

The Presidential Address

I*—KNOWING HOW AND KNOWING THAT: A DISTINCTION RECONSIDERED

by Paul Snowdon

ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to raise some questions about the idea, which was first made prominent by Gilbert Ryle, and has remained associated with him ever since, that there are at least two types of knowledge (or to put it in a slightly different way, two types of states ascribed by knowledge ascriptions) identified, on the one hand, as the knowledge (or state) which is expressed in the 'knowing that' construction (sometimes called, for fairly obvious reasons, 'propositional' or 'factual' knowledge) and, on the other, as the knowledge (or state) which is ascribed in the 'knowing how' construction (sometimes called 'practical' knowledge).¹ This idea, which might be said to be Ryle's most lasting philosophical legacy, has, in some vague form, remained part of conventional wisdom in philosophy since he put it forward.² My purpose here is fairly accurately described as 'raising questions', since both the criticisms of the received view (as I interpret it), and the positive alternative suggestions to be advanced, are, to some extent, tentative and exploratory. The aim is to assemble a broad range of evidence for the conclusion that we need to replace the standard account, to query especially what Ryle suggested as evidence for it, and to explore what seems to me to be the indicated replacement for it.

1. For Ryle's major discussion see Ryle 1949, Ch. 2. There are those who will want to point out straight away that to talk of two sorts of knowledge ascriptions is already to have overlooked the fact that there are others. In particular, and importantly, there is the use, in English, of 'know' followed by a noun, for example, we talk of knowing a poem, or a place, or a person. The present paper is ignoring these ascriptions at this stage of setting up the debate, but there is no assumption that this other construction is irrelevant to the overall debate.

2. I wrote and presented an early version of this paper in 1994, but left it unpublished for various reasons, the main one being that I was unsure about what positive account of knowing how to adopt. Recently, the publication of Stanley and Williamson 2001 has stimulated considerable debate about the present topic. My hope is that this paper is sufficiently different in emphasis and detail from Stanley and Williamson (despite being, in an obvious way, on the same side in the argument) to be worth publishing now, and that the debate to which it is intended to contribute—which is already under way—will at least generate some sort of stable and better understanding of knowing how than is contained in the orthodox view. I had hoped to include here discussion of the paper by Stanley and Williamson, and the responses to it in Koethke 2002, Schiffer 2002 and Rumfitt 2003. Attempting to do this made the paper even more monstrous than it is, and so I have decided to leave that for another occasion.

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I

The *Standard View*. Although endorsements of a difference between ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’ are frequently encountered in the philosophical literature, it is rare to find accounts which attempt to say in a general way what the difference is. I need, therefore, to provide a theory that seems to correspond to the views which are normally expressed. This suggested theory may contain generalisations of which the philosophers whose views I aim to capture would not approve, but I hope that what I call ‘the Standard View’ is a useful stalking horse, and I also hope (and shall argue) that it is not totally alien to what people have been inclined to think.

The Standard View can be characterised as affirming *two* propositions:

- (1) Knowing how does *not* consist in knowing that some proposition is true or that some fact obtains; knowing how cannot be reduced to or equated with (any form of) knowledge that.
- (2) Knowing how to G does in fact consist in being able to G, in having the capacity to G. Knowing how ascriptions ascribe abilities or capacities to do the mentioned action.

Thesis (1) is negative, and I shall label it the Disjointness Thesis (DT), because it claims that knowing how is disjoint from knowing that. Thesis (2) is positive, and I shall call it the Capacity Thesis (CT). There is no doubt that DT and CT are in need of clarification, but for the moment they are adequate to fix what has some claim to be the familiar approach.

When knowing how, as it often is, is described as ‘practical’ knowledge, the point that is being made, I take it, is something like CT. It is, however, a somewhat dangerous way to express the claim. ‘Practical’ applies unproblematically to knowing how in that the content of such knowledge relates, at least usually, to *practice*. Thus, knowing how to G concerns the practice of G-ing, just as knowing the date of the Battle of Hastings concerns mediaeval history. It is quite clear, though, that from this obvious sense in which knowing how is practical that it does not follow that it is practical in the sense affirmed by CT. It does not follow that the presence of knowing how consists in the presence of a *practical capacity*.

I now want to give a few examples of both early and more recent expressions of at least something like the Standard View. Here is one of Ryle's statements of it in the famous Chapter 2 of *The Concept of Mind*. The chapter is actually entitled 'Knowing How and Knowing That'. Ryle says; "'Intelligent" cannot be defined in terms of "intellectual" or "knowing how" in terms of "knowing that".'³ The second part of this sentence seems to express DT. A little earlier Ryle says 'When a person is described by one or other of the intelligence epithets such as "shrewd" or "silly", "prudent" or "imprudent", the description imputes to him not the knowledge or ignorance, of this or that truth, but the ability, or inability, to do certain sorts of things. Theorists have been so preoccupied with the task of investigating the nature, the source and the credentials of the theories that we adopt that they have for the most part ignored the question what it is for someone to know how to perform tasks.'⁴ Clearly, taking these last two sentences together, Ryle is affirming that knowing how is an ability, that is to say, he is affirming CT.

Here, again, is something that is at least close to the Standard View receiving expression by McGinn in his article 'The Concept of Knowledge'. He says 'Knowing how admittedly falls into place somewhat less smoothly, but I do not think that this should be found so very disturbing, since it seems to me intuitively correct to see this type of knowledge as somewhat removed from the types so far considered. It belongs less to the realms of the strictly cognitive than do the other types of knowledge, as is shown by its connection with the motor faculties.'⁵ The last sentence comes close to endorsing DT and CT.

The Standard View is also more or less explicit in a recent article by Professor Mellor. He says 'Why cannot I state the fact that I know when I know what it is like to feel warm? The obvious answer is that there is no such fact. Knowing what feeling warm is like is not knowing any fact, because it is not knowing that any proposition is true; it is just knowing how to imagine feeling warm. In this respect it is like knowing how to ride a bicycle. I cannot state the fact that I know then either, because

3. Ryle 1949, p. 32.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–28.

5. McGinn 1984.

there is no such fact to state. I must of course know some facts about bicycles to know how to ride one, but having the ability is obviously neither constituted nor entailed by knowing those facts.’⁶ In the last two sentences Mellor denies that knowing how to ride a bicycle is knowing that, and equates it with an ability. Of course, in the paper from which this passage comes, Mellor is giving his support to a response (or to part of a response) to a well known style of argument expressed, in their different ways, by Nagel and Jackson, raising problems for materialist approaches to experience. An earlier and influential version of this response, by Nemirow, deserves quoting here. He says ‘The correlation stated above suggests an equation: knowing what it is like may be identified with knowing how to imagine. The more seriously we take this ability equation, the easier it becomes to resist the knowledge argument.’⁷ What, from my point of view, is so striking about Nemirow’s remark is that for him there seems to be absolutely *no* distinction between knowing how and ability. A theory formulated in terms of an equation between knowing what something is like and knowing how is simply called an *ability* equation. He moves without any sense of movement from talk of knowing how to talk of ability. This is evidence of just how unquestioned CT has been.

