

Knowing things and going places

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Abstract

When I say “I know Sarah,” or “I know Berlin,” what sort of knowledge am I claiming? Such knowledge of a particular is, I claim, not reducible to either propositional knowledge-that or to traditional physical know-how. Mere, bare knowledge by acquaintance also does not capture the kind of knowledge being claimed here. Using knowledge of a place as my central example, I argue that this kind of knowledge-of, or “objectual knowledge” as it is sometimes called, is of a distinctive epistemological sort. It is a genre of inherently first-personal aesthetic knowledge, but it also, like know-how, involves active skill. I end by exploring a couple of classic problems in aesthetic epistemology, applied to the case of knowledge-of as active aesthetic knowledge.

1 | INTRODUCTION

This article is about the kind of knowledge we have when we claim to know a *particular thing*, as in “I know Berlin,” “I know Sarah,” or “I know Kendrick Lamar’s *Damn*.” In other words, I am interested in *knowledge of a particular*, or what some philosophers have called “objectual knowledge” (BonJour & Sosa, 2003; Farkas, 2019). More specifically, I restrict my attention and analysis in this essay to knowledge of *concrete, external particulars* (as opposed, for instance, to abstract objects, mental or internal states, or fictional objects). In everyday speech, we talk about this kind of knowledge just as idiomatically and naturally as we do epistemologists’ preferred kind of knowledge, namely knowledge-*that* some proposition is true. In German, we distinguish between *kennen*, which involves familiarity, and *wissen*, which involves factual knowledge. In French, the terms *connaître* and *savoir* are used to draw more or less the same distinction. In English, we have only one word for both kinds of knowing, but we still distinguish between them grammatically, saying “Do you know a?” or “I know a” when we are talking about familiarity with an object, and “Do you know *that* P?” or “I know *that* P” when talking about knowledge of a fact (Iaquinto & Spolaore, 2019). Objectual

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knowledge involves *familiarity*; we know *a* when we are familiar with *a* in the right way. But saying this calls for an epistemic analysis of familiarity.

Overwhelmingly, epistemologists have focused their attention on knowledge-that, while skill, or knowledge-how, has been a solid but distant runner-up. I argue that objectual knowledge-of is distinct from both knowledge-that and knowledge-how. What Russell dubbed “knowledge by acquaintance” is making a small resurgence in the epistemology literature, warranting both a recent collection of essays (Knowles and Raleigh & Knowles, 2019) and an even more recent *Philosophy Compass* survey article (Duncan, 2021). Objectual knowledge is more closely related to knowledge by acquaintance than it is to propositional knowledge or know-how. But knowledge by acquaintance, as Russell described it and as contemporary epistemologists have continued to describe it, is passive and minimal—as the phrase is used, we are acquainted with something simply when we are directly aware of it, or when it is present to us, or when we are conscious of it.¹ In contrast, I will argue that the relevant form of familiarity that constitutes objectual knowledge of concrete particulars is embodied, active, and aesthetic—it involves a sensuous relationship to the object that is ineliminably both physical and mental and involves dynamic and patterned interaction and experience.² I will thus argue that objectual knowledge is not a form of knowledge by acquaintance; the kind of knowledge that we get from mere passive awareness or consciousness of something we encounter cannot be scaled up to become the kind of familiarity we have in mind when we say that we know a complex particular like a city, a person, a work of art, or even a tomato or a table. There has been surprisingly little philosophical curiosity about what it means to *know* such objects, rather than knowing *about* them.³

Objectual knowledge is *epistemic*, in that, like knowledge-that, it is a form of grasping how things really are. There exists a small literature on whether objectual knowledge counts properly as knowledge at all.⁴ Whether objectual knowledge counts as “knowledge proper” is not a question that engages me here. I am beginning from the everyday fact that we often use the word “know” to talk about this relationship to objects. My goal here is to explore what it means to “know” a thing in this idiomatic sense. While it seems clear to me that “knowing” in this sense is *some* kind of epistemic relationship to objects, I am not invested in whether it also passes the test for counting as knowledge according to any particular technical philosophical conception of knowledge. Rather, I am interested in exploring the phenomenon that we name, in everyday speech, with the locutions “I know *a*” or “Do you know *a*?” where *a* is a particular object.

My plan for the rest of this essay is as follows. In Section 2, I will explore what is involved in knowing a place. What are we claiming when we say, “I know Berlin,” or asking when we query, “Do you know the Lower East Side?” What kind of epistemic status is knowledge of a place? In Section 3, I will give a general account of knowledge of concrete external particulars. I claim that place knowledge serves as a powerful model and metaphor for objectual knowledge in general. My account has several components, but in essence, knowing an object is roughly *knowing what it's like to competently experience* that object, where experiencing an object is an *active aesthetic skill*. In this section, I also argue that the traditional conception of knowledge by acquaintance cannot capture this kind of skilled experiential knowledge. In Section 4, I argue that objectual knowledge-of is also epistemically distinct from both knowledge-that and knowledge-how, and that it reduces to neither of these. In Sections 5 and 6, I build on my argument that objectual knowledge is *aesthetic* by turning to a couple of classic puzzles in aesthetic epistemology. First, I turn to the philosophical debate over whether aesthetic knowledge can be acquired through testimony, and I argue that my account of objectual knowledge lets us see how this debate turns on an ambiguity in what is meant by “aesthetic knowledge.” Second, I explore whether and when we can have knowledge of things if we only have direct contact with representations of them. Finally, in Section 7, I conclude by briefly considering whether and how my account could apply to objectual knowledge which is not of concrete external particulars, such as knowledge of abstract, fictional, and mental objects.

2 | PLACE KNOWLEDGE

Look at the pictures of cityscapes in Figures 1–3. Can you tell what cities the pictures are from at a glance? If you have spent time in these cities, you almost surely can. Yet, I have gone out of my way to choose random streets that you likely have not actually seen and which contain no famous landmarks. How do you

know at a glance which cities these are, if you are familiar with them, even though you have likely never seen these particular views?



