Harvey Siegel on Epistemology and Education: 
Rationality, Normativity and Justification

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Abstract: This paper attempts to elicit an intertwined relation between philosophy and education by revolving the discussion around three constituents of human knowledge: rationality, normativity and justification. This exploration takes the form of a close critique of Harvey Siegel’s work. Siegel’s analytical-philosophy-inspired defence of traditional epistemology and accordingly his preferred views on education are, to some extent, successful in construing an essential relation between philosophy and education. Yet, this paper argues that his approach does not overcome the philosophical cul-de-sac of how to reconcile the epistemic capacity of rational justification with the non-epistemic character of truth. It is then claimed that, in order to move beyond the predicament, we need to reconfigure the components of what it is for humans to know. The paper draws on Martin Heidegger’s distinction between earth and world as well as — more substantially — on Hilary Putnam’s recent idea of the interpenetration between value judgements, descriptions of fact and human linguistic conventions. The watershed that divides Siegel’s defence of traditional epistemology and this paper’s argument is a sensitivity towards what might be called the social and historical aspects of human knowledge. 
(Reprint request should be sent to Koichiro Misawa)

Key words: Epistemology, Education, Rationality, Normativity, Justification, Harvey Siegel

[As epistemology waxed in the world of general philosophy, it waned in the philosophy of education community. 
Harvey Siegel (2008)]

1. Elusive ties between philosophy and education?

Both education and philosophy, however defined respectively, are concerned with knowledge. Despite this obvious affinity regarding knowledge, their relative lack of interaction seems to be widely felt. This meagre relation appears to corroborate the existence of a fragmentary development in the institutionalised and compartmentalised academic disciplines of ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Education’ in general as well as ‘epistemology’ (or the theory of knowledge) and ‘the philosophy of education’ in particular.¹ What I set out to do in this paper is to draw more attention to the fundamental interrelation between philosophy and education —one whose relative lack of emphasis weakens the best practice and understanding of both.

One crucial trigger causing the discrepancy between general philosophy and the philosophy of education vis-à-vis questions of epistemology could be ascribed to an ever increasing ramification of complicated theories in academic philosophy.² This tendency has been prompted by the turbulence facing traditional epistemology since the previous century, caused by, say, ‘Two Dogmas of Empiricism’ (Quine, 1951) and ‘Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?’ (Gettier, 1963).³ Sceptical worries about traditional epistemology has brought to light ‘the psychological sub-processes’, which ‘causally generate states of belief’ in the analysis of knowledge beyond ‘the logical relations among propositions believed by the subject’ (Kitcher, 1992). This line of argument is often called naturalistic — in particular, psychologistic — epistemology. The strong version of naturalised epistemology — especially, Quine’s sort — ‘leaves aside questions of justification and considers only the genetic, causal question’ (Dancy, 1985, italics added).
It may be no surprise that, in the eyes of many philosophers of education, such detailed complication of theories is of only marginal relevance to what the philosophy of education is—or should be—concerned with. Notwithstanding this seemingly understandable outlook about the weak relation between philosophy and education, recent philosophical scholarship, in my view, shows a much closer alliance of philosophy with education. To make a case for this thesis, I will cast some light on three ingredients of human knowledge that are key to understanding what it is for human beings to know something at all: rationality, normativity and justification.

This attempt will be made by developing a critique of the work of Harvey Siegel who is a leading American epistemologist (of education). There are three reasons for this. First, he frequently refers to those notions in question in a limited, though rigorously analytical, style. Second, his vigorous defence of ‘traditional, “conservative,” Enlightenment epistemology’ (Siegel, 1997) serves as a touchstone as to how far what I provisionally dub the social and historical dimensions of human knowledge require a departure from a traditional epistemology. Third, he casts doubt on two currently prevailing views in philosophy: (neo-) pragmatism, which presently enjoys popularity (particularly in the U.S.) and the later Wittgenstein’s view, which is also highly acknowledged (especially in the U.K.).