In the light of these examples, it is not, I think, unreasonable to designate the conjunction of DT and CT as the Standard View. It is, further, also part of what is surely describable as the Standard View that DT and CT apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to other epistemological notions, the terms for which can sometimes be followed by ‘that’ and which can also be followed by ‘how’. One example is memory. We speak of someone remembering that P but also of them remembering how to G. The Standard View is that the former cognitive state is the retention of knowledge that, of propositional knowledge, whereas the latter is, in contrast, retention of an ability or capacity. It would say the same about other cases.

II

A Standard Addition to the Standard View. There is a question which naturally arises in response to the Standard View, but to

6. Mellor 1993.

7. Nemirow 1990, p. 493.

which there is a very plausible answer that has been offered by proponents of the view. This answer, therefore, represents something which may be regarded as a *third* component of the standard account. The question arises because it is obvious that we do not employ only the two verb forms which have so far been mentioned when ascribing knowledge. We also employ such expressions as: know why, know where, know when, know whether, know who, know what, know about (and so on). Knowing how *looks* to be just one more case on this long list. The question then is this: since these locutions are not of the 'know that' form, why is *one* of them (namely, knowing how) singled out as *the* contrasting case? The standard answer is that although these other forms of knowledge ascription are not *explicitly* ascriptions of knowledge that, they do in fact require, if they are to be ascribed with truth to a subject S, that there is some proposition or other such that S knows *that* it, that proposition, is true. The claim, then, is that DT does *not* apply to these other forms of knowledge ascriptions. So, although they are linguistically distinct forms of knowledge ascriptions, they are treated in the standard theory as indirect ascriptions of knowledge that.

We can trace how this account goes, and thereby see how plausible it is, by briefly developing an example. Suppose that I say: S knows who that person is. Then I am committed to there being some fact, expressible in the words 'That person is ...' which is such that S knows it about that person. I am committed, as it is said, to supposing that S knows the answer to the question: who is that person? We ascribe a piece of knowledge that by picking out, or in some way alluding to, the *question* to which S knows the answer, that is, such that the answer to the question is P, and where S knows that P. Now, this is, I think, clearly a very plausible treatment of such knowledge ascriptions.

Two things can be added. There is an obvious utility in having knowledge-that ascriptions of this *indirect* sort. It allows a speaker to ascribe knowledge that where the speaker need not suppose himself or herself to possess the knowledge thereby ascribed. I can without absurdity say: S knows who that person is, but I do not. In contrast I cannot without absurdity say: S knows that that person is the composer of *Memories*, but I do not. Such constructions allow us to ascribe knowledge of a fact even though we are in ignorance of the fact.

The second point is that it is a mistake to think of such ascriptions as specifying what is known as *the* answer to the question (say) ‘Who is that person?’ This is a mistake because such a question does not have a single answer. The person is the composer of *Memories*, but he is also the composer of *Starlight Express*, and so on. It is, therefore, better to say we are ascribing knowledge that P for some P which is *a* correct answer to the question: who is that person? It seems that the same multiplicity of answers exists for the other cases as well. However, in many contexts it would be totally inappropriate to defend an ascription of knowledge of this sort to S simply because S knows *an* answer to the question, for the context of conversation will impose restrictions on the type of answer that is relevant. Thus if we are watching a quiz in which contestants must know the dates of historical events to the month within the year, and not simply to the year, it would be quite inappropriate to defend an ascription to S of knowledge when the Battle of Hastings was by claiming that S knows that it occurred in 1066, even though that is, of course, *an* answer to the question: when did it occur? So, although there is no such thing as *the* answer, contexts of ascription impose restrictions on which amongst the true answers S must know.

We now have an exposition of what can be thought of as the standard account of the contrast between the two types of knowledge ascription.⁸

III

Difficulties for the Standard View. I now wish to argue that the standard account faces a variety of problems, and that as a package it is unacceptable.

8. I have so far presented the Standard View as holding that there are direct knowledge-that ascriptions, knowing-how ascriptions to which DT and CT apply, and the rest, which are treated as indirect knowledge-that ascriptions. (I have also endorsed the standard treatment of these indirect cases.) There is a complication here that needs registering. When, in the later parts of this paper, I speak, as I shall, of applications, they tend to consist in endorsements of an equivalence between one of these knowledge ascriptions, which have so far been treated as belonging to the rest, and ‘knowing how’ ascriptions, an equivalence which enables DT and CT to apply to it, bringing with it some supposed theoretical advantage. In the quotation from Mellor, for example, the candidate for such equivalence is ‘knowing what it is like to feel hot’. So the standard picture is, perhaps, best characterized as at the beginning of this footnote, with the qualification that maybe a few of the knowledge ascriptions which are neither explicit knowledge that nor explicit knowledge-how ascriptions are equivalent to knowing-how ascriptions.

The first point is fairly trivial. Once the standard account is completed in the way just sketched, it becomes clear, I think, that the normal expression of the contrast is careless. It is obvious that 'knowing how' can sometimes be treated in exactly the way just sketched for 'knowing who'. Thus to know how Hilary prepared for the ascent of Everest is to know the, or an, answer to the question: how did Hilary prepare for the ascent? Such a 'knowing how' ascription is obviously made true by the presence of some appropriate factual knowledge. The contrast, if there is to be one, therefore, has to be between 'knowing how *to*', and 'knowing that', rather than between the latter and simply 'knowing how'. I shall take it, from now on, then that 'knowing how' is just shorthand for 'knowing how *to*'.