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

The cities—Tokyo, Amsterdam, and Berlin, respectively, in case you were not sure—have a *look* to them. They present themselves as having consistent and intelligible aesthetic patterns. It is not hard, once we are familiar with them, to recognize this aesthetic, to tell what fits with a city and what does not. When we spend time in a city, we get this aesthetic knowledge. These three cities are especially aesthetically graspable in this way; some other places are harder to get to know. As urban theorist Kevin Lynch put it in Lynch (1964), these cities are *legible* and *imageable*. That is, they come together in an aesthetic unity that allows us to recognize where we are. Our grasp of the aesthetic character and patterns of a place is not only visual, nor can it all be captured in a static representation such as a photograph. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan writes, “Places are constructed out of such elements as distinctive odors, textural and visual qualities in the environment, seasonal changes of temperature and color, how they look as they are approached from the highway.” (Tuan, 1975, p. 152). When we say we know a city, we do not mean that we can recite a lot of true facts about it, although we usually can. To know a city is, in part, to have this sort of aesthetic feel for it. This allows us to say of something new that we run across in the city, “That’s so Berlin!” or “That really isn’t very Tokyo!”

But place knowledge is not just familiarity with the static sensory patterns of the place. To know a place is to have a feel for what it is like to negotiate its rhythms and its dynamic patterns. When I know a city, I know what it is like to hail a cab there, to stand in its lines, and to weave through people on its streets. I know how to find my way around; I am a skilled navigator of it. The aesthetic legibility of the city for me depends on my ability to move around in it and not just on knowing how it appears in sensation. Tuan points out that we have to learn a place by moving around in it and getting a dynamic sense of how it is structured:

Movements such as the simple ability to kick one’s legs and stretch one’s arms are basic to the awareness of space. Space is experienced directly as having room in which to move. Moreover, by shifting from one place to another, a person acquires a sense of direction. Forward, backward, and sideways are experientially differentiated, that is, known subconsciously in the act of motion. (Tuan, 1977, p. 12)

To know a place, we not only need to be able to experience a place as having a patterned aesthetic unity but also to be able to place and orient ourselves within it and to move around in it competently. But grasping the perceptual feel of a place and knowing what it is like to move around in it may still not be enough. For social, human places, knowing

them involves having experiential understanding of the kinds of uses that characterize them and are embedded in them. Architectural theorist David Seamon (1980) argues that learning to recognize and grasp *place ballets* is essential to what gives us a *sense of place*. Place ballets are bodily habits and routines that are intertwined with their environments. People move in distinctive ways in train stations, grocery stores, and school yards, for instance, and these movements are shaped by and give meaning to the physical structure of these spaces. You cannot coherently move as you would in a grocery store if you are standing on a train platform, and vice-versa: place ballets are essentially constituted by the material places in which they are situated. Knowing a place involves competency and familiarity with its place ballets.

Putting all this together, I would like to suggest that when we say we know a place, what we mean is that we know what it is like to *competently experience* it, through our recognition of its static and dynamic patterns, including its embodied social patterns or its place ballets. We mean that we can experientially grasp the place and orient ourselves in it—we *know our way around it*, and we *know what it is like to navigate it*. As Katalin Farkas points out, “In order to know Budapest... one also has to be able to get around at least to some extent” (Farkas, 2019, p. 270). When I say, I know Berlin, or I know the Lower East Side, I mean that I have this kind of particularized experiential knowledge. I know what it is like to experience the place, and gaining this knowledge requires not just staring at it but learning its patterns, navigating it, orienting ourselves within it, and experiencing participation in its place ballets, which requires becoming skilled in them.

The kind of knowledge I am describing here is a species of *aesthetic knowledge*, in a broad sense of “aesthetic.” By this, I mean that it is knowledge of what it is like to have sensory (including kinaesthetic) experience of something, and that it involves our familiarity with patterns, harmonies, unities, and forms that show up at the sensuous level, in particularized experience. But it is also *active knowledge*. Much of what it is like to experience a place can only be learned by honing one's ability to interact with it and negotiate it over time. So on my account, aesthetic place knowledge is far from contemplative, but rather often rooted in a kind of *practical engagement*. Aesthetic theory has tended to privilege contemplative aesthetic experience, both in the sense of paying it more theoretical attention and in the sense of valuing it more. But this is an historical accident, I think. The aesthetic value and interest of moving through New York or climbing a mountain (see Nguyen, 2020) is just as high as the aesthetic value and interest of looking at a painting.

Let us tease out some of the elements of this epistemic concept of place knowledge that I am suggesting here.

Knowledge of a place is inherently particular, not general. A place is a concrete individual, not a category.

Knowledge of a place requires *first-person contact* with that place. You might know a ton of facts *about* a place, but it would be unidiomatic and misleading to say that you know a place if you have never been there. You cannot come to know a place through testimony. While first-person contact is required for place knowledge, mere awareness of a place, or passive contact with it, is far from enough.

In order to know a place, you must know what it is like to experience it, but experiencing it competently is a *skill* that requires time and practice to develop. As Farkas puts it, in order to have acquired knowledge of a place, “one had to be there, for an extended time or several times” (Farkas, 2019, p. 270). To know a place, you must become adept at grasping how it works, how to negotiate it, and what aesthetically belongs in it and what does not. You need to be able to move through a crowd and order a coffee in it. When I visited Cairo, at first I was unable to cross the street. There are virtually no streetlights, and most streets have multiple lanes of fast-moving traffic. Locals know how to insert themselves into the traffic at just the right moment. This feels impossible as a newcomer, but over the course of a week or so, after shadowing locals for several days, I developed the skill, more or less. This is an important component of my knowing Cairo. Someone who can rattle off facts about the city and list and recognize landmarks but cannot make their way through it because they cannot cross the street probably does not know Cairo very well.

This brings me to my next point: place knowledge is a *matter of degree*. I can know a place well or a little. Knowing a place a little is still a kind of knowledge-of; it is still an epistemically meaningful familiarity with the place. There

is no fixed threshold as to when first-person, skillful experience of a place becomes knowledge of it. In this sense, place knowledge is quite different from traditional knowledge by acquaintance, although both require direct experience. Knowledge by acquaintance, as Russell and his modern inheritors describe it, is digital—either you have encountered a thing and become directly aware of it or you have not. In the case of place knowledge, more experience gives us fuller knowledge of the same object (and not just a larger store of pieces of propositional knowledge—that, although it surely gives us this as well).

Indeed, our knowledge of a complex place like a city not only comes in degrees but can never be complete. This is because different kinds of people will have access to different experiences of it, and they will of necessity use it in different ways and participate in different place ballets, and in different roles within those ballets. Black men and white women will use and experience a city very differently, for instance, and they will have access to different facets of it. The same goes for fat and thin people, old people and teenagers, and so forth. Different kinds of people who inhabit different bodies and subject positions will find themselves enmeshed in different place ballets, and they will take and experience different paths through space. None of us will ever experience a place from every possible perspective, and none of us, therefore, can have complete knowledge of a place.

