle's picture, having knowledge how consists in an ability, a skill that is inherently made manifest in performance, which is to say that a person's internally bringing propositional knowledge to mind does not make any contribution to a person's knowing how to ϕ . Two observations in particular make Ryle's account particularly attractive. The first is the fact that a person may have the right propositional knowledge and yet be unable to ϕ . The second observation is the fact that a person may display skilled behavior without having learned the propositional knowledge relevant to its exercise. And so it would appear that we ought to dismiss this highly intellectualist view Ryle is attacking here.

However, the issue in Ryle's response to intellectualism is the strong distinction he then establishes between knowing how to ϕ and having propositional knowledge. In fact, Ryle such propositional knowledge altogether in regards to skilled behavior because he believes it is simply behaviorally inoperative. The result of the Rylean move here is that first, propositional knowledge no longer contributes to a person's displaying expertise, but second, the use of such

knowledge is downgraded to be “useful [merely] pedagogically, namely, in lessons to those are still learning how to act” (12). Consequently, while Ryle succeeds in showing why an intellectualist account permeated with Cartesian influence is untenable, Ryle’s own view is committed to an incredibly weak perspective on the role that propositional knowledge plays in skilled behavior. To a Rylean, propositional knowledge is valuable only in teaching a novice who is becoming acquainted with a particular skill, but having such knowledge is in no way operative at the expert level. Regarding those who possess expertise, the role of explanatory knowledge is simply lost and the expert is then meant to be operating according to a knowledge that is radically different than what propositional knowledge provides us with.

IV. Resisting the Rylean Narrative

There are two immediate ways in which the intellectualist may push back against Ryle’s narrative in the 20th century.⁸ The first is through questioning the presumed relationship Ryle purports to exist between knowledge how and ability. In estranging propositional knowledge and its potential relationship to expertise, Ryle asserts that having knowledge how consists in actualizing an ability. However, in regards to Ryle’s assumption here, there exist many counterexamples that suggest we cannot simply reduce knowing how to ϕ to an ability that a person actualizes in performance. In “The Presidential Address: Knowing How and Knowing That: A Distinction Reconsidered” (2004),⁹ Snowdon investigates these counterexamples as a

⁸ Note that these responses I develop here will not be the path I ultimately believe we ought to pursue in resisting Ryle’s narrative. I introduce them here to show the strengths and weaknesses in alternative responses we are given in the literature, but ultimately I am interested in demonstrating why we ought to move beyond these responses to a path that I believe will serve as the most promising.

⁹ Snowdon, Paul. “The Presidential Address: Knowing How and Knowing That: A Distinction Reconsidered.” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol. 104, 2004, pp. 1–29. JSTOR.

way to overcome the assumed relationship between knowledge how and ability that pervades Ryle's account.

Three examples in particular demonstrate to us that Ryle's move in assuming a synonymous relationship between knowledge how and ability is in fact a mistake (8-9).

Consider a first example: I know how to make pudding, but there is such a shortage of sugar in the world that I cannot access an essential ingredient necessary in making it. Because of the shortage, I simply cannot make pudding despite having done so many times in the past.

Consider a second example: imagine I am the world's greatest cook but suddenly I lose my arm in a tragic accident. Despite the physical limitation I now have that renders me unable to cook physically, we would like to say nevertheless that I know how to cook despite my physical impairment. And lastly, consider a third example: I am inside a building that is burning to the ground. The only way to escape the fire is to crawl out onto a ledge and be rescued by firefighters. While I obviously know how to escape, I am paralyzed with fear which results in me remaining in the room that is currently set aflame.

In all three examples, we ought to believe that despite circumstance, I nevertheless have the relevant knowledge how regarding each example. The fact is that in all three examples, I know how to ϕ but nevertheless I am unable to manifest such knowledge in action. In the first example, it is through mere coincidence that I am unable to ϕ . In the second example, it is due to a physical limitation that I can no longer ϕ . And in the last example, the disconnect between my knowledge how and action is attributed to a psychological barrier. Each example demonstrates to us in a slightly different way why Ryle's assumption is misleading.

Having knowledge how and being able to act ought to be treated separately as these three examples suggest, and on Ryle's account he is merely inappropriately combining them together.

Another way to resist the Rylean account of skilled behavior is through directly challenging the assumption that in the case where a person explicitly brings propositional knowledge to mind, he cannot possibly be displaying skilled behavior. Again, according to Ryle's account, only a novice would explicitly consider propositional knowledge while acting, but once a person has mastered a skill, such knowledge is simply no longer operative in the behavior. Furthermore, in the case where a person is bringing to mind propositional knowledge explicitly, Ryle argues that it would in fact impede the expert's ability to skillfully engage with the world. However, through examining Barbara Montero's work in "A Dancer Reflects",¹⁰ we ought to see that Ryle's sweeping assumption regarding expert behavior is actually quite incompatible with Montero's discussion, and we ought to question, then, the assumed antagonistic relationship Ryle conceives between displaying skilled behavior and explicitly considering propositional knowledge.