Having accepted that the standard exposition (and naming) of the contrast is mistaken, and that it should be restricted to 'know how to', the next problem is that it is also clear that 'know how to' belongs to a family of knowledge constructions which employ the infinitive in their English expression. We talk of someone knowing where to put an object, and of knowing when to bow in the ceremony, and knowing whether to water that plant, and of knowing who to ask for the key. Having noticed this, one would naturally expect that 'know how to' functions in a similar way to such constructions. How, then, do they function? I want to suggest that such knowledge ascriptions are neither disjoint from factual knowledge ascriptions, nor do they, in any straightforward way, ascribe capacities. That is, nothing like DT or CT can be applied to them. Thus, to use two examples, to know where to put an object seems to amount to knowing that a certain place is where to put the object, and knowing when to bow in a ceremony is equivalent to knowing that a certain time is the time to bow, whereas knowing where to put the object does not seem equivalent to being able to put it there, since it may be that I know where to put it but, because of being too short, I am quite unable to put it there. Again, I might know when to bow but a sudden paralysis in my back means that I simply cannot bow at the moment which I know is the appropriate moment. I suggest, then, generalising considerably beyond the evidence given here, that these other 'know ... to ...' ascriptions neatly fit the standard treatment of them as indirect ascriptions of knowing that. It seems correct, then, to say that the Standard

View has to contrast ‘knowing how to’ with *all* the other infinitive knowledge ascriptions, and also with (basically) *all* other knowledge ascriptions as well. This does not render the Standard View completely incredible, but the pull in favour of theoretical uniformity makes acceptance of this picture uncomfortable.

I have so far criticised the normal formulation of the doctrine, and also tried to bring out that it involves, rather uncomfortably, treating ‘knowing how to’ as the one exception to a uniform and highly plausible treatment of all other cases. The third problem concerns the truth of CT. CT is the Capacity Thesis, and in its simplest formulation it claims that S knows how to G if and only if S can, or is able, to G. In this formulation CT claims an equivalence between ascriptions of knowledge how to G and ascriptions of the capacity to G. I want to argue that, as a general claim, CT is false.

First, it seems that the possession of the capacity (or ability) to G is not a necessary condition for knowing how to G. Here are five simple counterexamples:

- (a) I know how to make Christmas pudding, and have done so frequently. Alas, a terrible explosion obliterates the world’s supply of sugar, so that no one is able to make it. I still know how to but, like everyone else, cannot.
- (b) Raymond Blanc, the world’s greatest chef, knows how to make an excellent omelette. He loses his arms in a car accident, and is no longer able to make omelettes. However, he retains his knowledge how to make omelettes, and if you wish to learn how to make an omelette you should consult Blanc. He has, that is, not lost his knowledge, merely his capacity.⁹
- (c) Susan, having spent a lifetime in the Royal household, knows how to address the queen. She can tell you that the rule is ‘Ma’am to rhyme with spam, not Ma’am to rhyme with harm.’ She is, however, unable herself to address the monarch correctly, (or, indeed, recite the rule in the monarch’s presence) since being of a nervous disposition, she develops a speech impediment when in the

9. Shaw’s dictum ‘Those who can, do; those who can’t, teach’ is, of course, a witty falsehood. But it does not normally attract the response that if you can’t do it you can’t teach it.

royal presence, and cannot pronounce any word beginning with 'm'.

- (d) A group of friends want to open my safe in England while I am away in New Zealand. They ring me up and ask, somewhat tentatively given my forgetfulness, whether I know how to open my safe. I answer that I do and tell them how to do it. My claim to know how to do it is obviously true, and it is clearly unaffected by my being so far away that I am quite unable to open it myself for at least thirty six hours, and what is worse, have consumed so much Speight's Ale that I have developed a tremor in my hands preventing me, for some time, from opening safes. Part of the point of this example is to generate a sense of how *totally* irrelevant, in such a case, my own capacities for performing the action in question are to the issue of whether I *know* how to do it.¹⁰
- (e) Ann is in a room at the top of a burning building. There is no escape through the door since the corridor is ablaze. The only way to escape is to climb out of the window and crawl along a narrow ledge on one side of which is a sheer drop. Ann realises that that is the only way to escape. Unfortunately, the sight of the drop has the effect of making it true that she simply cannot get onto the ledge. She is, as we say, paralysed by fear. It seems plausible to me to say in this case that Ann actually *knows* how to escape, since she certainly realises that the one and only way to escape is to crawl along the ledge, but she is unable to do that, and hence unable to escape.

There seems nothing special or problematic about such cases, and it seems easy to construct counterexamples along these lines to at least many applications of CT to cases of knowing how. To construct such examples we need to describe cases in which the subject can show, teach, or tell (or otherwise convey to) us how to do something, and hence *must* be credited with knowing how to do it, but is for some reason or other unable to do it. There is no assumption here that the presence of knowledge entails that it can be passed on by the knower, but it makes a denial of the

10. I could, for example, have been rapidly struck down with more or less total paralysis due to motor neurone disease.

knowledge ascription very hard when the subject can, apparently, convey the relevant information to someone else.

There is one problem, however, about evaluating these suggested counterexamples to CT. They are intended to be cases where the subject knows how to G, but is not able to (cannot) G. The problem arises because judgements about what someone is able to (or can) do seem highly relative. Consider this case: S is a brilliant violinist who has performed the Brahms concerto often, but has currently broken his arm. If asked whether S can play the concerto it would be correct to say that he cannot (because he cannot play) but also correct to say that he can (because he knows the piece well, and his injury will go). This sort of complexity means that to demonstrate that there is no entailment from 'S knows how to G' to 'S can (is able to) G' it is not enough to specify a case where the former claim is true and there is *a* reading of the latter which comes out false. It is necessary to show that no reading of the latter is true. However, I think that in the above cases either that condition is already met or the incapacity can be so strengthened that the condition would be met.

There is also a counter-argument to consider. There is obviously a link between knowing how and possibility. Thus, if someone claimed to know how to build a perpetual motion machine, then, believing, as I do, that such a machine is impossible, I would respond that he could not know how to do it. We can say, therefore, that if S knows how to G then there must be a way to G, and hence it must be possible to G. G must be something that *can* be done. It might then be claimed that it follows that the subject who knows how to do something must be able to do it. The response to this last step, though, is that it is mistaken. The previous examples make it look right to say that, although knowledge how does require the possibility of doing something, it does not require that it is possible for the subject with the knowledge. The other conditions for being able to do the type of thing in question might not be fulfilled by the subject *with the knowledge*.

The previous paragraph contained a suggestion to explain why CT has seemed correct. There is another point to add to that. In normal circumstances, with normal agents, it will, at least often, be true that S is able to do G if and only if S knows how to G.