Yet in a clear sense, we all know the *same* concrete thing, even if we are familiar with it in different ways and from different perspectives. Places are concrete particulars, and we causally interact with the same place in different ways, so different people with different knowledge of a place still can know the same place. Just as two people can know different sets of facts *about* one and the same thing, we can have different knowledge *of* one and the same thing. But while there is nothing in principle blocking anyone from knowing all the facts about a place that anyone knows, the differentiated structure of society and the embodied differences between us block each of us from having all the knowledge of a place that anyone has.

Thus to summarize what I've claimed about place knowledge.

1. It is a form of experiential knowledge.
2. It requires aesthetic skills such as grasping patterns, orientation, and fit—to know a place it must become aesthetically legible to us.
3. It is built over time, as we move around in and interact with a place as embodied beings. It requires *knowing one's way around*.
4. It is particular, not general.
5. It is inherently first-personal, not testimonial.
6. It is a matter of degree.

3 | OBJECTUAL KNOWLEDGE

My primary motivating idea behind this paper is that place knowledge is a helpful paradigm for more generally understanding objectual knowledge of concrete particulars—the kind of knowledge we are referring to when we say, “I know *a*”, and it is not short for “I know about *a*” or “I know that *a*” or “I know how to *a*.”

I propose that *knowing a* for any concrete particular *a*, is a matter of *knowing what it's like to competently experience a*, where:

1. *a* exists. As Iaquinto and Spolaore (2019) point out, existence is a precondition for knowledge-of, just as truth is a precondition for knowledge-that. I cannot know that *P* if *P* is false, and I cannot know *a* if *a* does not exist.
2. One has had some first-person experience of *a*—one has had a chance to practice experiencing *a*.
3. The ability to experience *a* is a *skill* that requires dynamic interaction with and negotiation of *a*, not just direct awareness of *a* or passive confrontation with it (see also Smith, 2019).

Put more intuitively, the gist is that knowing an object is *knowing what it is like to competently experience that object*. This kind of knowledge is an epistemic relationship that has the six features that we just saw that place knowledge has: It is a form of experiential knowledge; it involves the aesthetic legibility of the object; it is built over time and requires *knowing one's way around* the thing; it is particular; it is first-personal; and it is a matter of degree rather than digital. Let me motivate and explore these features a bit.

Consider particulars other than places, such as people or artworks. It would be clearly misleading to say you know a person or an artwork unless you have had first-person experience of them (although that experience may be mediated by a representation of the right sort, of which more in Section 6). If I say I know Sarah, like if I say I know Berlin, and you find out I have just heard or read a lot about her, I have clearly been misleading. Knowing *about* a is categorically different from knowing *a*. If I have not met Sarah but I've heard about her, and you ask, "Do you know Sarah?" I might say "Well, I know who she is," as a way of differentiating my knowledge about her from objectual knowledge.

Knowing a person is wrapped up in being able to literally recognize them, not just through their static appearance, but in how they act and interact. You need to be able to say, "That's Sarah" or "That isn't Sarah," but also "That's so Sarah" or "That's not like Sarah." Bonnie Talbert says of knowledge of a person, "to know another is to know how to successfully interact with him/her over time" (Talbert, 2015, p. 7). We need to be careful about what we mean by "successfully" here, since I know many people well who I completely fail to interact with successfully, in various senses. But to know them, I need to be able to recognize their patterns, not just from the outside, but as I navigate interactions with them.⁵ Similarly, for an artwork, you must grasp it as an aesthetic whole. To know a piece of art is to be able to recognize it, to understand what belongs in it and what does not and how, at the level of experience. Artworks "come together" for us as we spend time with them, and interact with them. This involves literal movement, such as holding our body in certain ways, and directing and honing our attention.

Because this is experiential knowledge, it is inherently first-personal and not testimonial. But essentially, unlike mere consciousness or awareness, the kind of experience I am talking about is something we need to *learn* to have and part of this learning involves embodied dynamic interaction. Being skilled at experiencing a thing involves being able to competently recognize, respond to, and navigate that thing, including understanding how it hangs together as an aesthetic unity as we make our way around it. Thus knowledge of concrete particulars ineliminably has both a phenomenal and an embodied component to it.

Such objectual knowledge is clearly a matter of degree; we routinely say things like, "I know Sarah a little" or "I know La Bohème really well."⁶ How much active experience we must have with a thing in order to count as relevantly knowing it varies by context. If I say, "Do you know the hardware store on the corner?" I might just mean, could you recognize it if you saw it—for instance, if I am using it as a landmark in order to give you directions. But I also might mean, do you know what they stock? Or even, do you know how to find things in it? And if you reply that you know it *well*, you probably mean that you can find your way around in it easily, perhaps even that you know the people who work there and how to interact with them.

Other authors have noted that objectual knowledge requires causal interaction with the object. For example, Ernest Sosa writes that "Knowing someone or something, knowing some 'object' in the broadest sense of this term, seems at least sometimes to require having had some special causal interaction with that 'object'" (BonJour & Sosa, 2003, p. 100). However, there has been little exploration of what "special" kind of causal interaction is required. I am arguing that it is the kind of interaction that allows us to develop some degree of competence at experiencing the thing. Like with cities and neighborhoods, you know how to recognize what fits and what does not, and the dynamic feel of negotiating the thing over time. You know how to tell what is characteristic and uncharacteristic, at the level of experienced patterns—you *know your way around* the thing.⁷ It is in this sense that place knowledge is the paradigm: being familiar with a thing is *knowing what it is like to find your way around it*. The dominant metaphor for knowledge-of should not be *having information in your head* but *being able to get around*.⁸

The idea that some types of things take skill to experience is not new. We are used to examples like ultrasounds and symphonies, where seeing them or hearing them well involves specialized skill. My suggestion is that for *each*

thing, we must learn to experience it competently. This may draw on general skills that we have already developed for experiencing that *type* of thing, but it is still a new epistemic task. Note that there is a difference between the general skill of seeing ultrasounds and the particular knowledge of this particular ultrasound, which requires experiencing *it*. Your general skill might make you able to do this with minimal effort but you still need to have this first-person experience to know it. Knowing a thing is a matter of being able to parse it in experience, navigate it, and orient oneself in the experience of it, and this takes practice to do well.