There is no doubt that Siegel’s formulation of the affinity between epistemology and education is rigorously analytical and watertight. The basic thrust of his argument is that the Enlightenment standards of rationality hold universally and thus fostering the rational ability is one crucial aim of education across societies and epochs. This view has some truth in it, but it is restrictive to the extent that the discourse appears to simplify the issue of rationality and reason by disregarding the social and historical conditions that have placed them where they are. Here I am not at all committed to asserting social ‘constructionist’ ideas of the untenable kinds (In this respect, I find myself in substantial agreement with Siegel as to the dubious status of anti-realist theories). Rather my dissatisfaction with Siegel’s thought largely derives from his inadequate account of rational justification and truth, which seems to make him blind to the essentially educational nature of human knowledge. To clarify the issue, in what follows, I (i) begin by articulating why Siegel’s account of rational justification and truth is unsatisfying by comparison with Martin Heidegger’s and Charles Taylor’s line of thought and then (ii) pay heed to recent developments in Hilary Putnam’s ideas to encourage further reflection on what it is for humans to know something. Through these considerations, I (iii) offer an interwoven relation between philosophy and education in the light of human knowledge.

2. The engaged intellect: Heidegger-Taylor

I begin with Siegel’s reaction against Charles Taylor’s challenge to the assumptions of traditional epistemology. Taylor’s challenge is ‘to views of knowledge which regard it as representing an independent reality, and which do not recognize that knowers are agents’ (Siegel, 1998). In his ‘Overcoming Epistemology’, Taylor claims that the whole enterprise of modern representational epistemology bound up with the faith in foundationalism—on the grounds of the ‘disengaged subject’ and atomism—should come to an end. Drawing on Heidegger’s notion of ‘being-in-the-world’—put crudely, the idea that ‘we are not disengaged subjects, but agents, and that our knowledge depends upon this fact’ (Siegel, 1998, italics in original)—, Taylor insists that:

The notion that our understanding of the world is grounded in our dealings with it is equivalent to the thesis that this understanding is not ultimately based on representations at all, in the sense of depictions that are separately identifiable from what they are of (Taylor, 1995, p12, italics added).

At the heart of this sentence lies the rejection of the so-called representationalist theory or, put otherwise, correspondence theory of truth. Today criticism of the conventionally accepted dichotomy between the knowing subject and the known object is widely recognised in philosophy. One vital result of this line of criticism, in my view, is that the lingering philosophical pathology—especially in the Cartesian and British empiricist tradition—of how human minds (or thought or concept) can be in touch with reality (namely, the non-epistemic physical world) is exorcised to a large extent.

Yet, Siegel does not see Taylor’s argument as convincing. He argues that: ‘This [Taylor’s argument] in no way undermines the view that knowledge consists in beliefs which
(among other conditions) accurately portray "an independent
reality" (Siegel, 1998, p28). Siegel then feels able to
incorporate Taylor’s point by eliminating ‘infallible certainty’
from the traditional constituents in modern epistemology—
such as abstract rationality, theoretical justification, theoretici-
reason, objective knowledge, absolute truth, the a priori,
conceptual clarification, immediate universality and so on.
What Siegel advocates is, therefore, traditional epistemology
with fallibilism—the idea that ‘all claims are fallible and
open to challenge, and no claims are certain’ (Siegel, 1997,
p121, italics in original).

It is questionable, however, that Siegel’s argument fully
reflects Taylor’s point. Siegel, while embracing fallibilism,
does not admit the necessity of repudiating the traditional
correspondence theory of truth—i.e. the idea of truth as
‘radically nonepistemic’ (Siegel, 1997, p216)—, although he
argues that ‘[c]orrespondence cannot be a criterion of truth,
for we have no independent access to an independent reality
and so cannot tell when or whether the criterion is met’
(Siegel, 1997, p206, italics in original). It is a particular form
of justification that Siegel brings as a means to mediate us
to truth. He succinctly writes: ‘Because we lack direct
access to truth, we have no choice but to approach truth by
way of justification’ (Siegel, 2005, p352). Coupled with
fallibilism, Siegel’s view concerning justification and truth
then runs as follows: ‘the upshot of rational justification is
a prima facie case for truth; rational justification is a fallible indicator of truth’ (Siegel, 1997, p34, italics in
original). His explanation of fallibilism, justification and truth is, nonetheless, far from satisfactory to the extent that
it still tells us little about how rational justification (which
is epistemic) has necessary connection with truth (which
is non-epistemic).

