

PHILOSOPHY

PARADOXICAL KNOWLEDGE

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“Paradoxical knowledge” is a term in psychology research that describes pretended knowledge although it is rather clear that a person doesn’t have it – because the usual qualification is missing, a former qualification is outdated and it largely contradicts accepted knowledge. PK or KP seems a good term to describe the Corona denier phenomenon as seen in Homburg, Bhakdi and Lütge.

To avoid uncertainty, people may take a shortcut to knowledge. They recognize something as unknowable, but claim to know it nonetheless.

The quote above is from the [2019 paper of Gollwitzer and Oettinger](#) which itself is based on earlier work 2017 by [Burlando](#)

The KP provides a unifying context for the sorites and the liar paradoxes. Any concept is viewed as a [sorites](#), i.e. it is impossible to set a boundary between what is, and what is not, the entity to which the concept refers. Hence, any statement about reality can be reduced to a liar, wherefrom the KP follows in its most general form: -If I know, then I do not know-. The KP is self-referential but not contradictory, as it can be referred to two levels of knowledge: -if I know (epistemic), then I do not know (ontic)-, where the ontic level is made unachievable by concept vagueness. Such an interpretation of scientific knowledge provides an understanding of its dynamics.

The dynamics are clear: liars get aggressive whenever you catch the lies while developing even a tendency to fanaticism. [Epistemic paradoxes](#) – they are forever young in particular in old men.

The general structure of Meno's paradox is a dilemma: If you know the answer to the question you are asking, then nothing can be learned by asking. If you do not know the answer, then you cannot recognize a correct answer even if it is given to you. Therefore, one cannot learn anything by asking questions.

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