

Is Epistemic Normativity Just a Special Case of Skill Normativity?

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Many virtue epistemologists conceive of epistemic competence on the model of skill—such as archery, playing baseball or chess. Famously, for example, Ernest Sosa (2007, 2011, 2015) compares the believer to a target-shooting archer. On his view, forming beliefs is, in all relevant respects, just like shooting arrows. I argue that this is a mistake: epistemic competences and skills are crucially and relevantly different sorts of powers. This, I suggest, undermines the popular attempt to understand epistemic normativity as a mere special case of the sort of normativity familiar from skillful action.

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