Turning to an instance about which Taylor and Siegel
diverge will illustrate what is at issue. Taylor claims that
‘[w]e can draw a neat line between my picture of an object
and that object, but not between my dealing with the object
and that object’; on the other hand, Siegel argues that
‘I can…perfectly well distinguish...between my dealing
with the keyboard on which I am now typing, and the key-
board’ (Siegel, 1998, p27, italics in original). Siegel fails,
in my eyes, to fully comprehend the crucial point that one
single object, while existing independently of the existence
of the human knower, cannot be intelligible to humans as
that object. That the content of an object makes sense only
in one’s dealing with the object means that it becomes
intelligible only when one relates to it by reference to the
necessarily historically conditioned conceptual content of
that relationship or engagement. This also requires us,
and always already, to know other objects—precisely as a
condition for knowing that particular object. For example,
to understand what a keyboard is, we need to know what
keyboards look like, what we use them for, and what it is
like to play one. Without being acquainted with this sort of
(latent) historical, practical and relational knowledge of
what dealing with a keyboard means, Siegel cannot under-
stand it as having an objective meaning. In other words,
Siegel does not consider the full meaning of ‘dealing with’
in Taylor’s terms; that is, Siegel’s account of ‘dealing with’
seems merely an action of fingers striking the keys.

Siegel’s view is surely worth attending to as a warning
against the tendency towards an excessive relativisation
and subjectivisation of discourse—which is particularly
rampant in educational research. We do not need to regard
Taylor’s point, however, as tantamount to sheer relativism
or subjectivism. For human conceptual commitment does
not necessitate a repudiation of ‘objectivity’ as such. It is
futile, therefore, to reduce this fertile philosophical view to
an all-or-nothing issue by dichotomising possible ways of
thinking into two kinds: One is the deviation of abstract
and immediate universalism—i.e. the idea that objective
truth is absolutely non-epistemic, which is out there once
and for all; the other deviation is to abandon the notion of
objectivity altogether by seeing it as merely relative to
human epistemic differences.

Siegel is right that the world we live in is by no means a
human epistemic fabrication; yet, he seems to underesti-
mate what might be called a socio-historical account of the
human mind and knowledge. That is, we qua humans do
not live in the inanimate world that is generally assumed as
the subject matter of natural science, but always already in
the world that is composed of multiple layers of social
reality. For clarification of this thread of thinking which
avoids Siegel’s formulation that rational justification is
epistemic whereas truth is non-epistemic, I find helpful
Heidegger’s (provisional) distinction between the world
and the earth.

offers a lucid distinction between the world and the earth.
Although his discussion is complicated and poetically
depicted, my purpose here is just to borrow that distinction to illustrate my point by slightly interpreting it in my own way. According to that, the world is where we actually live; the earth is a meaningless environment that is just there. In the world, there is everything we know: e.g. natural things, physical human products, abstract and fictitious beings such as, in order, cars, nation states and Sherlock Holmes, a memory and record of the past events and figures, names and categories of things, conceptual relations of things, negation and contradiction; on the other hand, on the earth, it is only ‘natural’ things like stones, plants and animals that exist. In other words, the world is where, in addition to artefacts, human conceptual commitments and inferential relations are already embedded. Therefore, for example, in the world, there are situations describable in negative and even contradictory sentences; by contrast, there is no negation or contradiction on the earth.