Through investigating Montero's own experiences as an expert ballet dancer and what exactly these experiences suggest to us regarding skilled behavior, we are given a phenomenological account regarding expertise in dance performance that directly challenges Ryle's view. While Ryle's story suggests to us that propositional knowledge plays no role in expert behavior, because in doing so a person would have to explicitly bring to mind such knowledge, Montero argues that bringing propositional knowledge to mind explicitly is actually

¹⁰ Montero, Barbara. "A Dancer Reflects". *Mind, Reason, and Being-In-The-World: The McDowell-Dreyfus Debate*. (ed. Joseph Schear).

a very common occurrence during an expert dance performance, and that bringing to mind such knowledge in no way impedes but rather strengthens the dancer's routine. Although Montero admits that "many decisions about how to move are automatic and unconscious... it seems to [Montero] that the best performances also allow observers to witness deliberate, conscious thought in action, [because without it the performance] would be flat" (314-315).

As Montero introduces specific propositional statements that expert dancers regularly bring to mind during performance, we are provided with good evidence to suggest that Ryle's very sweeping assumption regarding skilled behavior and propositional knowledge being essentially incompatible is in fact quite misleading.¹¹ A quick example Montero discusses regarding explicit propositional knowledge being brought to mind during performance relates to the fact that talented dancers, during performances that involve particularly challenging music, explicitly count the music during the routine. But while this is only one example showing that explicit propositional knowledge may in fact manifest in skilled behavior, Montero believes the best example involves the way in which dancers at the highest level are concerned with performance quality while executing a live performance. She argues that the best dancers are the ones who are constantly thinking about "how to capture, accentuate, [and] play with the music in [their] movement", and while she says that these thoughts occur in practicing the routine and getting comfortable with it, these thoughts likewise appear in the live performance as well. Montero describes these propositional statements as not only serving to strengthen the dance performance quality (i.e. the way in which the performance resonates with the

¹¹ Of course, as I discuss later, Ryle's assumption is not inaccurate because it does not apply to any examples involving skilled behavior, but rather, it is misleading because Ryle asserts it as a universal rule while Montero's experience clearly suggests it does not apply to every case involving expertise.

audience), but she also characterizes them as helping the expert dancer respond to when things go wrong in performance.

Ultimately, what we are given with Snowdon and Montero's work are two different ways through which we are able to critically reflect on the shortcomings of Ryle's account. In Snowdon's response to Ryle, he argues that we cannot, as Ryle is comfortable doing, merely reduce knowledge how to an ability. While physically showing a person is able to ϕ in action may be the easiest way to prove that a person possesses knowledge how, we surely cannot then merely reduce knowledge how to physically proving a person is able to ϕ . As Snowdon demonstrates, there are many examples in which due to mere circumstance, we are unable to manifest the knowledge how we possess in action. Consequently, Ryle's move in making synonymous knowing how to ϕ with being able to manifest such knowledge in performance is clearly an overstep and a mistaken assumption. However, through Montero's work we are able to criticize Ryle's account in a different sense. While Ryle argues that the expert never brings to mind propositional knowledge in an explicit way, Montero's experience as a ballet dancer simply shows this is not the case. As a result, while we assumed earlier that physical and perceptual skills serve as paradigm examples showing the strength of the anti-intellectualist response, we see that Ryle's account does not accommodate every case.

V. The Direction We Ought to Move In

While these serve as two different ways to resist Ryle's story, in truth these responses provide us with relatively weak evidence against a Rylean account of skilled behavior. Due to the fact that Snowdon and Montero's work both rely on extremely particular examples that do not lend themselves much to generality, we ought to see that such responses do not provide us with sufficient reason to abandon the Rylean narrative. To be clear, Snowdon is only considering examples involving a person who already possesses knowledge how, but who is merely unable to manifest it in action due to circumstances that are arbitrarily engineered. Of course, while surely it would make sense to acknowledge circumstance as an impediment that may occasionally obstruct a person's action, there are two main reasons why Snowdon's work does not provide us the strongest way in which to resist the Rylean narrative.

The first reason lies in the fact that every example Snowdon provides us with includes people who have already mastered and previously displayed the particular skill in action – so in response, a Rylean may easily preserve the relationship between knowledge how and ability while admitting that due to particular circumstances, knowledge how may not be in fact exercisable. In response to Snowdon's argument, while the Rylean may concede the issue regarding circumstance playing a role in a person's ability to manifest knowledge how in action, he is able to say that despite this, in standard conditions where no special circumstances apply, a person ought to be able to manifest knowledge how in performance. It does not appear to put Ryle under great pressure then to concede that circumstance occasionally impedes skilled behavior, because under usual circumstances, Snowdon's examples have done nothing to contradict the Rylean assumption that knowledge how ought to be associated with physical

ability. The second reason, which relates to the first, lies in the fact that Snowdon's work does not concern standard cases involving expertise. A Rylean may exploit the fact that Snowdon's examples are highly specific and arbitrarily designed in such a way that we ought to simply categorize them as special cases. While surely circumstance and random chance may impact a person's ability to display skillful behavior, the traditional cases involving expert behavior do not involve such circumstances being in play. Consequently, the Rylean might say in response to Snowdon's work that the scope of these examples simply does not inflict much damage against Ryle's account, which at the moment appears to accommodate traditional cases involving expertise very well.

