

Knowing How and Being Able

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Abstract. Intellectualists about know-how tend to deny that knowing how to φ requires the corresponding ability to φ . So, it's supposed to be an attractive feature of intellectualism that it can explain cases of knowing how without ability, while anti-intellectualism—roughly, the view that knowing how *is* a kind of ability—cannot. I show that intellectualism fails to explain the very cases that are supposed to showcase this feature of the view. Despite appearances, this does not amount to an objection to intellectualism *per se*, but to the intellectualist's rejection of ability entailment. It turns out that all parties to the debate about know-how should accept that knowing how entails ability. The upshot is that the central question of the debate should not be *whether knowing how entails ability*, but *whether ability suffices for knowing how*, as anti-intellectualists sometimes claim.

Keywords: Intellectualism, Anti-Intellectualism, Knowledge-How, Practical Ability

I. Introduction

This paper draws a broadly applicable lesson from the well-known ski instructor case in the literature about know-how. Stanley and Williamson (2001) are the first to mention the case, and they do it to illustrate a point they credit to Carl Ginet (1975): that ascriptions of knowledge-how do not entail the ascription of the corresponding ability. The case is just this: that “a ski instructor may know how to perform a certain complex stunt, without being able to perform it herself” (416).¹ John Bengson and Marc Moffett (2011) fill in the details of the case and use it to make a similar point: that knowing how to φ does not require an ability to φ . For my purposes, I will treat these claims—Ginet's and Bengson's and Moffett's—as the same, since they reject the necessity of an ability to φ for knowing how to φ . I call this latter claim ‘Entailment’.

The two views I focus on—Stanley's and Williamson's and Bengson's and Moffett's—are intellectualist views of know-how (‘intellectualist’ because they characterize knowing how to φ as an

¹ The case they credit to Jeff King, though.

epistemic state regarding φ -ing). It is supposed to be an attractive feature of intellectualism about know-how that it can explain cases like the ski instructor's, cases of know-how without ability. I show that intellectualism doesn't have this attractive feature after all. My main contention is that neither Stanley and Williamson nor Bengson and Moffett do right by the ski instructor. This is for different reasons in each case. The reason Stanley and Williamson fail by the ski instructor is that, on the view they develop, it turns out that the ski instructor neither knows how to perform a certain complex stunt (in the relevant sense) nor has the ability to perform that stunt. On Bengson's and Moffett's view, if the ski instructor *does* know how to perform a certain complex stunt (in the relevant sense), it is only at a steep cost to their view. The upshot is that neither view can explain why we should think the ski instructor knows how to perform a certain complex stunt despite being unable to perform the stunt. Of course, the ski instructor case is not the only case that's supposed to be a counterexample to Entailment. I argue that other key cases in the literature follow the same pattern: either the agent in the case fails to know how to φ in the relevant sense, or it turns out that they know how to φ *and* have the corresponding ability to φ .

My arguments in this paper have two significant upshots. First, it turns out that intellectualism's key cases don't motivate intellectualism over anti-intellectualism, so intellectualism about know-how is not what it seems. Second, the pattern that emerges in the intellectualist's cases suggests that the debate itself is fixed on a notion of know-how that entails corresponding ability. One consequence of this is that it's a mistake to think the debate is about whether knowing how to φ entails the corresponding ability to φ .

Here is the plan. In the next section, I relay the ski instructor's story and explain why it matters to the debate about knowledge-how. After that, I take the two intellectualist views under consideration in turn. In section III, I argue that Stanley and Williamson don't get their intended result in the ski

instructor case. In section IV, I argue that *if* Bengson and Moffett get their intended result, it is only at a steep cost. In section V, I respond to the case types that don't fit the ski-instructor paradigm, and, in section VI, I conclude with remarks about what this means for the debate about know-how.

II. The ski instructor

In this paper I level a similar charge against two distinct intellectualist accounts of know-how. The charge is that they fail to make good on their central cases. I show that their failure to make good on these cases has consequences for how we understand the core commitments of intellectualism about know-how, where intellectualism about know-how is the view that knowing how to φ is a kind of epistemic state regarding φ -ing.² As John Bengson and Marc Moffett (2011) understand it, the core commitment of intellectualism is this:

x knows how to φ in virtue of x 's having some propositional attitude(s) regarding φ -ing. (p. 162)

The two intellectualist views I address are Jason Stanley's and Timothy Williamson's (2001), and Bengson's and Moffett's (2011). I'll abbreviate views and authors. Stanley and Williamson will be SW, and their view will be *SW intellectualism* (or *the SW view*); similarly, Bengson and Moffett will be BM, and their view will be *BM intellectualism* (or *the BM view*).

In this section, I present the case in more detail and say why it matters to the debate about knowledge-how. Later I turn to the views under consideration and show that neither gets their intended result regarding the ski instructor, at least without steep cost.

Stanley and Williamson mention the ski instructor only briefly, so I'll adopt Bengson's and Moffett's elaboration:

² For my purposes, this very broad characterization will do, but it is actually difficult to say what intellectualism is. The literature is inconsistent, but there's widespread agreement that intellectualism is the view that treats knowing how as a matter of knowing propositions. Thanks to Will Small for helpful discussion on this point.