Remember that I am restricting my attention to knowledge of concrete particulars. But notice that my account applies to concrete particulars that are not neatly bound in time or place but have multiple manifestations, like “Thai food” or “poverty.” These are still particulars: We do not say “A Thai food” or “A poverty.” The particular, Thai food, is different from the concept of Thai food—I can have the concept of Thai food and know lots of propositional facts about it without first-person experience of it, but this is not so for “knowing Thai food.” We would not say that we know Thai food unless we had eaten it ourselves, not just once, but often enough to have an aesthetic sense of its patterns, what belongs in it and what does not, and to know our way around a Thai meal, restaurant, or kitchen. It mostly comes off as a bit disingenuous to say you “know poverty” unless you have been poor yourself, but at a minimum it means having seen and interacted with poverty, learning its effects and patterns and manifestations. Thus, my account is not restricted to spatiotemporally bounded and locatable particulars.

For complex particulars such as places, people, cuisines, and artworks, which are the sorts of things I have been considering so far, it is relatively easy to make the case that one needs to develop the skill of recognizing what fits with them and what does not, and that one's skill at navigating them requires interaction and time to develop. Mere fleeting passive contact with any of these things is not enough to be familiar with them. But what about the kinds of simple things like tomatoes and patches of purple that philosophers have taken as their paradigm when discussing knowledge by acquaintance? Do we really need experiential skills developed from actively navigating these things in order to know them?

Notice first that, idiomatically, we do not typically say, “I know this tomato.” Despite the post-Russellian epistemological love for tomatoes, we usually reserve the phrase, “I know *a*,” for more complex and dynamic objects than these. But when we do say that we know such simple objects, what we mean is that we have a history of active experience of them of the sort that I have been describing. I might say to my roommate, “Do you know the tomato we bought last week?” or “Do you know the tomato in the fridge?” In these cases, I am asking if he remembers his history of interaction with the tomato or is able to actually go and find it if needed. We do not stare at a tomato and say “Ah, now I know it.” And since knowledge-of comes in degrees, even in the case of simple objects, we use the locution “I know *a* well” to indicate when we have had a lot of interactive experience of the thing and have developed skills at recognizing and negotiating it. It would be quite rare to say, “I know that tomato really well,” but if we did, it would be because we had perhaps picked it up and considered eating it several times, had watched it ripen, or had it get in our way as we fished in the fridge for other items, perhaps. When we say “I know that table well,” we mean that we know how it is rickety, what tends to be on it, the feel of sitting at it, and so forth. In both cases, this involves a kind of aesthetic, sensuous familiarity with what it is like to experience the thing, and this takes at least a little bit of time and history of interaction to develop.

I suggest that we should think of knowledge of the kinds of simple objects that we can know reasonably well at a glance as the diminished, minimal cases of objectual knowledge, of which the paradigm is knowledge of complex objects like places, rather than thinking of knowledge of complex objects as “messy” versions of knowledge of simple objects. Even in simple cases, we typically encounter objects as embedded in our embodied, dynamic, active, sensuous experience of the world not as static time slices. David Woodruff Smith points out that when we confront something in experience, we generally do so in the mid of action, interaction, and dynamic change, not as a static encounter:

In everyday life we do not experience a sequence of sense-datum phenomena, like the still photos that are reeled together in a motion picture projection. Instead, we experience a familiar yet complex

activity: from walking along a New York street, amid a bustle of people and rushing of cars; to hammering a nail into a wooden board, amid a carpentry project; to fetching a tennis ball and hitting a serve, amid a game of tennis. The experience of direct awareness, or acquaintance, is most aptly featured in activities like these. (Smith, 2019, p. 133)

It is as we navigate objects in meaningful ways that they show up to us as distinctive and recognizable, which enables us to become familiar with them. Knowing simple objects like tomatoes and tables still requires active skill, but it is a pale shadow of the skill needed to know a complex, dynamic object.

But what about even simpler particulars, like the “homogeneous purple field” upon which Sam Coleman (2019) focuses? Epistemologists interested in knowledge by acquaintance typically center their analyses on these sorts of phenomenal fields, rather than on everyday particular objects.⁹ In practice, I do not think we ever idiomatically use the phrase “I know a” to talk about this kind of knowledge, nor do I think these phenomenal fields count as concrete external particulars, which are my topic in this article. I think homogeneous purple fields do not have enough complexity and navigability to count as objects of knowledge-of at all.

Nevertheless, I do not actually think that we access even such phenomenal fields by direct acquaintance. Along with Sellars (1956), I believe that we only encounter phenomenal fields as abstractions from our encounters with objects. I agree with Sellars that even knowing simple phenomenal things such as the color green requires understanding how to interact with and navigate green *things*—how to look at them under proper light and the like. For Sellars, the punchline of the story of John the Necktie Salesman was that John needed a lot of normative propositional knowledge—that in order to have the concept of “green.” But another way of interpreting his parable is that in order to know what green is like, John had to learn how to experience green things by learning how to *do* stuff like take them outside to look at them. According to this Sellarsian picture, the phenomenal greenness itself is an abstraction from the green object. It is not itself the kind of thing we can navigate or interact with, but we only *encounter* it through navigation and interaction with concrete things. While I agree with Sellars in rejecting the given, I do not need to insist on that strong foundational point here. But I do want to insist that focusing on the kinds of simple phenomenal fields that have been at issue in debates over the given (whether they are in fact given or not) will not let us get a handle on what it is to be able to experience, and hence know, a complex material object of the sort for which we use the locution “I know a.” This is because we experience objects, even simple objects, not as sums of phenomenal fields, but as things to be navigated and grasped as having aesthetic unity, and with which we can be deeply or passingly familiar. Thus, whatever kind of grasp we have of phenomenal fields, it does not scale up to explain objectual knowledge.

Of course, Russell himself did not think that we had knowledge by acquaintance of objects, but only of sense data, selves, and universals—all entities that, in the form he had in mind, most of us today do not even believe in at all. Russell believed we could only have propositional knowledge by description of actual material objects. Hence, the kind of objectual, nonpropositional knowledge-of that I am discussing was not a category of knowledge that he acknowledged, and it should be no surprise that his version of knowledge by acquaintance does not scale up to explain it.

I have been drawing a picture of objectual knowledge, on the model of place knowledge, as *active, aesthetic, first-person experiential* knowledge of an *existing concrete particular* that depends on *skill* and is a *matter of degree*. The skill of experiencing a thing requires *learning one's way around a thing*. When we take rich, dynamic, complex particulars that matter to us as the paradigms of things that we know, this all seems fairly obvious once pointed out, I think. We can then pare down to see how all of this is at work in a minimal sense when we know simpler objects or have less need for deep knowledge of a thing. If we do this the other way around, and start with the experience of simpler things as our paradigm, as most philosophers do, then this complexity and structure are harder to see. We become tempted by a minimal acquaintance theory of experience of particulars and are unable to scale back up to knowledge

of complex things.¹⁰ But we cannot understand the kind of graded familiarity that makes up objectual knowledge by constructing it out of passive instances of direct awareness.