Similarly, Montero's work is a highly unique story regarding expert behavior as well. While Montero's experience may suggest that skilled behavior does in fact involve exercising propositional knowledge explicitly during performance, Montero's career as a dancer is merely a single experience in a long list of literature that tells us the exact opposite is true – that in a person displaying skilled behavior, propositional knowledge is completely absent, and in the event that a person brings such knowledge to mind, it does in fact distract the person and subvert the performance. As a result, it appears that challenging Ryle's account directly as it were through Montero's experience – that is to say, questioning whether propositional knowledge is in fact explicitly brought to mind in skilled performance – is at best a highly specific case that does not appear to carry much weight against Ryle's narrative, and is at worst a losing battle that intellectualism cannot win. As a result, with respect to these critiques, we ought to distance ourselves. It will require a radically different argument, an argument that we are able to apply to a wider scope regarding cases involving expertise, in order to overcome the

Rylean narrative we inherit in the 20th century. Only then will we be able to see where exactly propositional knowledge, and explanatory knowledge specifically, fits into the picture with respect to skilled behavior.

VI. Actualizing Propositional Knowledge Non-Explicitly

As I have suggested, while Montero's experience provides us with one way in which to attack Ryle's account, it nevertheless appears to miss out on the many examples in which the expert simply does not explicitly consider propositional knowledge while acting. In those cases, which are obviously very common regarding expert behavior, we need a different story as to why we ought to believe Ryle's narrative misses the mark. A critical assumption underlying the Rylean account is the fact that propositional knowledge, according to its very nature, must be behaviorally inert, which is to say, unless we explicitly consider propositional content prior to acting, such knowledge is simply inoperative in a person's action. Only because Ryle believes a skilled person does not explicitly consider propositional knowledge in action, and that explicit consideration to such knowledge is the only way in which Ryle conceives it being able to bear on a person's behavior, Ryle is then able to conclude that propositional knowledge, as a result, does not contribute to a person's displaying expertise.

However, there is no reason we ought to limit propositional knowledge and its relevancy to action through it having to be explicitly considered prior to an individual's act. Only in discovering a way in which to conceive propositional knowledge as being able to bear on action non-explicitly, we will come to see the ways in which explanatory knowledge in particular is able to play an especially important role in expert behavior. Without establishing a reasonable way in which propositional knowledge generally may reenter the story first,

however, there is no path in which to pursue in rehabilitating the role that explanatory knowledge, a special type of propositional knowledge,¹² may play in the picture I believe we ought to investigate.

The most promising way to challenge Ryle on the assumption that propositional knowledge cannot possibly be actualized non-explicitly is through exploiting the "unwarranted asymmetry [he establishes] between manifesting propositional knowledge and manifesting knowledge how".¹³ Again, Ryle first argues that propositional knowledge is behaviorally inoperative in skilled behavior because a skilled person does not consider such knowledge prior to acting. And so the story arises that we need a separate type of knowledge, one that is inherently intertwined with action, which is made manifest in a person's ability to ϕ . However, Ryle's move rests upon an assumption here which is rather ambiguously laid out — why are we ought to commit ourselves to the picture that propositional knowledge may only be relevant to action when we consider a proposition prior to acting? No reasonable intellectualist ought to be obliged to agree with Ryle when he makes such an argument.¹⁴ To be sure, there is in fact no strong evidence to suggest that the model Ryle attributes to manifesting knowledge how cannot be seen as the model on which we manifest propositional knowledge. As long as we have good reason to believe exercising propositional knowledge does not inherently consist in a

¹² Generally, I conceive explanatory knowledge as a special subset of propositional knowledge. While the latter in its broadest sense is knowing that ϕ is the case — that is, having factual knowledge — explanatory knowledge is a particular type of propositional knowledge that consists in knowing the answer to the "Why?" question, generally consisting in knowing that ϕ is a reason relevant to a particular activity.

¹³ Stanley, Jason. *Know How*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

¹⁴ I first became motivated to investigate this weakness in Ryle's account through Stanley's work in *Know How*. However, it ought to be noted that Stanley's positive account regarding skilled behavior, one that he constructs in response to Ryle's anti-intellectualist account, is not a view I believe we ought to pursue. In short, it is an essentially linguistic argument that I do not believe is a particularly compelling way to resist Ryle's story.

contemplative and detached activity, one that cannot possibly arise alongside action but only prior to it, then Ryle's assumption is in fact very misleading because it limits the scope of propositional knowledge in a way that undervalues its relevancy to action, and specifically its ability to influence skilled behavior.

An example that is particularly helpful in resisting Ryle's assumption here comes to us through an argument that Stanley discusses in Carl Ginet's work. Ginet argues that in opening a door, a person surely does not explicitly consider propositional knowledge prior to turning the knob and leaving the room. The person obviously would not have to say things such as — "There is a door here... I ought to twist the knob... I ought to push the door open" — in order to successfully exit the room. However, there is no reason to believe simply because these phrases are not considered explicitly that propositional knowledge is then absent in a person's action (i.e. in this case, opening the door). In overcoming the traditional way that we conceive propositional knowledge, a story that suggests people acquire propositions through merely reading books and in no way displaying these propositions in action, we will come to see that in opening the door, there is no reason we cannot agree with Ryle that the person does not in fact explicitly consider propositional knowledge prior to acting, but that such knowledge is nevertheless made manifest in the person's action.

Of course in response to Ryle's assumption here, we are meant to envision a picture that is radically different than the traditional attitude we hold towards propositional knowledge, and as a result, it appears quite strange at first — in what ways is propositional knowledge able to be made manifest in a person's action? In McDowell's essay, "The Myth of

the Mind as Detached", ¹⁵ this possibility is laid out through a very plausible account that pressures the pivotal assumption Ryle is making here. As I have suggested, Ryle's commitment to propositional knowledge being behaviorally inoperative is only tenable in the event that we ought to believe in exercising such knowledge, we stand in an inherently contemplative relationship to the world and are consequently at a critical distance to it (because then it appears such knowledge in no way influences a person's action and is in fact quite distant to it). Through investigating McDowell's work on skilled behavior, however, I believe it will become clear as to why we ought to deny the assumption that propositional knowledge, according to its very nature, must be distant to action, ¹⁶ and why we ought to be convinced that propositional knowledge does not require us to stand in a detached and reflective attitude towards the world.

