Seminario

Tópicos de Epistemología:
Epistemología do Desacordo e Racionalidade

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Salvador - Noviembre 2014
Seminario

- Enviar un mail a eabarrio@gmail.com antes 4 feira 2300hs.
- Presentación de pequeños escritos en cada clase.
You’re in a chemistry lab class working with a lab partner. You need to ascertain the temperature of the liquid solution you are working with. You put a thermometer in the solution, wait a minute, take it out, and read that it says the liquid is at 78 degrees Celsius. You have no reason to doubt the thermometer is working, so you come to believe the liquid’s temperature is 78. Just to be sure, your partner does the exact same thing, using another thermometer that, for all you two can tell, is just as good as the one you used. But she gets a reading of 83 even though the liquid is stable and well sealed, so that its temperature couldn’t change that much in the space of a minute. Finally, she is your equal in general intelligence, knowledge of chemistry, and the other Disagreement Factors.

(Based on Thomas Kelly’s “Peer Disagreement and Higher-Order Evidence,” in Feldman and Warfield, 2010)
Disagreements

Abortion’s Moral and Legal Status

If Bo says “Abortion is wrong” and Po says “Abortion isn’t wrong,” they might not be disagreeing at all. It all depends on the details of the case. Bo might mean to say that abortion is morally wrong while Po is saying that it isn’t legally wrong (both of them talking about the same country and time period). They may well agree that abortion is legally permissible and morally impermissible; so, no disagreement exists even though their language, the sentences they used, made it look like they disagree. Alternatively, they might agree that they are talking about morality as opposed to the law, but they mean different things by “abortion,” with one of them including nothing but third-trimester abortion while the other includes abortions at any time.

(Based on Frances 2013)
### Disagreements

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<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Led Zeppelin's Influence</td>
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<td>Michael Jordan's Height</td>
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<td>Messi vs Cristiano Ronaldo</td>
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Disagreements

Is capital punishment a significant deterrent of crime?

Should our country go to war, knowing that we’re going to end up killing many thousands of innocent civilians?

Should we get an apartment in Manhattan or go with somewhere cheaper?

Is time travel really possible?
Free Will and Determinism

On the one hand, it seems that we have at least partial control over our thoughts and actions. But, the human body is just another biophysical organism subject to the laws of nature, like any other physical organism. And the laws of nature are deterministic.
Disagreements in Philosophy

- The central doctrines in Saul Kripke’s philosophy book Naming and Necessity must be true.
- There are numbers, sets and properties
- Knowledge is justified true belief
- There are important differences between *Know how* and *Know that*
- Deflationary approach about truth
Disagreements in Logic

Classical Logic is right. Paraconsistent logic is wrong!

Validity is truth preservation. Validity is proof!

MP is right vs MP is wrong
How should you react to the realization of disagreement?

This question is **ambiguous**: there are several intelligent ways to interpret it.
The Disagreement Question

- p: Our country should go to war.

A and B discuss about p. A believe that p and B does not believe that p.

- How to act?
  - Should our country go to war?

- What to believe?
  - After the realization of disagreement, should you continue to believe p?
  - After the realization of disagreement, how should you act?
The Disagreement Question

- p: He is guilty.

- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable answers to a single question?

- A y B have accessed very different bodies of evidence in coming to their contrary views.

- “He is guilty” and “He is not guilty.”

- When the two people have opposed yet strong bodies of overall evidence, then they can very reasonably hold opposite beliefs.
The Disagreement Question

- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable answers to a single question?
- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable answers to a single question when they have the same data?
- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable – in the sense of not stupid – answers to a single question when they have the very same evidence, including background knowledge and data?
- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable – in a sense significantly stronger than that of not being stupid – answers to a single question when they have the very same evidence, including data and relevant background knowledge?
- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable – in a sense stronger than that of not being stupid – answers to a single question when they have the very same evidence, data, relevant background knowledge, and cognitive ability?
- Is it ever the case that two reasonable people can come to different yet reasonable – in a sense stronger than that of not being stupid – answers to a single question when they have the very same evidence, data, relevant background knowledge, and ability, and have worked on the question for a comparable amount of time?
Disagreement Factors:

- Data
- Evidence
- Time
- Ability
- Background Knowledge Circumstances of Investigation.
The obvious issue of domain specificity

- If Sara is an astronomer and you are not, then if Sara affirms p (about astronomy) and you reject p, then Sara is p right and you wrong.
- If you know that Sara is an astronomer, then you know that she is an expert on astronomy, but this implies nothing regarding her expertise in other areas.
- There are fields for which there is genuine difficulty – independently of deception and ignorance – in figuring who, if anyone, is an expert.
- Who is an expert on God, or morality, or beauty? Or even movies?
- It’s hardly clear who counts as an expert in morality.
Evidence and Higher-order Evidence

- First order evidence: informations
- Higher-order evidence: Evidence about evidence

The reason higher order evidence is important for the topic of disagreement has to do with testimony.

- If you come to believe something on the basis of some body of evidence, and then you learn that a great many intelligent people believe the exact opposite, that testimonial fact – that they are so intelligent and yet disagree with you – is evidence E that you may have missed something in coming to your belief.
Under what circumstances is X the epistemic superior of Y with respect to a question Z?

If they are roughly equal on all Disagreement Factors, then they are epistemic peers on that question.

Notice that it doesn’t make much sense to say simply that X is the epistemic superior of Y: you need to specify a topic at the very least.

When you disagree with person X regarding belief B, it need not be the case that X is your superior, peer, or inferior with respect to the topics relevant to B – again, according to the definitions given above.

For instance, although you may be generally smarter than I am, perhaps I have thought about the issue under consideration a lot more than you have; so your advantage in intelligence is more or less canceled out by the fact that I have spent much more time on the question at hand.

In most real-world cases, it’s going to be difficult to know or even have a reasonable belief that you are a peer with someone who disagrees with you.
The correct answer to a Disagreement Question depends, at least in part, on the details of how your epistemic position compares with that of the other person – the person you’re disagreeing with.

**Superior Rule:** If, before the discovery of disagreement, you thought that a certain person is a genuine expert on the question as to whether belief B is true, you are definitely not an expert, she surpasses you in some Disagreement Factors, and you do not surpass her in any Disagreement Factors – so she is your epistemic superior on the question – then, upon realizing that the two of you disagree, you should adopt her view on B or at least suspend judgment (and she should keep her belief).

**Peer Rule:** If, before the discovery of disagreement, you thought that a certain person is your epistemic peer on the question as to whether belief B is true – so you admit that you have no advantage over her when it comes to judging B – then, upon realizing that the two of you disagree, you should suspend judgment on B.
Escriba un pequeño texto (4-5 carillas) donde:

- Describa dos casos de diferentes desacuerdos entre pares.
- Reflexione, a partir de estos casos, sobre los factores que podrían estar influyendo para producir un desacuerdo real entre pares epistémicos.
- Responda en el texto:
  - ¿Qué actitud debería tomar alguien que se encuentre en una situación de desacuerdo entre pares? ¿Qué debería creer acerca de lo que está en desacuerdo? ¿Cómo debería actuar?
  - ¿Podrían dos pares epistémicos no compartir los mismos criterios de racionalidad?