Should we, then, dismiss the earth from our discussion as something intellectually unreachable like Kant’s ‘Ding-an-sich’? Certainly not. The earth is the foundation for our embracing of realism. It is true that we occupy a multitude of standpoints and thus each person lives in a more or less different world from that of others. However, the difference does not amount to total incommunicability. Now we can ascribe our communicability between ‘different worlds’ to the existence of the earth, as it were. It is notable that a parallel can be drawn between mind and body—put precisely, between human qua human and human as purely physical. Our bodies are biologically convergent in that, for instance, no one can be 3 meters tall, see 5 kilometers ahead or live for 200 years. Because of these kinds of biologically in-built constraints of our bodies and our conceptual capacities, we basically react to the earth in such a way that we can, in varying degrees, communicate with one another—even if people live in different cultures, using different languages. Furthermore, the earth is the ground of human mistakes. An aspect of the earth not yet disclosed may tell us that a human perspective that has been seen as right so far needs modifications. Put the other way round, the earth is a source for the infinite but (at least in theory) communicable variety of human knowledge.

Yet, this distinction between world and earth must not be confused with the complete separateness of them. They can be described distinctively only for expediency’s sake, but the fact is that they form a totality of human world from the outset. Such a human world exists prior to the existence of any single human being; no one can create the human world ex nihilo from the earth or from ‘the world as it really is’.

Noteworthy here is that it is, contrary to what John McDowell terms ‘bald naturalism’ (McDowell, 1996), impossible to try to inspect the earth by bracketing the notion of our (human) world. Along these lines, I would argue that truth can be understood as ‘truth humanly speaking’, aware that this may have a somewhat feeble-minded constructivist connotation. It neither follows, however, that truth is one-sidedly epistemic nor that ontology can be reducible to epistemology. The point to appreciate is that we do not have to abandon the Enlightenment notions adduced earlier such as objective knowledge, absolute truth, etc. Yet, these notions need to be recognised in the way just mentioned, rather than in the conservative way that Siegel favours. What we must bear in mind is the fundamentally organic and inseparable relation between world and earth. To borrow Heidegger’s enigmatic words:

World and earth are essentially different from one another and yet are never separated. The world grounds itself on the earth, and earth juts through world. Yet the relation between world and earth does not wither away into the empty unity of opposites unconcerned with one another (Heidegger, 1993, p174, italics added).

This passage should, I think, be read as one that highlights the dynamic and shifting character of the unity between world and earth.

Siegel adheres to the binary oppositions between rational justification as epistemic and truth as non-epistemic—i.e. independent of humans—despite his ambivalent claim that they are nonetheless not irrelevant to each other. As long as we oscillate between them, however, no one would be able to resolve the age-old difficulty of accounting convincingly for the relation between the non-epistemic character of truth and the human epistemic capacity of rational justification. Siegel adverts to ‘an earlier Putnam’ as considering truth ‘radically nonepistemic’ (Siegel, 1997, p216). However, in my understanding, Putnam these days has an outlook quite congenial to the story I have been trying to articulate. The difference between Siegel and myself therefore becomes clearer by shifting attention to Putnam’s views on the relevant issues.
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3. The interpenetration between mind, body and world: Hilary Putnam

The central gist of the present Putnam is, I argue, the insight that value judgements, descriptions of fact and human linguistic conventions are all _interpenetrating_. In other words, mind, body and world are, from the very beginning, interpenetrating. ‘An earlier Putnam’, with whom Siegel has an affinity concerning the concept of truth, embraced what Putnam now calls _metaphysical realism_—a doctrine that ‘the mind and the world are separated by an epistemological chasm’ (Heil, 2005). Clearly, the Cartesian mind-body dualism is one extreme form of metaphysical realism. His gradual dissatisfaction with metaphysical realism drove Putnam 1 to the next stage, where he sees truth as ‘idealised rational acceptability’ rather than as ‘radically nonepistemic’. His further shift to the present Putnam is a promising extension of the previous line that placed slightly too much emphasis on the internalistic—i.e. subjectivist—explanation of truth.