In incorporating McDowell's account regarding skilled behavior, we are provided with a particularly strong phenomenological insight that suggests to us a person may in fact manifest propositional knowledge non-explicitly in skillfully engaging with the world. Broadly, McDowell believes that propositional knowledge is present and operative all the way through to the "ground-floor level", "at which there [exists] absorbed coping and acting in flow" (54). In using McDowell's example of the chess player, we are presented with an interesting alternative that motivates why we ought to believe the player is in fact manifesting propositional knowledge while he is playing a game. Relatively strong evidence we have in recovering the role

¹⁵ McDowell, John. "The Myth of the Mind as Detached". *Mind, Reason, and Being-In-The-World: The McDowell-Dreyfus Debate*. (ed. Joseph Schear).

¹⁶ I mean to say here that we ought to deny the presumption that we are only able to exercise propositional knowledge in action in the event we consider it prior to acting. That is what I specifically mean in questioning the assumption that propositional knowledge is essentially "distant to action."

propositional knowledge is able to play in skilled performance is the fact that the expert chess player is able to “answer the ‘Why?’ question straight off”, without any need to critically reflect on and take time to investigate the move he recently made (47). With the fact that the player is able provide us with what is generally considered to be a higher level reason as to why he made a particular move, this suggests that propositional knowledge (i.e. again, the chess player’s reason as to why such a move was particularly good) is in fact involved during the player’s performance all along (rather than merely arising in the chess player’s retroactive considerations regarding why he made a particular move).

Of course, whether such evidence is particularly strong rests upon the argument that the player’s propositional knowledge is in fact operative while he is playing, and is not merely an attempt by the player to rationalize the move only after he makes it. While it may be tempting to believe that the chess player’s answering the “Why?” question cannot possibly bear on the player’s performance, that commitment only comes to us through Ryle’s assumption that in exercising propositional knowledge, these instances are restricted to cases in which “an agent deliberates about what to do and acts in light of the result” (47). Once we discard the myth of the mind as detached, the presumption that in exercising such knowledge we must stand in a critical distance to the world that is laden with contemplation and reflective thought, it is much more plausible that the chess player is in fact acting according to propositional knowledge despite the fact that he is not explicitly bringing such knowledge to mind while he is playing. And again, what provides us with strong evidence here is what manifests in the generally dependable response an expert gives in providing an account as to why he has made a particular move. Perhaps most importantly as evidence, the expert player

does not need to reflect on the question when we ask him why he has made a skillful move.

The response he gives us is immediate, and we are able to imagine such propositional knowledge as consisting in statements such as – “I made this move because it helps my defensive strategy in this way... I made this move because it pressures my opponent offensively in this particularly effective way” and so on. The fact that the expert is particularly equipped with providing such knowledge upon request is strong evidence to suggest that propositional knowledge is in fact always operative in the player’s performance, and in requesting the explanation, the expert is merely obliged to make such knowledge explicit.^{17 18}

VII. The Power of Explanatory Knowledge

At the moment, we have already seen why we ought to question Ryle’s account regarding skilled behavior. In short, the first reason lies in the fact that the expert’s knowledge how, although perhaps it is easiest to conceive as an ability, is not merely reducible to an ability that we are meant to actualize in performance. In using Snowdon’s critique, we have seen that there are cases where despite a person’s being unable physically ϕ in action, it is appropriate to say that such a person knows how to ϕ regardless. The second reason lies in the fact that with Montero’s work on expert dance performance, we see that a person with expertise does in fact

¹⁷ While in giving explanations the expert chess player is making such knowledge explicit, McDowell’s account suggests that we ought to believe such knowledge was always at work in the chess player’s behavior only in a non-explicit way — that is to say, in a way that the expert does not explicitly consider such knowledge while acting.

¹⁸ As a note, the work McDowell is doing here manifests in an exchange concerning the way we skillfully engage with the world as he sees it in response to the way Hubert Dreyfus envisions the engagement going. See “The Myth of the Pervasiveness of the Mental” in order to explore the ways in which a person may respond to McDowell’s picture that I have roughly outlined here. While I do not explore counterarguments to McDowell’s account, that is because all I am interested in showing here is that such an account is plausible, and that we, as a result, may be able to engage propositional knowledge in action in a non-explicit way, which is a possibility that philosophy should not believe is impossible.

occasionally bring propositional knowledge to mind explicitly during performance, and that bringing this knowledge to mind does not impede the person's ability to act skillfully (as a Rylean supporter may suggest) in the world.

However, as I have suggested, these two critiques do not provide us with a decisive way in which to overcome the Rylean narrative we inherit in the 20th century. With Snowdon's work, while we have motivated why the expert's having knowledge how may not be completely reducible to having a physical ability connected to action, many would agree that a person's ability to display knowledge how is at the very least one way and most likely the most common way to prove a person does in fact know how to ϕ . So while we may not be able to entirely reduce knowledge how to an ability, as Ryle suggests, it appears that Ryle does capture something important in saying that we obviously care that experts are able to skillfully manifest knowledge how in action, particularly under standard conditions. Likewise, it appears that Montero's experience as a ballet dancer is a highly unique phenomenological account as well, because as we see elsewhere in the literature and in accounts regarding skilled behavior, it appears that propositional knowledge lacks having the role that Montero conceives it having in expertise in dance.