The reason is that for agents with normal capabilities it is only the ignorance of how to do G that prevents them from being able to do it. So, once they learn how to they will become able to, and if they are able to it will be because they know how to. There is, therefore, another truth behind CT.

Having argued against the necessity of possession by S of the capacity to G for S to know how to G, I now wish to offer some counterexamples to its sufficiency. I shall argue, that is, that CT is wrong also because from the fact that S can do G it does not follow that S knows how to G.

I shall offer four simple cases:

- (1) A man is in a room, which, because he has not explored it in the least, he does, as yet, not know how to get out of. In fact there is an obvious exit which he can easily open. He is perfectly able to get out, he can get out, but does not know how to (as yet).
- (2) There is an irregular and rather narrow opening in a rock. S, who is fairly agile and thin, can certainly get through it. If, however, he has no knowledge of the rock or the task it would be odd to say that he knows how to get through it.
- (3) Martin is someone who can do fifty consecutive press-ups. Let us suppose that none of us here can do that. It would be, I suggest, quite counterintuitive to say that Martin knows how to do something we do not know how to do. Rather, he is, simply, stronger than we are. He is stronger, but not more knowledgeable.¹¹
- (4) During an evening of music I sight-read the accompaniment to a song by Wolf that I had not seen or heard before. It is clear that I was able to do that, and, indeed was able to do it well before I actually did it. But it would seem quite incorrect to say that I *knew how to* sight-read that piece.

I hope that these cases provide fairly convincing evidence that abilities to do things do not necessarily yield knowledge how to do them.

11. The Martin case fits rather badly with McGinn's remark quoted earlier that links knowing how with the motor system rather than the cognitive system. It seems that it is because Martin is special in the former respect that we do not talk of knowing how.

A further argument for the same conclusion rests on the plausible thought that if S knows how to G then there must be such a thing as the, or a, way to G. Thus S might know how to open a safe, because there is a way to open it which he knows about. By doing the things which are the way, S opens the safe. Now, there are some things we do, and so certainly can do, where there seems to be no such thing as the way we do them. These are called 'basic actions', things we can do but *not* by doing something more basic; there is, in this case, nothing which is our way to do them. It is, of course, controversial which actions they are, but it would be quite inappropriate to say that each of us knows how to blink. In this sort of case it seems that we should say: we can do them, but do not know how to do them. (Other counterexamples to the thesis that the capacity to do is sufficient for knowing how will be presented in the discussion of Ryle below.)

The upshot of these arguments and examples is that the equivalence asserted by CT does not obtain.

The fourth and final problem is that DT is not true. It seems to me that there are clear enough cases where 'knowing how to' fairly obviously does reduce to, or consists in, 'knowing that'. For example, I am thinking about a chess puzzle and, as we say, it dawned on me how to achieve mate in three. Surely, the onset of this knowledge consisted in my realising *that* moving the queen to D3, followed by moving the knight to . . . etc., will lead to mate in three. (Think, also, how ludicrous it is to speak about this sort of case in the way McGinn does, that is, of, 'knowing-how' having something to do with motor skills.) Again, S knows how to get from London to Swansea by train before midday. S's knowing how to do that surely consists in knowing *that* one first catches the 7.30 a.m. train to Reading from Paddington, and then one . . . etc. Finally, if someone knows how to insert footnotes using Word then they know *that* the way to insert footnotes is to click on Insert and then on Reference, and so on.

Basically, DT seems plausible only because a very limited range of cases is considered.

One way to think about such examples is to note that in the construction 'S knows how to G' the place filled by 'G' can be occupied by descriptions of actions of very different kinds and levels. Sometimes we use (or it is said that we use) descriptions of what are fairly basic physical actions, for example, riding a

bicycle, or walking, but we can also pick out much less directly physical cases, for example, opening that safe, applying to Oxford University, applying for a bank loan, arranging a marriage ceremony in a registry office, and so on. Given this rather vague contrast, it is plausible to say that it is only the relatively basic physical actions which even give the impression that knowing how to is disjoint from knowing that.

The standard doctrine in its full generality should, then, be rejected. The major task is to replace it by something better, but I want first to consider (in Sections IV and V) Ryle's grounds for supporting it and his applications of it, and (in Section VI) another recent application of the Standard View.

IV

Ryle's Discussion. It is striking that Ryle put the chapter entitled 'Knowing How and Knowing That' as the second chapter in *The Concept of Mind*. This indicates, I would have thought, that Ryle saw the theme (or themes) of the chapter as particularly important. But despite its title, and despite the fact that Ryle also labels one section within it 'Knowing How and Knowing That', the chapter is initially primarily concerned with refuting and replacing a doctrine which Ryle labels the 'Intellectualist Legend'. Towards the end of the chapter Ryle tries to apply the results of rejecting that doctrine to the problem of the nature of our understanding other people, which is to say, the problem of other minds. Ryle in fact weaves remarks about the distinction between knowing how and knowing that into his exposition of these two major themes. The intellectualist legend is, therefore, the supposed first great myth to be dispelled in Ryle's de-mythologising of our thought about the mind, and Ryle makes a central use in attacking the intellectualist legend of his most characteristic form of objection, namely, the allegation that the doctrine generates an unacceptable infinite regress. The chapter is rich in argument and observation, and the engagement with it here has to be extremely selective and incomplete.

What, then, is the intellectualist legend, and, most importantly for the present discussion, what has it to do with the supposed knowing-that and knowing-how contrast?

The intellectualist legend is Ryle's name for the idea that he summarises at one point as the claim (or as at least a view committed to the claim) that 'the intelligent execution of an operation must embody two processes, one of doing, and another of theorising.'¹² The legend is not entirely easy to characterise precisely, but there are two crucial features to it. First, it is a theory about what Ryle calls 'intelligence epithets', or the properties they ascribe. Intelligence epithets, Ryle tells us, include such positive expressions as 'clever', 'sensible', 'careful', and 'witty', and more negative expressions like 'dull', 'silly', 'careless' and 'humourless'.¹³ Second, it analyses the conditions for the application of such epithets into *two* linked occurrences. The first is an intellectual operation. As Ryle expresses the view, it says that 'the agent must first go through the internal process of avowing to himself certain propositions about what is to be done ... He must preach to himself before he can practice'.¹⁴ The second occurrence is the resulting action or public performance, say cooking or making a chess move, which is produced after and because of the intellectual operation. It is, I think, reasonable to say that Ryle's characterisation of the intellectualist legend primarily makes clear what the elements in the approach are, and does not pin down, or suggest for critical attention, an analysis of a particular positive or negative intelligence epithet. Still, given the vague and primarily structural characterisation, Ryle thinks that the view is open to a regress objection. The regress objection supposedly arises because the active 'consideration of propositions', which is to say the intellectual occurrence, can itself qualify as intelligent or stupid, insightful or careless, and if its possessing these features is taken to consist in its being the product of a prior intellectual operation, which would have to possess the same feature, then the position generates an infinite regress.

