

A Puzzle About Infallibilism

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The Case

Someone (infallibly) believes that X drank a bottle of poison and (infallibly) believes that anyone who drinks such poison will be dead within 24 hours. 24 hours later, the observer comes to believe that X is dead. Unbeknownst to the observer, X was actually run over by a bus before the poison took effect.

The inferential pattern:

- (1) Anyone who drinks the poison will die within 24 hours.
- (2) X drank the poison 24 hours ago.

Therefore

- (3) The poison has killed X.

Therefore

- (4) X is dead.

Knowledge?

Does the observer's belief count as knowledge?

If Yes

Then we can infer things through a falsehood (even with no other access to it) and still know things.

This is surprising given what goes on in certain Gettier cases.

If No

Then we can have beliefs supported by infallible justification that don't amount to knowledge.