Obviously, Siegel is averse to Putnam 2, the internal realist Putnam (Siegel, 1997, p216). In line with Putnam 1’s scheme, Siegel holds the following view as to critical thinking which he highly appreciates as ‘the educational cognate’ of rationality (Siegel, 1988, p127):

[T]ruth is _independent_ of rational justification: we can be justified in believing that \( q \) even though \( q \) is false; and we can be justified in rejecting \( q \) as false even though it is true (Siegel, 1997, p18).

Based on this view, Siegel gives priority to rational justification rather than truth as the aim of critical thinking (Siegel, 1997, p34). The view cited above is in tandem with his understanding of ‘fallibilism’. I concur with fallibilism inasmuch as the epistemological programme of foundationalism as it is cannot be tenable. I do not believe, however, that there could happen a total or massive failure in our recognition of truth, given that we live in our human world rather than a meaningless environment. Everything in the world is bound up in complex ways within a social, historical and relational matrix, a _de facto_ reliance upon which cannot possibly be dropped out of view, as one thing implies and is imbricated with many others. Nor can this complex interacting web be forgotten as a crucial condition of our ability to live in our world _qua_ humans. As mentioned, the earth is always a source for our mistakes, but the mistakes are revisions and modifications, not a massive failure which proves that our engaging in our world so far is completely misoriented.

I do not mean to say that Siegel’s fallibilism implies a massive or total failure. But, what seems to be missing in his account of fallibilism is the acuteness towards the present Putnam’s subtler insight. When Siegel says that we can be justified in believing that \( q \) even though \( q \) is false, how can we arrive at a conviction that \( q \) is in fact false despite our rational justification that \( q \) is right? His answer is that:

Even very powerful reasons for or against some claim \( q \) can be wrong, misleading, or overturned by _evidence not yet available_ (Siegel, 1997, p18, italics added).

This reply seems _prima facie_ good enough and ideally scientific. I am inclined to claim, however, that a sort of pitfall may lie here, a pitfall that might risk leading towards a species of scientism, which Siegel obviously rejects.

As referred to, Siegel thinks of critical thinking as the educational cognate of rationality and regards fostering critical thinking as one fundamental aim of education. Given that our world is already filled with a great deal of scientific, and correlatively technological, frameworks, it is inappropriate and simply wrong to devalue science. Yet, I would take issue with Siegel if he is prone to confine the apex of rationality to science—i.e. the presently most dominant view—, which appears to be a covert aspiration shared by many ‘naturalistic’ analytical philosophers. What he seems to be mistaken about is his likely assumption that _evidence not yet available_ will (probably scientifically) be disclosed to us in a non-epistemic, namely, human-independent form. In brief, what Siegel fails to fully apprehend is that _evidence not yet available_ will partly be a result of the way _humans_ live—e.g. how we envisage a mode of enquiry. The whole point is that it is us human beings that constitute the relevance of evidence. It is not _a priori_ determined.

It is here that the significance of _education_ is brought into clear focus. As noted, all that is given in _our_ world has and involves a relation to human history and experience. Due to concrete social and historical determinations and determinacies, opacities of the interpenetration between...
concept and being as well as between word and world are unavoidable. Insofar as truth is only revealed through human experience and practice, education has vitally important roles to play in order to improve the breadth and depth of our experience as human beings collectively (which might be called the social dimension of education) as well as to become full and free human beings individually (which might be called the personal dimension of education). Put another way, the two main broad roles of education I want to emphasise are: (i) to initiate people into the world of meaning constituted by the complex interaction and deeper imbrication between concept and being as well as between word and world, and thereby (ii) to lead them to increase the sophistication of their interrelatedness in better ways because the unity can shift. As long as ‘the world as it is’, whatever it may be, does not offer us a recipe for our living, let alone legitimate human development from outside our world, we human beings have the burden of making our ongoing world better and more sophisticated. At the heart of these processes lies education—education in a broad sense. For, since we cannot get outside our world, what we can do is just to tinker with what is already here, so to speak, namely, with the legacy of human history which has been embodied and reposited in tradition and language. (Hans-Georg Gadamer and McDowell are the representative embodiments of this idea.) Viewed in this way, education in the inclusive sense described is the centrepiece of human development.