However, with McDowell's account, now that we at least shown that the Rylean assumption regarding propositional knowledge being behaviorally inert is not necessarily the right view to hold, we ought to see that a specific type of propositional knowledge, explanatory knowledge, is indispensable to expertise and is able to be actualized in expert behavior. Considering the fact that we are beginning to lose sight of the role that explanatory knowledge and propositional knowledge generally play in skilled behavior according to the contemporary

literature, we are at an especially important crossroad in philosophical history where we ought to recapture the ways in which explanatory knowledge may play a valuable role in expertise. In motivating its utility, it is particularly relevant that we return to a debate which spans back to antiquity regarding expertise in medicine. Using medicine as a paradigm example, it will reveal to us a valuable case in which we will see that Ryle's account simply cannot accommodate, and why we ought to be convinced that explanatory knowledge does in fact show up in a person's expert behavior.

VIII. Using Medical Expertise as a Paradigm Example

Seeing exactly where the value lies in a doctor's having explanatory knowledge in medical practice is illustrated through a debate between empiricists and rationalists arising in ancient philosophy. Through Michael Frede's work in "An Empiricist View of Knowledge: Memorism",¹⁹ we are able to investigate this debate and see these insights that contemporary philosophers appear to have lost. At the time, because "traditional medicine with its very limited ability to deal with disease came to be regarded as embarrassingly inadequate", many philosophers are questioning whether there is in fact such a thing as expertise in medicine (228). To be sure, empiricists and rationalists both agree that such a thing does in fact exist, but the two share strong disagreements as to what exactly a doctor's medical expertise consists in.

On the empiricist account, the medical doctor's expertise consists merely in a very complex experience. That is to say, the expert doctor acquires knowledge through practice, which consists in attempting and succeeding in curing patients he has seen in the past. As the

¹⁹ Frede, Michael. "An Empiricist View of Knowledge: Memorism." *Epistemology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

doctor accumulates experience through practice, the physician acquires the ability to diagnose and treat patients through relying on the many cases he has addressed in the past. With respect to explanatory knowledge, however, the empiricist discusses it as occupying the merely tangential role very similarly given to it in Ryle's account regarding skilled behavior. The implication that arises with the empiricist account is that while explanatory knowledge may help the student who is studying to become a doctor, such knowledge does not in fact play any role in the expert doctor's behavior. Because the empiricist believes that explanatory knowledge is not "borne out by experience", such a person concludes that such knowledge simply cannot influence the doctor's skilled behavior. As the empiricist argues, the doctor's expertise manifests in curing patients — it does not concern whether he is able to recite an explanatory account as to why such drug is in fact a successful cure. So long as the doctor successfully treats patients, whether he possesses the relevant explanation to medical practice is in no way significant to the doctor's ability to display medical expertise.

On the rationalist account, however, we are provided with a much different story regarding expertise in medicine. The rationalist argues that experience and practice, however complex it may be, is not sufficient in distinguishing who is in fact an expert doctor and who is not — according to the rationalist, the expert doctor is the physician who possesses the right explanatory knowledge, and that such knowledge is what we ought to be concerned with in distinguishing the two.²⁰ The strongest evidence a rationalist may provide against the

²⁰ Of course, the rationalist does not mean to suggest here that a physician's experience and practice is in no way relevant to the expert doctor's ability to display expertise. What the rationalist is saying rather is that while experience and practice surely play a role, the key difference between the average physician and expert doctor is the fact that the latter possesses the right explanatory knowledge regarding practicing medicine.

empiricist's story is the fact that expert doctors are able to discover and successfully administer new drugs to patients.²¹ However, in order to prepare an investigation into those cases, first let's consider a doctor who is merely addressing what we call "standard cases", ones that he has come across in past experience. In standard cases, it appears that the empiricist account is surely plausible. A doctor who is using well known drugs, which he has already seen work in experience, does not require the relevant explanatory knowledge in order to administer these drugs successfully. However, the important question is in "non-standard cases", in which "past experience does not provide clear guidance", in what ways can the doctor handle these cases successfully on the empiricist account (231)? This is a question that rationalists use to critique empiricists because while we would expect the expert doctor to go beyond merely standard cases and address situations which may be completely new, it is rather unclear as to what the empiricist is able to say in response to the expert doctor's ability to address these cases.