4 | KNOWLEDGE-OF VERSUS KNOWLEDGE-THAT VERSUS KNOWLEDGE-HOW

In this section, I argue that knowledge-of is categorically distinct, in its epistemic form, from knowledge-that or knowledge-how. In practice, however, all three are deeply entangled. Since I have argued that experiencing an object depends on developing skills, one cannot, on my account, have knowledge-of without having developed some knowledge-how. Moreover, as we negotiate and experience a thing, we inevitably learn propositional facts about it, and our knowledge of facts about a thing crucially helps guide us as we negotiate experiencing it. In practice, then, you also cannot have any kind of rich knowledge-of without a bunch of knowledge-that, and our knowledge-of will be a source of knowledge-that. All three types of knowledge are thus intertwined in practice.

But we can still conceptually distinguish the three types of knowledge. While it is impossible to gain knowledge-of an object without also acquiring knowledge-that things are true of it, the reverse does not hold: One can have any amount of knowledge-that various facts about an object are true, without having any knowledge-of it whatsoever, if one has learned these facts indirectly without first-person contact with the thing. So no amount of knowledge-that is sufficient for knowledge-of. And knowledge-of is essentially aesthetic knowledge of *what it's like* to competently experience a thing, which is conceptually distinct from the know-how required to have that experience. So these types of knowledge are entangled and interdependent but distinct. My goal in this section is to tease out the differences and similarities in epistemic form between the three kinds of knowledge.

Knowledge-of is formally different from knowledge-that in several ways. First, knowledge-that is propositional, whereas knowledge-of is non-propositional, taking a particular thing as its object.¹¹

Knowing-that P involves having the belief that P, where that belief has whatever extra features, internalist or externalist, your favorite epistemological theory says it has to have in order to count as a piece of knowledge. But knowing an object is not a matter of having beliefs at all (though it co-travels with having a lot of beliefs). Rather, it involves being familiar with a certain kind of experience. No number of beliefs about a thing adds up to the experience of the thing. Philosophers from Kant through Sellars and McDowell have argued that we can only encounter particulars through the lens of the concepts that we use in predicative truth claims about them (McDowell, 1994; Sellars, 1956). On this basis, they shift all their epistemological attention to propositional knowledge. I do believe that getting to know an object always involves applying concepts to it and learning truth claims about it. But the kind of knowledge that we characterize in everyday speech as “knowledge-of” still does not *reduce* to propositional knowledge about it.

Second, knowledge-that is, by nature, digital. We do not know that a fact is true a little, or a lot; we either know it or we do not. We have the notion of credence, which is designed to capture the graduated nature of our confidence in propositions, but knowledge that a proposition is true is specifically not graduated in this way. In contrast, as we have seen, knowledge-of is a matter of degree.

Third, the content of knowledge-that can be either particular or general. We can have factual knowledge that a particular object has some property, or that a generalization is true. But knowledge-of is definitionally particular.

Fourth, knowledge-that can always, at least in principle, be transmitted by testimony, even when it comes to private and subjective facts. I can pass the knowledge that I am in pain onto someone else, who can have good reason to believe me when I tell them that I am. But knowledge-of requires a direct first-person encounter. While you might know that I am in pain, you do not know my pain. You might describe Hong Kong to me in so much detail that I feel like I know it. I might get quite good at imagining it. But unless I visit it myself, it would be deeply misleading for me to say “I know Hong Kong.” The same holds for less grandiose objects, like my pink jumpsuit; I can tell you about it, and you might know *about* it, but you do not know it unless you perceive it.

Thus knowledge-that is quite different from knowledge-of. But the harder case will be distinguishing knowledge-of from knowledge-how. Especially since I have argued that knowledge-of depends on skill, it may seem that it is just a subspecies of knowledge-how. After all, knowledge-how, like knowledge-of, is a matter of degree. I can know how to ride a bike or how to play the piano a little, or well, and as in the case of knowledge-of there is no context-free threshold for what counts as having the relevant know-how. Moreover, both are first-personal and cannot be inherited through testimony. You might help me to develop know-how by telling me or showing me how to do something, but unless I come to be able to do it for myself, no amount of believable testimony adds up to knowledge in the relevant sense. But, I want to argue, knowledge-of is not itself knowledge-how.

For one thing, unlike knowledge-of, knowledge-how is typically general, not particular. Knowing how to throw a good left hook or ride a bike is a transferable skill. I can confidently and felicitously say that I know how to ride a new bike that I have never gotten on before, and that if I have thrown good left hooks in the past, I know how to throw one again now (although again, this is a matter of degree). I do not need to ride *this* bike to say that I have the know-how to ride it. Meanwhile, though, it would be misleading to say that I have knowledge of this particular bike if I have not ridden it, or at least interacted with it in other meaningful ways, and this is so no matter how many similar bikes I have ridden in the past. Notice that if I learn to skillfully navigate a thing, **a**, and **a** and **b** are nearly identical, then my skill at navigating **a** gives me skill at navigating **b** automatically (even if I never exercise it), but my knowledge of **a** does *not* give me knowledge of **b**.

Knowledge-of *requires* skill. In particular, it requires skills at experiencing things. Some kinds of general know-how are experiential skills that position us well to learn to experience some particular thing. I might, for example, get very good at listening well to jazz, and that might put me in an excellent position to quickly learn how to listen to a new piece. My general jazz listening know-how enables me to become familiar with the new piece with a minimum of effort. Still, the general know-how does not give me knowledge of *this* piece until I listen to it in particular, and learn what it is like to hear it.