Put another way, the advancement of evidence not yet available, whether it is scientific or not, goes hand in hand with human rationality—a basic conceptual web which has been historically (and biologically) conditioned and the de facto reliance on which makes it possible for humans to live in our world. In a nutshell, what will be unpacked by evidence not yet available does exist independently of human epistemic capacities, but it will partly be concept-dependent, though not concept-exhaustive. Thus, the main problem with Siegel’s account of the relation between rational justification and truth resides in the fact that he does not dismiss metaphysical realism—the view that ‘the things we talk and think about are whatever way they are independently of our thoughts’ (Cormier, 2006, p110)—by adhering to the idea that truth is ‘radically non-epistemic’.

With the aid of Heidegger’s distinction between world and earth as well as Putnam’s idea of the interpenetration of mind, body and world, I have striven to reveal that we can overcome an obsessing worry of philosophy, especially of Cartesian and British-empiricist epistemology, the worry about how the human mind can be in touch with the ‘external’ world. The fact is that they bleed non-reductively into as well as out of each other and thus that they figure as a complex and subtly nuanced totality. In this, there is no room for either the proposition that Reality as it is totally independently of humanity on the one hand, or the thesis that the mind one-sidedly constitutes the world on the other.

The vital point is that considerations so far tell us that we can retain a sort of ‘representation’—accordingly, most of the Enlightenment notions listed earlier—even after we jettison the conventional correspondence theory of truth. Here, this representation, as Putnam puts it, is entailed by the activity ‘in which we engage’, not the idea of a representation as ‘an interface between ourselves and what we think about’ (Putnam, 1999, p59, italics in original). The following example Putnam adduces serves to encapsulate this point: ‘Wittgenstein says that “This chair is blue” (imagine he had a blue chair in front of him) corresponds to reality, but he can only say to what reality by using the sentence itself’ (Putnam, 1999, p197). Put another way, the kind of representation we endorse is by nature normative, which is decisively distinct from non-normative ‘representation’ in the correspondence theory. True, Siegel also stresses the normative character of rationality and its importance for education, but, as far as this matter is concerned, his understanding of normativity seems not to reach the point where the notion of ‘correspondence’ or ‘representation’ is already normative in the sense that such notions already possess human conceptual content.

Siegel is right in locating rationality ‘between an overly formalistic conception of rationality, and an overly contextualist conception’ (Siegel, 1997, p102, italics added); that is, ‘substantively’ (Siegel, 1997, p104). Nonetheless, his position makes me somewhat uneasy about the way rationality is to be understood. For his mode of speaking might give the impression that rationality is, though normative and fallible, inert. Still, rationality essentially requires open variety—on the basis of rationality we now have. Human flourishing evolves, as does rationality—intertwined with
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a refinement of normativity and justification. That is, Siegel’s path still appears to run nearer the formalistic one. My lane, it could be argued, is slightly closer to the contextualist one, which results from my emphasis on what might be called the social and historical aspects of human knowledge that enable us to grasp the organic and plastic character of rationality.