About the intellectualist legend and Ryle's treatment of it I want to make four remarks, which in no way say all that needs to be said:

12. Ryle 1949, p. 32.

13. These examples come from a much longer list that Ryle gives on p. 25 of Ryle 1949.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 29. This page seems to contain the clearest exposition of the intellectualist legend.

- (i) If we rely upon the fairly schematic characterisation of the intellectualist legend that Ryle gives, the claim that it is committed to an unacceptable regress is unjustified. All the intellectualist legend strictly requires is that if an activity is, say, intelligent then it must be preceded by and result from a distinct intellectual process *of a certain kind*. There is nothing in this vague claim that generates, of necessity, the postulation of a further intellectual process, since the principle (call it IP) that what is required for anything to fall under a particular intellectual epithet is for it to be preceded and caused by an intellectual occurrence that falls under that epithet is not built into the position. If IP is grafted onto the intellectualist legend, then the objectionable regress would arise and the complex position would be refuted by Ryle's objection. However, the aspect of Ryle's regress objection that would then need probing would be why IP should count as part of the position he is considering. What, after all, is the core or point of the intellectualist legend? The answer, it might reasonably be suggested, is to represent the thought that the mental qualities possessed by public occurrences, and ascribed to them by intelligence epithets, accrue to such occurrences in virtue of their being preceded by private, inner, intellectual processes. Now, if that is the heart of the view, the IP should not be part of it, because it is fundamentally a model of how such intelligence epithets apply to public actions. The position as characterised, then, does not generate a regress, and it should not be added to so that it does so.¹⁵
- (ii) An obvious fact about intelligence epithets is that they have what might be called an occasion application, where we say of an action that the epithet applies to it (for example, he played that sequence of the game intelligently), and a non-occasion application (for example, we can say of a person that he is intelligent). With this distinction in hand, we can notice that in his discussion Ryle

15. The exposition here of Ryle's regress argument treats its target differently from the account proposed in Stanley and Williamson 2001. However, their discussion of the argument as they represent it does help when considering the form expounded here.

talks of both types of application, but the intellectualist legend, which is the primary topic of the chapter, is a thesis solely about occasion applications and cannot qualify as a thesis about non-occasion applications. On the other hand, the emphasis in the more positive parts of his discussion on intelligence epithets as dispositional fits better the non-occasion application of such terms. Thus, the intelligent person surely is the person who can perform certain cognitive tasks (such as learning) better than the average person. It is, therefore, difficult throughout the chapter to knit together the different aspects of the discussion.

- (iii) The intellectualist legend—contrary, perhaps, to how Ryle viewed the matter—has no essential link to Cartesian dualism. Thus, suppose that the legend is correct: that would not determine the ontological status of the intellectual acts required to confer intelligence epithets on our public acts. They might be internal physical occurrences. Alternatively, suppose that dualism is correct, and that the core mental occurrences (including intellectual acts) are not physical (but occur, say, in a non-physical substance): it would still be possible for the intellectualist legend to be false. While accepting dualism, one could admit that there are uses of intellectual epithets that do not require intellectual acts.
- (iv) There is, I believe, no question but that Ryle is right to reject the intellectualist legend. One way to see that he is right is to ask why we often do, as we most certainly do, engage in intellectual activity prior to action. What is the general point of thinking before acting? The simplest and obvious answer is that with many situations which call for action it is not immediately obvious to us at the moment of action, without prior consideration, what to do, given our general goals. So we engage in intellectual activity to work out what to do. We consider consequences and likelihoods and the responses of the world and its inhabitants to alternative actions. Sometimes, however, being as we are, it is simply obvious to an agent what to do at the moment of action (or so it seems), and then no prior consideration is necessary. Clearly, though,

in this latter sort of case, our action can be, for example, intelligent or stupid. The existence of such cases reveals that prior intellectual acts are not necessary for the application of intelligence epithets to human actions.

So we can all agree, I suppose, that, despite some questionable aspects to Ryle's argument, the multifaceted intellectualist legend is to be rejected. The question is, though, how does acceptance of the standard knowing that/knowing how distinction, as Ryle was the first to develop it, fit into or help rejection of the legend? I want to argue that rejection of the intellectualist legend does not require and is in no way helped by the standard account of knowing how.

There are three sides to developing this case. The first is that Ryle brings knowing how into the discussion simply because he claims one thing and *assumes* another. The claim, and it is one of his major claims, is that the so-called 'intelligence epithets' stand for abilities or capacities. Certainly for some of them, as I suggested above, this is very plausible. The assumption is that knowing-how ascriptions ascribe capacities and abilities. With these two things in place it is perhaps close to following (although it does not in fact follow, as will be seen below) that what is ascribed by an intelligence epithet can also be ascribed by a knowing-how claim, and so the theory of intelligence epithets can be expressed in terms of 'know how' ascriptions. But without that second assumption about knowing how (which I earlier labelled CT) there is no reason to bring knowing how into the discussion at all, the primary focus of which is getting straight about *intelligence epithets* and not about knowledge ascriptions. So Ryle's views about knowing how do not *contribute* at all to the dissolution of the intellectualist legend; instead, they merely lead him to *talk* about knowing how, to bring it in.

Further, and this is the second point, the assumptions about 'knowing how' not only make *no* contribution, they result in implausible descriptions (though, perhaps, this need not have been so). Take, for example, the central intelligence epithet 'intelligent'. As a first shot, it seems true to say that if A is more intelligent than B, this consists in A having capacities which B lacks. For example, A can learn certain things faster than B, A can think of things which B cannot think of, and so on. A possesses capacities which B lacks. So, intelligence is a matter of

capacities or abilities. It is, though, inappropriate to describe A as *knowing how* to do things that B does not know how to do (except as this will probably be a result of the difference in intelligence). Part of the reason this is inappropriate is that A simply does not know how to learn quicker than B; if asked by someone how to learn so quickly, A should, and would, reply, 'I don't know how to do it. I simply can.' I am claiming, then, that Ryle is right about intelligence, but, on reflection, seems to be wrong about its link to 'knowing how'. Another example where it seems to me that Ryle's linking of an intellectual-style capacity with knowing how is wrong is the example of 'making and appreciating jokes'. Ryle talks of 'people as knowing how to make and appreciate jokes'.¹⁶ It is, it seems to me, wrong to describe a witty man as 'knowing how' to make jokes. He is, simply, able to make them. Again, we would hardly say that someone *knows how* to appreciate the sight of a person slipping on a banana skin, even though he is able to appreciate it as funny.