When philosophers discuss know-how, they tend to focus on physical skill. Two people can share a physical skill only if they have the same physical capacities, to the extent required to execute the skill. To throw a left hook, ride a bike, or play piano, one must be able to use one's body in a certain way. So, if two people share a physical skill then at some level of description they share a physical capacity. Interestingly, in this way, objectual knowledge is typically quite different. There are, as we saw in Section 2, different ways to experience one and the same object. Two people can know the same thing even if their physical interactions with it and the physical skills they use to navigate it are quite different. You and I might both know Berlin—one and the same object—very well, even though you navigate it by wheelchair and I navigate it by foot, for instance. Our physical motions through the city may be almost completely different, and yet we both are navigating the same thing. People with very different bodies and capacities can share an aesthetic grasp of what belongs in Berlin and what does not, what its patterns and character are, and how to orient themselves within it. Our sense of the aesthetic unity of the city can be independent of the particular physical motions and skills we use to get that sense. We also might pick up on different patterns and forms of unity because of our different experiences. Yet we both have knowledge of the same thing. The same goes for people and other objects; there are various ways to experience the *same object*, using different sensory modalities and different physical skills. Thus, although knowledge-of depends on embodied knowledge-how, there is generally no unique set of physical skills that undergirds a particular case of knowledge-of.

Some of the differences in epistemic form among the three types of knowledge are summarized in Table 1.

5 | PROBLEMS IN AESTHETIC EPISTEMOLOGY, PART 1: THE ACQUAINTANCE PRINCIPLE

I hope that my account of objectual knowledge as a kind of active aesthetic knowledge can clarify a long-standing puzzle in aesthetic epistemology. Richard Wollheim (1980) was the first to name the *acquaintance principle*, although

TABLE 1 Knowledge-of, knowledge-that, and knowledge-how

	First-personal or via testimony	General or particular	A matter of degree or digital
Knowledge-of	First-personal	Particular	A matter of degree
Knowledge-that	First-personal or via testimony	General or particular	Digital
Knowledge-how	First-personal	General	A matter of degree

it has its roots in Kant's Third Critique. Wollheim's version of the acquaintance principle is that it is not possible to *aesthetically appreciate or aesthetically evaluate* a without first-person contact with and experience of a. Within aesthetic epistemology, Wollheim's principle has been widely extended to the claim that we can have no *aesthetic knowledge* of a without first-person experience of a, and there have been a variety of attempts to tweak the principle to make it more precise or to come up with counterexamples to it.¹² The intuition behind the acquaintance principle is that aesthetic knowledge is by nature experiential and first-personal and requires direct contact with the object of knowledge, which is inconsistent with such knowledge being passed on by testimony (Robson, 2012).

This is puzzling because there seems to be no good reason not to believe trustworthy and skilled reporters when they testify to the aesthetic properties of a thing—when they say that something is beautiful, graceful, funny, or whatever—unless we take aesthetic judgments to be entirely subjective and relative to individuals. Such relativistic positions are generally philosophically unsavory, and this one seems to just be empirically false; there is often widespread aesthetic agreement, especially among experts. Not only does it seem on the face of it like I ought to be able to accept the aesthetic judgments of experts via testimony, but I also seem to be able to arrive at aesthetic judgments through inference: I am confident that I will find a Coen brothers movie starring Steve Buscemi funny, based on my past experience, and that I will find a Gaudi chapel beautiful. I know I would find the city of Melbourne cool, based on everything I have read about it. Although all these inferences are fallible, they seem as secure as the knowledge I routinely get from inductive inference. So, why do we have this residual intuition that something is missing or has gone wrong, that *real* aesthetic knowledge cannot be inherited or inferred in this way?

Notice that while I am confident *that* the movie is funny, the chapel is beautiful, and the city is cool, I do not have knowledge *of* any of these objects. I can make aesthetic judgments *about* them but I am not familiar with them. My proposal is that the acquaintance principle is capturing a truth about the kind of aesthetic familiarity that is key to objectual knowledge, but that when people give apparent counterexamples to it, they switch to talking about propositional knowledge-that. Wollheim's original principle confuses matters by not distinguishing between them.

As we have seen in our exploration of knowledge-of, aesthetic familiarity is experiential and relies on skill, and there is nothing mysterious or relativistic about the fact that this needs to be gained first-personally rather than through testimony or inference. This is so, after all, for knowledge-how as well. No amount of reading about how to ride a bike and believing what we read is equivalent to actually knowing how to ride a bike. It is not that people telling me how to ride a bike are untrustworthy or are trying to impart mysteriously subjective or relativistic knowledge; it is just that gaining justified beliefs is categorically different from gaining skills. Likewise, gaining justified beliefs is categorically different from gaining aesthetic experience. Even very thin aesthetic appreciation based on relatively fleeting contact with an object requires some familiarity with it, and hence at least some minimal level of experiential knowledge-of. Aesthetic knowledge-of is subjective, but only in the unspooky sense that know-how is also subjective: you have to have it for yourself.

However, when we make claims *about* aesthetic properties—that something is funny, or graceful—we are expressing factual beliefs. These can be passed on via testimony and inference just fine. Although these terms do not convey the qualitative experience of the thing, neither do color terms. When I tell you that a building is red, I do not give you the experience of its redness, but that is no reason for you not to believe me and now have knowledge that the building is red. I do not think evaluative aesthetic terms work interestingly differently from this. There is nothing special or mysterious about the fact that we have words for kinds of experiences, and can use them to pass on knowledge *about* those experiences, but not knowledge *of* them. What we cannot have without direct experience

is knowledge of what it is like to experience something, but this is really no surprise. Nor is there anything special about aesthetic predicates like graceful and beautiful here—we also cannot be familiar what it is like to experience the largeness or triangularity or overcrowdedness of a thing without direct first-person experience. Aesthetic properties are qualities of experiences. You can infer or learn through testimony that something has aesthetic properties, but this does not let you know what experiencing the thing is like. So I can know through testimony *that* a Gaudi chapel is beautiful, but I cannot know the beauty of the chapel without seeing it for myself.

There seems to be a puzzle around the acquaintance principle only when we conflate these two kinds of knowledge. So for instance, Robert Hopkins's version of the acquaintance principle is that *S's belief* on an aesthetic matter is legitimate only if *S* has experienced for herself the object that belief concerns (Hopkins, 2006, p. 86). But formulated this way, the principle seems wrong. We can perfectly well have legitimate beliefs about aesthetic matters without direct experience, I just argued, and to say that we cannot is to make such beliefs mysteriously resistant to the normal rules of evidence. What Hopkins's version of the principle does is transform an insight concerning aesthetic knowledge-of into a claim about knowledge-that. The phrase “aesthetic knowledge” invites the perception of paradox, because it is ambiguous between “knowledge of what it's like to experience something” and “knowledge about aesthetic facts and properties.”¹⁴ When the acquaintance principle is formulated as a principle about knowing-that aesthetic facts are true, it makes aesthetic properties seem unnecessarily and weirdly mysterious.