4. A small conclusion

In section 1, I wrote that part of recent philosophical scholarship shows a close alliance of philosophy with education. This line of philosophical argument can be summarised as a growing awareness about what I would call the social and historical dimensions of human knowledge. The view is well explained, for instance, by Richard Rorty in his introduction to Wilfrid Sellars’s philosophy: ‘knowledge is inseparable from a social practice—the practice of justifying one’s assertions to one’s fellow-humans. It is not presupposed by this practice, but comes into being along with it’ (Rorty, 1997, italics added). Knowledge is never divorced from social practices of justification to fellow-humans; but, it is by no means reduced to a determined set of social practices or conventions. This goes precisely to the heart of my argument in this paper. This view pursued here, if taken seriously, encourages us to see the traditional outlook towards the relationship between philosophy and education differently; that is, philosophy must in essence be seen to be interwoven with educational aspects. Paul Standish convincingly adverts to this point:

[F]orms of enquiry central to philosophy (into ethics, epistemology and metaphysics) themselves necessarily incorporate questions about learning and teaching: they ask questions not only about the nature of the good (for the individual and for society), but also about how we become virtuous; and not only about the nature of knowledge, but also about how it is acquired. In other words, these essentially educational questions of teaching and learning are not external matters to which the philosophy is applied, but internal to philosophy itself (Standish, 2007, p162, italics in original).

This line of thinking reminds me of Quine’s favourite parable of Neurath’s boat: the ‘parable of the mariner who has to rebuild his boat while staying afloat in it’ (Quine, 1988, italics added). Quine appeals to this parable to stress that philosophy is part of science in the sense of no first philosophy outside of science. In contrast, I make an appeal to this parable to amplify a non-foundational explanation of human knowledge on the grounds that we are always already in our world which co-varies with rationality, normativity and justification.

Siegel’s discourse seems to reiterate the trivial point that we live in the world filled with meanings where rationality and reasons are of primary importance inasmuch as it would not make any coherent sense to have meanings without them. This point is certainly critical but nevertheless it does not go far enough. To follow it through, it is to be recognised that we are always in some sense on the way—i.e. our world is shifting. Due to Siegel’s insensitivity towards this latter point, his understanding of human knowledge may arouse the impression that rationality and normativity, for instance, are of inert nature and accordingly that his views on education based upon a traditional epistemology are also limited.

Assuming that our world is intrinsically normative, however, has yet to answer the more imperative question whether this has any implications for content, namely, how we should live or what education we should envisage. What I have attempted to do in this paper is just to prepare the ground for further fruitful discussion about this.

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misunderstandings and infelicities in my exposition of his views. Other errors that remain are of course my responsibility alone, but they may persist in the form of disagreements which I hope could be sources for pursuing the issues addressed in this paper in greater detail.

Notes

1. What I mean by ‘Philosophy’, ‘academic philosophy’ and ‘general philosophy’ designates other philosophical areas—such as the philosophy of mind, language, science, etc.—most of which are distinct from the philosophy of education insofar as they are practiced and taught in Departments of Philosophy. Note also that what I mean by ‘epistemology’ in this paper almost entirely coincides with the strand dominant in the Anglo-American analytical tradition.

2. The internalist and externalist conceptions of epistemic justification, reliabilism, virtue epistemology and many other theories typify this tendency.

3. These papers caused upheaval in the empiricist epistemological tradition of philosophy insofar as they putatively undermined traditional assumptions and formulations in the explanation of how we attain knowledge in philosophy: for example, the Kantian distinction between analytic and synthetic statements and the Platonic account of knowledge—justified true belief—were threatened.

4. Both pragmatism and the later Wittgenstein’s view deserve detailed attention inasmuch as they are anti-Platonic to the effect that human knowledge is never legitimated from outside of the human cognitive domain. However, these are too substantial to address here and would be the topic of a separate paper.

5. ‘It [the Rortian relativisation of knowledge] seems more widely accepted in education than it is within epistemology’ (Winch and Gingell, 2008, p75).

6. This description is, strictly, not accurate. For on the earth, there is neither name nor any category for understanding, say, what a stone is. By the same token, the earth is not even the mere collection of physical entities. For the idea of collection, for example, already presupposes something that does not exist anywhere in the meaningless environment.