I have tried to engender a sense of how odd Ryle's way of speaking is here by invoking or highlighting the thought that these capacities are not knowledge-based. There is a second point. When CT is affirmed it is implicitly understood that the capacity in question has to be a capacity to do something, to perform an action. No one would affirm that, because I can bleed or digest a three course meal, these are things I *know how* to do. So even a supporter of CT should be careful to check that actions are what a capacity is for, if they are to put it in terms of knowing how. However, intuitively, there are non-actional capacities involved in such intellectual abilities as learning fast, or being amused, or understanding. This is another reason, then, to query the ways that Ryle speaks that I have singled out here, and also to recognise that, even if we accept that intelligence epithets ascribe abilities and accept CT, there is still no guarantee that intelligence epithets can be re-expressed in terms of knowing how.

The third reason for saying that the rejection of the intellectualist legend does not have anything to do with the standard knowing-that/knowing-how contrast is, in some ways, a more interesting one. Why might it be thought that an engagement

16. Ryle 1949, p. 28.

with the intellectualist legend is aided by the standard account of knowing how? One possible reason is this. Let us agree that the legend is false. Since the application conditions of an intelligence epithet can be expressed in terms of knowing how, then, if knowing how were a sort of knowing that, the intellectualist legend would be true; so it is good that DT is true. It has been seen already that intelligence epithets need not be re-expressible in terms of knowing how, but apart from that error in this suggested argument, the standard account would not be necessitated because the legend is a completely inaccurate account of how propositional knowledge affects practice. In particular, the intellectualist legend, as a model of the role of propositional knowledge, exhibits what might be called the *Myth of Expression*. By that I mean the idea that the role of what you know, of the facts that you know, comes from the internal expression of the fact. This Myth is doubly wrong. First, expression is not necessary for knowledge to have a role. Thus, the doorbell rings and I walk to the door, knowing where it is. That knowledge determines my performance but it need not be expressed to do so. But, second, and more insidiously, expression would not itself account for, or explain, the role of knowledge. To have expressed something to yourself does not account for the influence of the knowledge it expresses on your performance. It is merely to have engaged in another performance.

My suggestion is, therefore, that there was no particular reason for Ryle to link exposure of the myth of the intellectualist legend to the standard theory of knowing how.

V

Some More Alleged Differences Between Knowing How and Knowing That, and a Suggested Similarity. In the course of his rejection of the intellectualist legend Ryle does adduce other supposed evidence for his account of the knowing how, knowing that, contrast, and I want, briefly, to consider three examples:

(i) Earlier in his discussion, Ryle makes the following remarks:

There are certain parallelisms between knowing *how* and knowing *that*, as well as certain divergences. We speak of learning how to play an instrument as well as learning that something is the case;

of finding out how to prune trees as well as of finding out that the Romans had a camp in a certain place; of forgetting how to tie a reef knot, as well as forgetting that the German for 'knife' is *Messer*. We can wonder *how* as well as wonder *whether*. On the other hand, we never speak of a person believing or opining *how*, and though it is proper to ask for the grounds or reasons for someone's acceptance of a proposition, the question cannot be asked of someone's skill at cards or prudence in investments.¹⁷

The first claims in this passage are true, except that it is inaccurate to describe the data as providing parallels between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that'. What is shown is, rather, that the expressions 'how to' and 'that' can attach, to a large extent, to the same epistemic verbs. That is a striking fact. However, the last sentence simply brings out, initially, that there are verbs, in particular 'believe' and 'opine', which can be followed by 'that' but *not* by 'how to'. But it is clear that this is irrelevant. If 'knowing how' is a sort of 'knowing that' (that is, if DT is false), there is no commitment to thinking that the expressions 'that' and 'how to' must always be able to occur in the same context.

The second element in the contrast is interesting but, I think, dubiously handled by Ryle. Ryle is assuming that skill at cards and prudence in investment are cases of 'knowing how'. Let us suppose that that is correct. The contrast that is then established is between *acceptance* of a proposition and 'knowing how'. However, Ryle's aim is to establish a contrast between 'knowing that' and 'knowing how', and that is not achieved. In fact, we do not, surely, ask for, or talk about, a person's grounds or reasons for his or her knowing that P either.

(ii) Later in the chapter Ryle remarks, 'We learn by practice, schooled indeed by criticism and example, but often quite unaided by any lessons in the theory.'¹⁸ Now, as a remark this is unobjectionable, and it is simply put forward as a remark. It is, however, misleading in at least two respects. First, we very often came to know how to do something without any practice. Just a glance in the room where I am was enough for me to realise how to reach the chair I am sitting in. I certainly did not need to practice reaching it. Emphasising that knowing how

17. *Ibid.*, p. 28. I have removed a paragraph break in the quoted passage.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

derives from practice mistakenly encourages the idea of it as *essentially* low-level and practical. Secondly, we must not think of that it is standard or the norm for propositional knowledge to be acquired by ‘lessons in theory’. Most propositional knowledge is acquired without lessons.

(iii) Ryle also makes the following remarks:

A further non-parallelism must now be noticed. We never speak of a person having partial knowledge of a fact or truth . . . On the other hand, it is proper and normal to speak of a person knowing in part how to do something . . . An ordinary chess-player knows the game pretty well but a champion knows it better, and even the champion has still much to learn.¹⁹

This passage provides no evidence in favour of Ryle’s account. The first remark need not be disputed, but it is in fact not normal to speak of knowing in part how to do something. It would actually be odd to say that he knows in part how to open a safe, or he knows in part how to ride a bike. Further, the use of ‘know’ in the final sentence is not even the ‘know’ of ‘knowing how’, but is simply knowing, and it is graded not in terms of ‘part knowing’ but in terms of knowing better.

At least some of Ryle’s attempts to provide evidence for the contrast between knowing how and knowing that seem to me to achieve very little.