In analyzing possible responses that the empiricist may provide us with, ultimately I believe we ought to side with the rationalist as having the most plausible account regarding expert behavior in medicine. Because the empiricist is committed to experience and only experience being the key differentiator between the average practitioner and expert doctor, it appears to be rather an impossible task to address in what ways the expert doctor's past experience will be able to answer to these non-standard, unknown cases that we expect the expert doctor to be able to handle. First, the empiricist may say that in discovering and

²¹ While in today's world we may consider discovering a new drug and diagnosing a patient with a disease as responsibilities meant to be separate between a medical researcher, let's say, and a practicing physician, in the ancient debate no distinction along these lines are made, and I do not believe it is an important point that we make such a distinction here either.

administering a new drug, a doctor may have come upon its discovery accidentally — that is, the doctor may have discovered the drug through random experimentation in the laboratory and simply through chance, it happens to be successful in curing patients. Of course, while we may concede to the empiricist that accidental discoveries made in the sciences are in fact relatively common, to say that expertise in medical practice consists in miraculously fortunate discoveries is a manifestly absurd thing to say. Surely medical research regularly results in discovering new drugs that we were purposefully meant to discover, so the suggestion that we ought to attribute new discoveries in medicine to a doctor's luck outside the physician's intention is quite an imprudent thing to say. The second reason such a response is inadequate lies in the fact that it would be an extremely weak argument to say that the difference in these cases between the average practitioner and expert doctor consists in the expert doctor's luck — would we really want to argue that in these situations the expert doctor simply happens to be luckier than the non-expert? In the case that we accept that premise, why are we ought to consider the expert doctor to be an expert in the first place?

As Frede discusses the debate, the second response an empiricist may opt to pursue involves using memory as a mechanism with which to occupy the role explanatory knowledge plays according to the rationalist's account — that is to say, an empiricist may provide such a sophisticated picture regarding memory that the expert doctor does not in fact require explanatory knowledge to display expertise in medicine. Such a picture would involve memory being able to provide the doctor with an ability to make and in turn exploit empirical generalizations in experience. Here, we would have to agree with many questionable assumptions being made, and in the case that we make these concessions, the response

remains relatively weak regardless. Assumptions would include: first, memory is not merely a passive receptivity regarding past experience. Second, memory is in fact something that would allow us to recognize patterns in experience akin to the insight explanatory knowledge provides us. And lastly, memory is actually an active power, something that is able to construct empirical generalizations we have seen in the past and make them in a way applicable to the present case. With so many assumptions that are quite naturally vague and unconvincing, I will suffice to move on and say that in response to the empiricist's shortcomings, we ought to take seriously the rationalist account that would have explanatory knowledge playing an essential role in the doctor's displaying medical expertise.

Leaving the debate and considering now the way in which we view medicine in today's present context, I do not believe it is through mere coincidence that in today's world, it would most likely be impossible to discover a good, let alone expert doctor who is without explanatory knowledge – that is, a doctor who is so knowledgeable and skilled through complex experiences that he does not require the explanatory knowledge relevant to medical practice. Consider the doctor, let's say, who tells you he will be able to cure you, but in no way is able to explain why a particular drug will be successful. All he is able to say is that through the experiences he has seen in the past, we ought to believe that a particular drug would work in the situation you are currently in. While the drug that the doctor administers may turn out to alleviate your illness, we ought to believe that such a doctor nevertheless is not distinguishable as expert.

This is due to the fact that the doctor's advice issues with no security – that is to say, the advice he is giving you is only accidentally right, which includes both the cases that are standard and non-standard. There is nothing according to the empiricist's account that is making the

doctor's advice right according to necessity, because without the relevant explanatory knowledge, there is no way in which he is able to say with absolute confidence that he knows a given drug will successfully work given your illness. And in situations involving non-standard cases, it does not even appear plausible to imagine the way in which such a doctor would go about alleviating the person's medical issue. We ought to believe it is simply implausible that past experience would be able to serve the role that explanatory knowledge is meant to play because past experience, as we have seen, does not obviously appear to allow the doctor to address cases that are non-standard in nature.²²

With that, I would say that omitting the role of explanatory knowledge in the expert doctor's ability to discover new drugs and cure patients is simply misguided. Regarding having expertise in medicine, it is clear that explanatory knowledge ought to serve two important roles that experience simply cannot accommodate – the first is in a doctor's making discoveries, and the second is in the doctor's ability to act with absolute confidence that the advice he provides us is right according to necessity, rather than by mere accident (which we will see influences the extent to which the expert's behavior contrasts with the non-expert's).

²² Here, all I hope to have shown is that the empiricist account, as it stands, does not have a readily plausible answer to the way in which the expert doctor accommodates non-standard cases. I do not wish to dwell on the issue too much, so I suffice to prove that the burden is on the empiricist who has yet to come up with a plausible solution to such an issue.

IX. The First Role of Explanatory Knowledge ²³

In moving beyond medicine as a paradigm example meant to motivate the picture I believe we ought to recover, we are able to further investigate the first role of explanatory knowledge in work taken up by Julia Annas in "Practical Expertise."²⁴ In this work, Annas establishes an important distinction between having expertise and merely having an impressive routine, which, as it is argued, depends on whether a person is able to provide an explanatory account.²⁵ In investigating Annas' distinction here, we ought to see the ways in which the first role of explanatory knowledge manifests in the expert's behavior. Surely here Annas is not attempting to disparage the valuable role that routines play in our everyday lives, but she is concerned with the seemingly casual way in which we discuss knowledge how that implicitly obscures an important difference to be acknowledged between a mere habit, which may involve knowing how to ϕ , and what is distinguished as genuinely expert behavior. The fact is, I alongside Annas would agree that to be an expert in the case I am interested in, a person must have the relevant explanatory knowledge because that is what allows an expert to go beyond the merely standard cases that any person with a mere routine would be able to accommodate (i.e. the average physician).

²³ The first role of explanatory knowledge manifests in the expert's ability to predict, discover, and broadly address cases that are non-standard.