7. Space does not permit me to do more than refer to some remarks made by philosophers who encourage this line of thinking. Robert Brandom insists, inspired by Hegel, that ‘[t]he study of natures itself [e.g. physics] has a history, and its own nature, if any, must be approached through the study of that history’ (Brandom, 2000, p33); Putnam, elucidating the impossibility of science as purely naturalistic, argues that ‘[o]ur views on the nature of coherence and simplicity [which enable the conducting of science] are historically conditioned, just as our views on the nature of justice or goodness are’ (Putnam, 1990, p138). It should not be assumed, however, that these philosophers sign up for a thoroughgoing historicism.

8. There are at least three stages at which Putnam has deployed distinct views. Christopher Norris, calling the three Putnams ‘Putnam 1’, ‘Putnam 2’ and ‘Putnam 3’ respectively, describes Putnam 1 as a ‘strong causal-realist’, Putnam 2 as an ‘internal realist’ and Putnam 3 as a ‘commonsense’ realist (Norris, 2002, p25). I feel friendly towards Putnam 3, while Siegel towards Putnam 1.

9. Siegel recently professes his modification of the earlier view concerning the importance of rational justification and truth as aims of education. His sustained discussion with Israel Scheffler and Alvin Goldman urges Siegel to come to see that ‘both true belief and rational belief (and, relatedly, critical thinking) are rightly regarded as crucial epistemic aims of education’ (Siegel, 2005, p347). However, the problem of how rational justification and truth are to be mediated has yet to be defused. This is why the trouble, I think, still abides even in his present view.

10. I find unacceptable the sort of foundationalism defined as follows: ‘what all foundationalisms share in common is the belief that any adequate account of human knowledge must not only explain how our knowledge-claims about “the world” can be justified beyond all doubt, but also how we arrived at such an account of justification itself’ (Wachterhauser, 2002).

11. Note that I am not claiming that how we live determines or changes the material structure of our world, needless to say. Rather, the point I want to make here is that it is our ways of engaging with such a material structure that partly—if not entirely—determine which aspects of reality can be possible objects of our knowledge in our
world. One corollary to this point is that the content of
science and the method of science are not irrelevant to
each other. However, it is to be borne in mind that this
view does not entail the repudiation of presently
accepted scientific evidence.

12. Note, however, that ‘the world as it is’ provides some
background conditions and constraints under which
alone humans and all other living things can live. For
instance, no one, no animal and no plant can break
natural laws like the law of gravity. To use Heidegger’s
terminology, the earth is required for the world to figure.

13. I take these terms, ‘concept-dependent’ and ‘concept-
exhaustive’, from Roy Bhaskar.

14. Siegel suggested to me that truth be seen as a semantic
property. To be sure, some of the claims I have made
about truth might be more plausible as claims about
meaning. Either way, Siegel’s formulation that truth is
radically non-epistemic seems to be untenable to the
extent that it implies Reality or the Way the World is.
However, this point needs further exploration.

15. What I have here in mind is McDowell’s insight that
experiences and impressions—i.e. ‘impingements by
the world on our sensibility’ (McDowell, 1996, p10)—
already have conceptual content.

16. As many critics argue, Rorty often goes too far. We
should not throw out the baby with bath water, however.
His views are, on many occasions, insightful though he at times takes a further step, which is all too often
both needless and bewildering. The quote I cite here
is incisive unless it is interpreted as a form of linguistic
idealism or epistemic conventionalism.

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認識論と教育に関するハーヴィ・シーガルの論考：
合理性、規範性、正当化

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抄録：本論文は、人間の知識を構成する主要概念である合理性、規範性、正当化をめぐる哲学的考察を基に、教育と哲学の内在的な、しかしこれまで光が当てられなかった側面を照射する。マルティン・ハイデガーと（より全面的に）ヒラリー・バトナムの議論を軸として、ハーヴィ・シーガルの近代認識論擁護に批判的な考察を加える。導かれる結論は、人間が知識をもつということはすでにある種の社会性を伴っているという論点である。ただし、本論が明らかにする「社会性」は基本的に超越論的論点であり、多くの社会科学研究や「質的研究」に見られる社会構築主義（の亜種）とは一線を画する。
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