There is a different point I wish to suggest which seems to count the other way. When we consider whether someone knows that P or not, we take it that (or at least we are standardly assumed to take it that) the way they acquired the view that P, can, even if P is true, discount this as a case of knowledge that P. Is this a feature of ‘knowing that’ which does not apply to ‘knowing how’?

The question is whether we accept that there is a distinction between knowing how and merely being right as to how without in fact *knowing* how. I think that the answer is that there is such a distinction. We have, for example, the concept of guessing how to do something; and that allows a place for someone being right as to how, without actually knowing how. Again we allow, I think, that if the agent was right about how to do something but

19. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

that this was due to some fluke or misconception, then it is correct to withhold attribution of 'knowing how' or of '*really* knowing how'. Thus, if I stray into Fred's room, under the impression that it is Bill's, and I do know how to find Bill's coffee, then, if Fred keeps his in a similar place, I shall be able to find the coffee, will, that is, be right as to how to get the coffee, without really knowing how to find it.²⁰

In the balancing of evidence, then, it seems to me that Ryle's attempts to display a difference between knowing how and knowing that are often misconceived, whereas there is in one way a striking similarity between knowing how and knowing that.

VI

A Dubious Application of the Standard Theory. I have so far argued that the standard theory of the knowing how has serious problems. It is fortunate, of course, for the case I am trying to develop that Ryle did not need the distinction in order to sustain his criticisms of the intellectualist legend, since there is no real attraction to defending the letter of that position. However, the standard account has also been applied in other philosophical theories. One form of application is where it is claimed that another type of knowledge ascription is equivalent to a 'know how' claim. According to the standard account it then follows that DT and CT apply to these further knowledge ascriptions, and generating that consequence is the philosophical point of such an application. I want, therefore, to consider, in a brief and general way, one such recent application, namely that pioneered by Nemirow and endorsed by Mellor in the passage quoted earlier, according to which what is ascribed by saying that someone knows what it is like to have a certain experience, say feeling a pain or feeling warm, is that they know how to imagine having that experience.

This suggestion is part of an attempt to answer a familiar type of argument, associated with Nagel and Jackson, which, very crudely, runs as follows. There is something it is like to undergo an experience, and what it is like is known by those who undergo them. However, no amount of information about the physical basis or constituents of the experience will convey to someone

20. This, if correct, provides another counter example to CT.

what it is like. There is, therefore, some fact about the experience beyond the physical facts, and so, physicalism, which claims that all facts, including facts about experiences, are physical facts is wrong. The response allows that people who have experiences can move into the state of knowing what the experience was like, and moreover cannot be moved into it by merely being given all the physical facts, but since this is equivalent to moving into the state of knowing how to imagine the experience, a state to which DT and CT applies, it is solely the emergence of a capacity and, most importantly, there is no fact that the subject knows to be the case; so no facts have been shown to exist beyond the physical facts. We might describe the point as that of providing a *non-factualist* analysis of knowing what an experience is like.

In considering this approach there are in fact two equivalences to assess. One equivalence is that between knowing what an experience is like and knowing how to imagine it. But the other equivalence is between knowing what an experience is like and *being able* to imagine it. Proponents of the view affirm the former equivalence en route to affirming the latter equivalence, but if they ceased to believe that CT applies to knowing how then they could simply affirm CT (and DT) about knowing what an experience is like. This means that the supposed benefits of the approach are strictly independent of the standard treatment of knowing how.

I want to consider the ability equation first, since reflection on that has clear implications for the other equivalence. I take it that it would be hard to maintain that knowing what an experience is like is a quite different state from other cases of knowing what something is like. What could possibly explain why talk of knowing what X is like should have a quite different analysis when X is an experience from its analysis when X is not an experience? We can then test the ability equation by considering it in another case. Suppose the following. A teacher has read to a group of school children an account of a person P who is very frightening to look at and who has done various bad things, but they have been shown no pictures of P and do not know what he looks like. The teacher then says; 'Let us all try to imagine what P looks like.' When the children obeyed the teacher's request they can be described as 'imagining what P looks like'. It is, therefore, true then that they *can* imagine what P looks like but it is obvious

that they do not *know* what P looks like. Why is that? The obvious first reason is that their imaginings of what P looks like might be various and inaccurate. Let us therefore consider two children, X and Y. X imagines P as looking like Tony Blair, whereas Y imagines him as looking like Iain Duncan Smith. In fact, P does look exactly like Tony Blair, so X's imagining was accurate, whereas Y's was not. If then we build in accuracy does that mean that X knows what P looks like? It does not mean that, because although X imagined P's look accurately X did not *know* that it was accurate. It follows that being able to imagine what P looks like is not sufficient for knowing what P looks like, nor is being able to imagine accurately what P looks like. Is either of these necessary for knowing what P looks like? The obvious case is that of someone with a currently non-functioning or poor or defective imagination. Thus we let X look at a picture of P. Subsequently he can draw a good representation of P's face, recognise pictures of it, tell us when other faces are similar, and so on, but he simply cannot imagine it if asked to do so. X clearly knows what P's face looks like but cannot imagine it.²¹ It seems true, then, that being able to imagine P's look, whether accurately or not, is neither necessary nor sufficient for knowing what P looks like. The ability equation is incorrect.

However, its incorrectness reveals something else which is important. Why did the child who imagined accurately not know what P looked like? The obvious answer is that the child did not know *that* it was accurate. But the image is accurate only because it is a fact that P looks the way it represents him. This brings out that when the 'ability to imagine' equation is carefully thought through a fact is rediscovered as involved, namely that P does look like that. Without bringing that fact in the analysis is clearly wrong, and once it is in the imagination component can be recognised as irrelevant. It would not be quite correct to say that someone knows what P looks like just in case they know that something—say a visual image—accurately represents P. This is refuted by the possible existence of someone who is such a

21. We should, at this point, take a leaf out of Wittgenstein's book and shed light on this problem by ignoring the internal nature of imagination, and treat it as basically producing a representation. Then we see that the ability to imagine P's face is no more involved in knowing what P's face is like than is the ability to accurately paint a picture of P's face. This might be lacking because one lacks the equipment or the ability to paint. Similarly the ability to imagine might be absent.

dim-wit that he cannot work out that if something is an accurate representation of how P looks then P looks that way. So working through the ability equation we return to the suggestion that someone knows what P looks like just so long as, for some fact as to how P looks, they know that it is a fact. There is no plausibility in a non-factualist analysis of knowing what someone looks like. This makes it very hard to defend a non-factualist analysis of knowing what an experience is like.