²⁴ Annas, Julia. "Practical Expertise". *Knowing How: Essays on Knowledge, Mind, and Action*. (eds. John Bengson and Marc Moffett). New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

²⁵ As we will come to see later on, the requirement that says an expert must be able provide an explanatory account is something that arises in ancient Greek philosophy, specifically in Plato's work in the *Gorgias*. However, the way Plato is using the role of explanatory knowledge is slightly different than the way Annas uses it, which will be made clearer later on in the discussion.

In order to illustrate this argument, we ought to explore the example Annas provides us with the plumber, which is meant to show us why exactly explanatory knowledge is essential in a person's skilled behavior involving craft. The expert plumber, according to Annas' work, cannot simply know "that you lay the pipe, but *why*", because this will allow him to distinguish the important and unimportant aspects in laying the pipe a particular way (109). Only through understanding these reasons (i.e. knowing what conditions are especially relevant regarding when and where to lay the pipe), which are grounded in explanatory knowledge (which I suggested in an earlier note generally consists in knowing that ϕ is a reason relevant to a particular activity), the plumber is then able to acknowledge what the most relevant aspects are to laying the pipe given the particular case – however, the real value in having explanatory knowledge consists in the fact that it also allows the plumber to go beyond this particular case and realize in its broadest sense what are the important and unimportant aspects to laying the pipe under a general context (we will see why in the discussion to follow).

Of course, while there is no exact science to the plumber's work, we ought to believe that through this example, explanatory knowledge serves as a plausible way in which the expert plumber is able to move beyond merely standard cases and address the difficult, non-standard ones. Through having reasons as to the purpose regarding why the plumber ought to behave in particular ways, explanatory knowledge then serves as a medium through which the expert plumber is able to recognize things in experience (i.e. while he is acting) that would influence the craftsman's subsequent behavior. Because he is equipped with reasons that ought to lend generality to experiences he will have in the future, explanatory knowledge is then made manifest in the craftsman's ability to go on and at least regarding this particular example,

predict when and where is a good place to lay the pipe and broadly accommodate these non-standard cases that he has yet to see in experience.

To be sure, it is explanatory knowledge here that allows the plumber to transcend having a mere routine. Without these reasons grounded in explanation, which allow the plumber to gain a deeper understanding regarding the craft, the plumber would only be good at doing things he has previously done and knows would be successful due to past experience. Similar to the average physician, the apprentice plumber who lacks the relevant explanatory knowledge would not be successful in accommodating non-standard cases. Without the relevant reasons, while obviously the apprentice will nevertheless be able to handle cases he has already seen in the past, to which he generally knows the solution already, such behavior is only distinguishable as having a mere habit according to Annas, however impressive that habit may be.²⁶ While the apprentice may be able to handle these cases in a way that would suggest he is an extremely experienced craftsman, unless he can go beyond doing the same thing over and over again, which is meant to be overcome in acquiring explanatory knowledge, then he has yet to reach the type of engagement we generally require a person with expertise to

²⁶ To be clear, I do not believe I have to agree or disagree with the strong distinction Annas makes here between having mere habit and having expertise, although I do explicitly agree with and use Annas' distinction in a weaker sense. While Annas states that without explanatory knowledge a person may only access and display merely habitual and routine behavior, I do not believe we ought to commit ourselves to this distinction as strongly as Annas discusses it. All we have to show in recovering the role of explanatory knowledge is that in particular cases involving expert behavior, having explanation in a way shows up in the expert's performance. In the case where that is a convincing story, that is where the scope of my investigation ought to stop. I do not believe I have the means here to make the universal statement Annas subscribes to in saying that in every case, the only way a person is able to acquire and display expertise is through acquiring the relevant explanatory knowledge. In agreeing with this stronger, universal distinction, I would be tasked with providing a lot more evidence than I would be able to give here. Ultimately, simply in showing various examples where Annas' distinction applies, I believe that ought to be sufficient in motivating the ways in which the Rylean account regarding skilled behavior is unconvincing and why we ought to recover the role of explanatory knowledge.

meet, one that again stipulates that such a person must go beyond merely standard cases and interact skillfully with cases that are altogether new.

X. The Second Role of Explanatory Knowledge

The second role of explanatory knowledge manifests in the security which then accompanies the expert's behavior – because explanatory knowledge ought to lend confidence to a person due to the fact that the expert's behavior is now aligned with what is right according to necessity, rather than according to merely educated guesswork, we ought to see that explanatory knowledge does in fact influence the expert's behavior in a material way. It is very plausible that the security which accompanies explanatory knowledge manifests in the expert's behavior psychologically – because such knowledge lends confidence to the expert, we ought to see that such a psychological disposition manifest in the expert's going on to display skilled behavior.

Interestingly, in considering intellectualists who explicitly and implicitly disagree with Ryle's account regarding skilled behavior and wish to recover the role of explanatory knowledge in expertise (i.e. a contemporary philosopher such as Annas), none have appreciated this second role of explanatory knowledge which I believe we ought to acknowledge as being relevant to expert behavior as well. While in both philosophy and cognitive science we have discussed ways in which explanatory knowledge is useful in the expert's making predictions and discoveries,²⁷ the concept that explanatory knowledge ought to benefit the expert

²⁷ There are in fact interesting connections and insights that cognitive science is able to provide us with that corroborate and strengthen the first role explanatory knowledge plays in expert behavior. See Lambrozo's "The Instrumental Value of Explanations" in order to investigate further the way in which cognitive science supports what I am asserting here regarding explanatory knowledge.

psychologically is a topic that has yet to receive adequate attention. In order to discuss this second role, we will have to return to a discussion that arises in ancient philosophy involving Plato's work in the *Gorgias*.²⁸ Only through recovering an insight that arises in this Platonic text, we will come to see why exactly this second role of explanatory knowledge ought to be considered operative in expert behavior as well.

