

SAHAR JOAKIM  
KNOWLEDGE BEYOND BELIEF

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT  
28 APRIL 2020

A standard assumption is that belief is a condition on knowledge. If that's true, then knowledge does not exist without belief. In Chapter One, I rationally reconstruct the historical relationship between knowledge and belief. In response to Gettier, many philosophers tried to show what kind of true belief constitutes knowledge. Throughout this dissertation, I demonstrate how knowledge is not limited to the scope of belief. That is, knowledge neither requires nor entails belief. In Chapter Two, I offer and defend a philosophy of mind that can explain how knowledge is possible without belief. I map the mind by distinguishing knowledge, belief, judgment, acceptance, and faith; and with a clear picture of these mental attitudes, we can see how knowledge is not a kind of belief. Chapter Three argues that knowledge does not require belief for its constitution. For this, I adopt Anscombe's terminology: belief is a mental attitude with a world-to-mind direction of fit, and intention has a mind-to-world direction of fit. I argue that no attitude with a world-to-mind direction of fit is required to constitute knowledge for agents who represent as true the results of their own creative or practical activity. What I call conative knowledge is constituted in virtue of intentions rather than beliefs. Even if I am correct that knowledge does not require belief for its constitution, it may be that knowledge yet entails belief. Chapter Four argues that knowledge does not entail belief by appealing to an epistemic norm of assertion for agents speaking as representatives of their field. For representatives, knowledge is the epistemic norm of assertion. But belief is not required for apt assertions. Representatives can satisfy conditions on knowledge without satisfying the condition on belief, so knowledge does not entail belief.