It would be possible to run through an example of knowing what an experience of a certain kind is like in a way exactly parallel to the above argument in order to bring this out more directly, but I shall just mention two examples to show that non-factualism about knowing about what an experience is like is highly implausible. Do you know what *tasting* Chanel No. 5 is like? Most of us do not, but surely there is a fact of the matter as to its taste which we can get to know only by tasting the substance. Next, think of a child staring at its first strawberry and wondering what it will be like to taste it. Again, it is obvious that there is a fact of the matter, which we already know and which the child is about to learn.²² Neither CT (understood as an ability to imagine equation) nor DT apply to knowing what an experience is like, and so if there is to be a response to the Nagel/Jackson argument it will not be a non-factualist response.

What, finally, of the equation of knowing what an experience is like with knowing how to imagine it? Since engaging in imagination has already been argued to be totally irrelevant, there is no plausibility in the suggestion that knowing what an experience is like can be equated with knowing how to imagine it. But there is another point to make. I hope that I am not alone in finding such remarks as 'S knows how to imagine President Bush' or 'S knows how to imagine a red patch' very odd. One possible explanation is that the activity of imagining is a basic mental activity. Imagining is simply something that we can do, but we do not do it by doing anything else. If so, there is no way whereby we do it, and hence it is odd to think of someone knowing how to do it. I suggest, then, that the knowing how equation is dubious for this further reason.

22. The first example I heard from Michael Woods, who credited it to Austin, and the second example comes from C. B. Martin.

VII

An Alternative to the Standard View. I have argued that the standard account of the knowing how/knowing that distinction is implausible, and that its rejection does not threaten plausible philosophical tasks. If the argument has been correct then we are in search of a replacement.

So, if CT and DT are abandoned, what is a better account of knowing how, and of its relation to knowing that?

I am inclined to think that the crucial issue to be faced first is what to say instead of, or about, DT. If the cases given earlier are persuasive, then it is hard to deny that what sometimes makes a ‘know how to’ ascription true is the presence of knowledge that a certain way is the way or method to do something, for example, to open a safe, to get to a certain place, or to address royalty. This means that either we hold that it is always true that knowing how is equivalent to knowing that, in which case it gets treated like (practically) all other knowledge ascriptions, or we hold that knowing how is sometimes knowledge that, sometimes not.²³ From the point of view of the standard approach, the former is the more extreme theory, but once the necessity for an alternative is accepted, it has attractions which make it the view to explore first. The grounds are two-fold. First, it is so much tidier to have all knowing-how claims the same, and indeed the same as all other non-direct knowledge ascriptions. Second, there is nothing at all that would indicate that there is something approaching an ambiguity or a bifurcation in our talk of knowing how. There is no particular sense that sometimes talk of ‘knowing how’ stands for factual knowledge and sometimes for something else. To these observations can be added another small argument. If S knows how to G then S knows what is a way to G, in which case S knows that a certain way is a way to G. Further, if S knows that a certain way is a way to G, then he does know how to G. So, by a few simple steps, the equivalence emerges.

The major (although certainly not the sole) resistance to the abandonment of DT for all cases of knowing how comes from the idea that in fairly complicated physical routines where we would say that S knows how to G—for example, riding a bike

23. This seems to be the direction that Rumfitt favours in Rumfitt 2003.

or playing a violin—S would be quite incapable of stating or expressing the supposed proposition about ways to do it which according to the knowing that approach is what he somehow knows to be the case. There is, it seems, no proposition which S could express or endorse, and so it cannot be propositional knowledge.

Now, I do not have a completely satisfactory evaluation of this sort of argument. I shall make, however, one partial response to it. When it is felt that there are A-cases which are not B-cases, one task is to investigate the A-cases themselves more thoroughly, but another task is to develop a better sense of what B-cases involve. This present response, therefore, has two sides. The first side consists in rethinking to some extent what knowing *that* involves. The second side consists in developing a richer conception of what is present when one knows how. First, it is a philosophical myth to suppose that knowledge that standardly and centrally equips the knower with words which amount to a complete expression of his knowledge. Think how often the expression of knowledge ineliminably involves either gesture and or a response to the indication of samples. 'The fish which got away was **THIS** long', 'The hat she was wearing was **THAT** shape, roughly', '**THAT** was the smell of her perfume', or '**THIS** was how Schnabel played the chord.' All these surely are the expressions of knowledge that, but the knowledge is expressible only in contexts which supply the appropriate items or permit the appropriate behaviour. To this should be added that in many cases the aspect that needs to be indicated for the knowledge to be formulated need not even be something that is publicly available. Thus, where one knows that **THIS** is the taste of strawberries or **THAT** is the taste of Chanel No. 5, the feature-bearing sample cannot itself be perceptually presented to others: they need their own samples. Certainly, then, the knower need not be in a position to formulate in public general linguistic terms what is known. It therefore does not follow that there is no knowledge that because the knower cannot articulate to an enquirer in the context of just any interrogation a suitable formulation of what he or she knows. We might call the assumption that knowledge that involves being able to express completely and linguistically what is known

‘the Myth of the Proposition’. My suspicion is that, as with many false contrasts, one feature is mistakenly contrasted in a theory with another (for example, knowing how with knowing that) only because the second is misconceived as well.

The second element in this response is to suggest that, if we are seeking a candidate piece of information that is known to be the case in such examples as knowing how to ride a bike, it is that this sequence of actions—present to the agent and knower in the course of actions and accessed by knower as his or her actions—is a way to ride a bike. The aim of this rather rough formulation is not to slot the proposal into some standard account of knowledge, but rather, in a relatively theoretically neutral way, to indicate a candidate for what might count as the kind of information in question in such cases. The agent need not be riding a bike to have the sample actions available to him or her, because, in principle, there might be simulation devices in the context of which the agent performs the actions without actually riding a bike.

It may not, then, be impossible, even in such cases, to find facts that are known.

VIII

Conclusion. I have tried to argue against the standard version of the ‘knowing how/knowing that’ contrast, to lessen its role in other philosophical enterprises, and to make a case for the claim that DT is false for all cases. However, there obviously remain serious problems that I have not addressed, and there are other alternatives to the traditional view, which need scrutinising. Ryle’s true legacy is, then, rather than his own views, a sense of the difficulty but also the importance of determining the nature of ‘knowing how to’.²⁴

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