6 | PROBLEMS IN AESTHETIC EPISTEMOLOGY, PART 2: THE REPRESENTATION PROBLEM

In this section, I consider a potential difficulty for my account of knowledge-of, which constitutes a second puzzle in aesthetic epistemology. On the one hand, aesthetic epistemologists have typically had a strong intuition that aesthetic knowledge of a thing requires a first-person encounter with it, as we just discussed. My account of objectual knowledge has also built in the necessity of this first-person encounter. And yet, sometimes (but not always), it seems like we can acquire aesthetic, objectual knowledge of a thing via an encounter with a *representation* of that thing, rather than with the thing itself. If I have seen and spent time carefully examining a high-quality photograph of a painting, it is not misleading for me to say that I know the painting, even if I have never seen the original. My knowledge will not be complete; there will be a level of familiarity that can only come from experiencing the original painting's scale, the three dimensionality of its brush work, and the like. Still, we would not think it misleading for someone to say they know the painting from its reproductions. This seems like a violation of my account of knowledge-of, which requires first-personal navigation of the thing. In other cases we do not accept such knowledge by representation: No matter how closely you have examined photographs of me, you do not get to say you know me without actually meeting me (though you might know about me, or know who I am). To make things more complicated, it is reasonable for you to say you know me if we have only interacted via Facebook, which is a kind of dynamic representation of me, although it is most likely (but not always) misleading for you to say you know me well. So we have a double question: how can representations give objectual knowledge at all, given that such knowledge is supposed to require first-person contact, and which representations do so and why? This section of the paper will be much more aporetic than the rest, as I do not yet have a detailed answer to this question.

I think the key to alleviating the tension is noticing that *first-person contact* with a thing does not mean *unmediated* contact. I do not know you any less well if I use glasses to see you. What our first-person encounter with an object requires in order to yield objectual knowledge is not *directness*, but rather the right kind of causal engagement with the object itself, whether mediated or unmediated. The object itself must be causally controlling my experience of it, even if that experience is mediated. For example, I may know a painting through photographs of it, but not through another artists' imaginative rendering of what the painting probably looks like, even if it happens to be very accurate. So it is true that a first-person encounter is required for objectual knowledge, as I have been arguing. But it is an important nuance that that encounter may be mediated. Not all forms of mediation are acceptable, however.

So what sort of causal engagement with the object is of the right sort to yield knowledge of it? Here I have only a sketch of a theory. A complete account here, which I am not offering, would need to provide two kinds of criteria: (a) We need criteria for when a representation of a thing is controlled by the thing *in the right way* for the representation to give (mediated) access to the *thing itself*. To acquire knowledge of a thing, our experience of that thing need not be direct, but it has to be *of the thing itself* – it must be a first-person experience of that particular thing, and not of something else similar. Such criteria must explain why looking at something through glasses (or even through a telescope, where what we are seeing is in the past) can give us knowledge of it, but merely reading a description of it cannot, and looking at a very similar thing cannot. (b) We need criteria for when a representation of this kind can actually teach us how to experience the thing – criteria that will vary depending on the kind of thing at hand. This is why still photographs can give knowledge of paintings, but not of people or places. Looking at a photograph of a painting carefully—moving your eyes over it, looking at it from different angles and distances—will enable you to develop most of the skill of competently experiencing the painting. This does not work for a person or place, where much of what it is like to experience it involves dynamic interaction that cannot be recreated with a still photograph that does not change as you interact with it.

Is there any way of knowing a *place* through a representation of it? Clearly a photograph or painting will not do. But are there any circumstances under which you could interact with a mediating representation of a place and come to know that place, without having directly been there? Might a real-time virtual encounter with a place might be enough, if the virtual experience is directly controlled by the place and is rich enough in detail? Some video games that are closely based on a specific real place, and go out of their way to capture the aesthetic feel and orientation of the place, can give a feeling of familiarity with the place itself. My son managed to navigate Istanbul somewhat effectively just on the basis of having played *Assassin's Creed: Revelations*. All the same, that sort of representation is surely too indirectly tied to the place to give actual objectual knowledge of it, though it may give us a felt simulation of this knowledge. But perhaps a richer representation of this sort that was more directly and dynamically causally tied to the city itself might count? I am not certain. My take-home message in this section is that in order to yield objectual knowledge, a first-person encounter with an object need not be direct, though it must be causally entangled with the object in the right way, and it must yield knowledge of what it's like to experience the thing.

7 | CONCLUSION: THOUGHTS ON KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER KINDS OF PARTICULARS

I have restricted my attention in this paper to objectual knowledge of material particulars. This kind of objectual knowledge, I have tried to show, is fundamentally experiential but also fundamentally embodied; it involves learning our way around the thing.

But what about nonmaterial things, with which we cannot straightforwardly have an embodied interaction? Can we have knowledge of such things, and is my account helpful for understanding that knowledge? We cannot in any obvious way have aesthetic, embodied experiences of abstract particulars such as mathematical proofs, for instance, although it seems to make sense to say that we know them. Nor can we do this with fictional objects, although we often feel like we know fictional characters and places well. Mental states pose interesting problems of their own; can we have objectual knowledge of our own hopes, or of our own depression? Can we have embodied aesthetic knowledge of such things?

For the most part I leave it as an interesting question for others whether my account of objectual knowledge can be meaningfully extended to encompass such objects. However, I close with some remarks about these other sorts of objects.

Fictional objects fail the existence criterion that makes objectual knowledge of them possible (see Section 4). Thus my inclination is to say that we simply do not have objectual knowledge of them at all. We may have a close imaginary equivalent of such knowledge, and when we do, in our imaginations we become familiar with them in

much the same way that we become familiar with real objects. Hence we are speaking metaphorically when we say that we know Mr. Darcy, or Gotham City. This can, however, be a pretty rich metaphor, since fictional things may be richly aesthetically realized. It is certainly possible to tell whether something fits with the aesthetic look and feel of Gotham City or does not belong there, for instance.

In the case of abstract objects, I am not certain whether we need a distinctive account of knowledge-of that fits them, or whether all knowledge concerning them is a form of knowledge-that. Maybe knowing a mathematical proof, for instance, is just a matter of having a lot of propositional, descriptive knowledge about it—the expression “knowing the proof” may be just short for “knowing a lot about the proof, including what its steps are.” To the extent that there is no object to experientially encounter, we might only know about the thing through facts about it; the notion of objectual knowledge may not get a grip in such cases. (If this is right, and we cannot have knowledge of them, this *might* be a reason for anti-realism about them, although I cannot pursue that thought here.)