In the *Gorgias*, Plato discusses a key distinction we ought to make between having a mere knack and having expertise (i.e. craft). Similar to the way Annas conceives it, the distinction lies in the fact that a person who possesses expertise is able to provide us with an account, while the person who possesses a knack cannot (at least not to the same extent the person with expertise is able to). However, Plato's emphasis on what this explanatory account provides us, in contrast with Annas, does not relate to the expert making predictions and discoveries in the context of non-standard cases – rather, Plato's account would suggest that even concerning standard cases to which both the expert and non-expert have dealt with in the past, the expert's behavior is radically different than the non-expert's, and this appears due to the fact that explanatory knowledge manifests in the expert's behavior so as to distinguish and, in a way, make it better than the non-expert's behavior.

In using pastry baking and medicine as an example,²⁹ we are able to see the ways in which Plato exploits having an explanatory account in distinguishing the two enterprises. Because pastry baking does not require having explanatory knowledge, Plato believes we ought

²⁸ Plato (trans. Donald J. Zeyl). *Gorgias*. Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1987.

²⁹ To be sure, Plato's understanding with respect to pastry baking is much different than the way we understand the culinary world today. As a note, I do not intend through this example to suggest that pastry baking is in fact merely a knack, but I use it regardless as a useful way to demonstrate what contribution Plato ascribes to having an explanatory account.

to consider this enterprise as a mere knack, as merely “flattery”, because “it guesses at what’s pleasant with no consideration [as to] what’s best” (465a). Despite the fact that “Pastry baking has put on the mask of medicine,” it remains to be a mere knack because those engaged in it merely guess at what a person would like to consume, what would be pleasant to the person, let’s say, rather than knowing what the person ought to consume, what is best according to medicine (464d). In contrast with pastry baking, because medical expertise requires that the expert doctor possess explanatory knowledge, which aligns the doctor’s behavior with what is best rather than merely with what is pleasant, the expert doctor’s behavior is markedly different than the person who is skilled in pastry baking.

Of course, Plato does not explicitly discuss the psychological benefit associated with having explanatory knowledge, but the work he develops in the *Gorgias* I believe ought to show us a way in which to realize this exact insight. It makes rather intuitive sense to believe that through explanatory knowledge, through knowing what is right and what is best according to the way things ought to be, rather than according to the guesswork akin to the pastry baker, the expert does in fact gain confidence in having explanatory knowledge, which would then allow him to go on with the assurance that he really does know what he is doing in a way that transcends merely having a knack. Regarding standard cases, too, this insight suggests that the expert’s behavior is different than the non-expert’s because he acts with absolute confidence that he is right, due to the security provided to him through explanatory knowledge – and to be clear, we are able to imagine such confidence showing up in the expert’s behavior through the expert’s willingness to take risks, let’s say, and generally trust the things he believes ought to be done.

Of course, there are two arguments that a person may have in questioning whether explanatory knowledge does in fact serve this role. The first is the fact that there are experts who possess explanatory knowledge who despite having such knowledge, lack confidence. The second is the fact that there are non-experts without explanatory knowledge that do in fact display an incredible level of confidence, so in what ways are we meant to reconcile these counterexamples? We ought to say in response that such people are simply acting unreasonably – we ought to believe it is not merely through coincidence that experts generally have an exceptionally high level of confidence as opposed to non-experts. And while there may be many aspects that contribute to such confidence (which again, allows the expert to behave in particular ways, which may consist in taking risks and trusting what he is doing generally), we have strong evidence to suggest in light of Plato’s work in the *Gorgias* that explanatory knowledge, because it secures a person’s knowledge and action, is in fact involved in lending confidence to the expert and ultimately providing a psychological benefit we see manifest in the expert’s behavior.

XI. Conclusion

As is made clear now, what we inherit with Gilbert Ryle’s work in the 20th century regarding skilled behavior, while it may be successful in responding to an intellectualist story arising with Cartesian influence, leaves us with an account where explanatory knowledge and propositional knowledge are simply inoperative to the expert’s behavior. However, in exploiting the weaknesses of such Ryle’s move with Jason Stanley’s work and McDowell’s account regarding skilled behavior, we realize that we do not have to commit ourselves to propositional knowledge being behaviorally inert (and as we have seen, we are to in fact manifest such

knowledge non-explicitly). Once we overcome the Rylean assumption regarding propositional knowledge, we have seen the ways in which through investigating explanatory knowledge in particular, the Rylean account regarding expertise simply is not adequate in addressing the valuable role such knowledge plays in the story.

Through primarily using medicine as a paradigm case, we see that at the very least explanatory knowledge may show up in the expert's behavior in two different senses, in the expert's predicting and discovering, and in the expert's psychological disposition that is ultimately tied to the expert's behavior. In developing the ways explanatory knowledge ought to be seen as valuable, I believe we are compelled to recover the role of explanatory knowledge in expertise, and ensure that we hold the contemporary literature in philosophy to this standard. Ultimately, as we seek to understand expertise and skilled behavior through philosophical accounts, we cannot ignore the ways in which explanatory knowledge enters into the picture.

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