There is a closely related kind of knowledge worth mentioning here though. Although a mathematical *proof* is an abstract object, the act of *proving* is a concrete mental particular. Kant would say that our understanding of abstract objects comes from our familiarity with the mental act of constructing them. It may make more sense to speak of objectual knowledge of provings than of proofs. I can, I think, be familiar with the experience of working through and understanding the steps of a proof.

This brings us to the topic of mental objects. I will not attempt an account of knowledge of mental objects here, especially because this would probably require an account of the ontology of the mental, which is wildly beyond the scope of this paper. I will just note a few points. First, there is certainly something that it is like to experience a mental particular such as a hope or a state of depression. As with external particulars, such knowledge comes in degrees; we can be very familiar with a mental thing or just passingly so; merely encountering it in our mind is not enough for intimate knowledge. Moreover, at least often and maybe always, our becoming familiar with a mental particular involves its showing up in the context of embodied action. I may learn that my depression is more intense and different in quality when I do not exercise or when I am alone in the dark, for instance. My hope that my dog will live a long time is connected in innumerable ways to other of my mental attitudes and feelings, as well as to my actions and surroundings; becoming familiar with that hope in part means learning these connections and patterns. The phenomenology of my hope is not abstractable from how it is embedded in webs of action, experience, and other mental states. Thus often, I suspect, we have knowledge of mental things quite similarly to the way we have knowledge of physical things. We learn our way around them through action, and thereby come to know what it is like to competently experience them. I think the residual question here is whether we can come to know a mental object purely through introspective contemplation that does not engage the body at all (except as a substratum), and that is completely detached from sensuous patterns. Or to put the point differently, are there experiential skills that we can develop that are purely mental, like meditation perhaps? I am inclined to be skeptical of such things, but whether they exist is a bigger question than I can take on here. If they exist, then we need to make sure that in our broader account of objectual knowledge, we include purely mental skills among the relevant experiential skills. This would be a kind of objectual knowledge that is not aesthetic knowledge, if it exists at all. In general, though, it does not seem that it would be too difficult or jarring to extend my account of objectual knowledge to mental objects.

This has been a big-picture paper, and I have left lots of loose ends, and failed to fill in many details. My rather ambitious goal has been to capture the character of an epistemic relationship to things that we talk about a lot in everyday idiomatic speech, but that has not really been on epistemologists' radar. I've tried to develop a picture of objectual knowledge of concrete particulars, using place knowledge as a helpful model and paradigm. I've argued that such objectual knowledge is *active aesthetic knowledge of existent objects*; we know things to the extent that we are familiar with *what it is like to competently experience them*, where experiencing them requires first-person engagement over time and the development of skill—it requires that we *learn our way around a thing*, much as we learn our way around a place. My hope is that this paper has shown that knowing what it is like to competently experience a thing is an important, complicated, and distinctive epistemic relationship between knowers and objects – one that cannot be subsumed under traditional epistemological analyses of knowledge by acquaintance, propositional knowledge, or know-how.¹³

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ See Russell (1910), as well as almost all of the post-Russellian literature on knowledge by acquaintance, in particular Duncan (2021), which is a *Philosophy Compass* survey of the topic, and which defines acquaintance in this minimal way from the start. See also Levine (2019), which defends the claim that acquaintance involves mere consciousness of an object.
- ² David Woodruff Smith (2019) argues that perception always and ineliminably occurs in the context of action and interaction, and is not a passive or static relationship to an object, and thus that knowledge by acquaintance only occurs in the context of action. This is an exception to the general approach. I take Smith's argument to be consistent with everything I say here, but he does not develop a specific account of objectual knowledge that builds on this insight.
- ³ A notable exception is Farkas (2019), but she argues explicitly against the possibility of a unified account of objectual knowledge.
- ⁴ For instance, see Farkas (2019) for a discussion of this debate.
- ⁵ As Benton (2017) and Talbert (2015) have each pointed out, knowing a *person* requires not only *interaction* but *reciprocity*; to get the kind of familiarity with someone required for knowing them involves interacting with them in a way that calls on them to interact back and to become familiar with you in turn. People – and perhaps non-human animals – are the only particular objects for which objectual knowledge involves reciprocity, since they are the only things that can have objectual knowledge of their own. For this reason, knowing a person is not a good model of objectual knowledge in general; this is part of why I prefer place knowledge as my paradigm case.
- ⁶ Benton (2017) also makes the point that objectual knowledge essentially comes in degrees, but he does not explain why this is so.
- ⁷ Errol Lord (2018) also argues that some kinds of objectual knowledge involve being able to experience a thing *competently*, which is a *skill*. He is focused solely on moral and aesthetic knowledge, on our knowing how to affectively and cognitively respond to an object.
- ⁸ Farkas (2019) explicitly claims that finding your way around is a criterion of knowledge that is limited to place knowledge, but this just seems deeply wrong to me.
- ⁹ See for instance Duncan (2021) (which itself aims to be a survey of the literature), Levine (2019), Grzankowski and Tye (2019), and Sosa in BonJour and Sosa (2003).
- ¹⁰ For instance, both Sosa (2003) and Lord (2018) explicitly admit that knowing things like people and places requires interaction, but also hold to a minimal acquaintance account of how we experience particulars, with no story of how to make it from one to the other.
- ¹¹ Some philosophers simply do not believe in non-propositional knowledge. I do not want to wade into that debate here. As I said in footnote 1, I am not invested in whether knowledge-of “really” counts as knowledge, in some technical sense. Knowledge-of is non-propositional as a matter of form. In everyday parlance, it is a kind of knowledge, which again, is good enough for me here.
- ¹² See for instance Budd (2003), Hopkins (2006), Lord (2018), and McIver Lopes (2009), among others.
- ¹³ An anonymous referee points out that one might believe that some kinds of aesthetic appreciation might be too thin, and based on contact too fleeting, to count as knowledge-of, because it might not involve much skill at all. I think that to appreciate something at all one has to have at least minimal knowledge of it. But even if the referee is correct, this would still be experiential appreciation based on first-person contact, which is all that matters to me here. My point is to contrast this kind of experiential, objectual appreciation of aesthetic properties with knowledge-that some aesthetic factual claim is true.
- ¹⁴ I am genuinely grateful for formative feedback from audiences at the University of Cincinnati “What’s Next?” workshop, the University of Nottingham Philosophy Department, and the University of Warsaw Analytic Philosophy group, as well as for helpful and constructive comments from an anonymous referee.

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