Ski Instructor. Pat has been a ski instructor for twenty years, teaching people how to do complex ski stunts. He is in high demand as an instructor, since he is considered to be the best at what he does. Although an accomplished skier, he has never been able to do the stunts himself. Nonetheless, over the years he has taught many people how to do them well. In fact, a number of his students have won medals in international competitions and competed in the Olympic games. (BM 2011, p. 168)

SW and BM find it apt to ascribe knowledge of how to perform these ski stunts to Pat—we should be able to say that Pat *knows how* to perform these stunts even though he does not have the ability to perform them himself.³ In fact, Bengson and Moffett and Wright (2009) presented *Ski Instructor* to 190 participants and found that “the vast majority (81%) judged both that Pat knows how to perform the stunts and that he is unable to do them” (392). For anyone not represented by this 81%, BM encourage the target intuition in a footnote:

Suppose a novice ski jumper were to enter the ski lodge and say, “My goal is to learn how to do ski stunts. Who here knows how to do them?” An employee may then reply, while pointing to Pat, “He does.” Notice also that it would be more than a little odd for Pat (or the employee) to tell students that Pat does not know how to do the stunts, but he will teach them how to do the stunts anyway. (2011, p. 168, fn. 19)

The idea *Ski Instructor* is supposed to motivate is that one can know how to φ without being able to φ . It’s supposed to be a counterexample to a key anti-intellectualist claim. As BM understand the claim, it is that “having the ability to φ , or having had the ability to φ at some time in the past, is necessary for knowing how to φ ” (167). It will be helpful to treat this tenet of anti-intellectualism as two claims:

³ Neither SW nor BM tell us why Pat lacks the ability to perform the stunts, but they have good reason for this. As soon as they specify *why* Pat can’t perform the stunts, they are open to one of two lines of argument from the anti-intellectualist. If the reason Pat can’t do the stunts is environmental (e.g., broken skis), then know-how and ability don’t come apart *per se*—it’s just that contingent features of the environment prevent the exercise of his know-how/ability. If the reason has to do with something about Pat qua agent (e.g., injury), then the anti-intellectualist will appeal to counterfactual success to preserve the link between knowing how and being able (along these lines see, e.g., Hawley 2003, Noë 2005, Glick 2012; for response see Bengson, Moffett, and Wright 2009, fn. 10).

Strong Entailment. Knowing how to φ requires having the ability to φ .

Weak Entailment. Knowing how to φ requires having had the ability to φ .⁴

To simplify, I'll refer to these claims together as 'Entailment', and we can understand Entailment as the generic claim that knowing how to φ requires the corresponding ability to φ .⁵

Ski Instructor matters to the debate about know-how because it is the intellectualist's best evidence that Entailment is false. Intuitions lead us to regard Pat as a compelling counterexample to Entailment, and so a compelling counterexample to anti-intellectualism. By contrast, the intellectualist seems to be in a good position to do right by Pat, because the intellectualist argues that knowledge-how is a kind of epistemic state, such as propositional knowledge or understanding. Pat's inability to perform the stunts seems beside the point of his epistemic status, his knowing how. So intellectualism predicts the intuition that 81% of us have: he knows how to do the stunts but is unable to do them.

Insofar as *Ski Instructor* is a case against Entailment, it's key to intellectualism's appeal over anti-intellectualism. In what follows, I show that *Ski Instructor*, and, later, the intellectualist's other key cases, do not give us reason to reject Entailment. It turns out that, by the intellectualist's own lights, they should accept Entailment.⁶

III. SW intellectualism

In this section, I present the SW view and argue that SW don't get the result they wanted for *Ski Instructor*. To keep this in view: it should turn out, on their view, that Pat knows how to perform a

⁴ Why 'Strong' and 'Weak'? Strong Entailment requires having an ability at a particular point in time (i.e., *this* point in time). Weak Entailment requires only that one had the ability at *some* point in time.

⁵ However we specify the activity φ that S knows how to do, the activity φ that S has the ability to do must match. I will discuss ways of specifying activity types when it becomes relevant in section V.

⁶ But see Carlotta Pavese (2021). Pavese is the only intellectualist I now of who grants that knowledge-how entails ability. She briefly responds to *Ski Instructor*, but she does not offer an argument for Entailment.

certain complex ski stunt despite being unable to. I will argue that Pat does not know how *in the relevant sense*.⁷

SW claim that knowledge-how is a subspecies of knowledge-that, so one knows how in virtue of having a certain kind of relation to a proposition. Their argument for this is linguistic: all knowledge-*wh* ascriptions have embedded questions, and the ascription effectively says that the ascriber knows a contextually relevant answer to the question. Without getting into the linguistic analysis, here is what this amounts to:

1. Sam knows where to see a movie. / Sam knows a proposition that answers the question *where can we see a movie?* / Sam knows *that* we can see a movie at Music Box Theater.
2. Kristen knows when the movie starts. / Kristen knows a proposition that answers the question *when does the movie start?* / Kristen knows *that* the movie starts at 6:00pm.
3. Tiffany knows how to pull an espresso. / Tiffany knows a proposition that answers the question *how can she pull an espresso?* / Tiffany knows *that this* is a way she can pull an espresso.

SW argue we should treat knowledge-how ascriptions in the same way we treat knowledge-*when*, *-where*, and *-why* ascriptions—as ascriptions of propositional knowledge. Part of the appeal of the SW view is that it doesn't make a special case of knowledge-how. What helps knowledge-how seem plausibly propositional is that the proposition need not be articulable,⁸ and it can be indexical. So, on the view so far: Tiffany knows how to pull an espresso *iff* she knows of some contextually relevant way *w* that *w* is a way she can pull an espresso, and she needn't be able to articulate *w* in order to know that *w* is a way she can pull an espresso.

This is not yet the full story, however, because I can watch Tiffany pull an espresso and think “*That’s a way for me to pull an espresso!*” This looks like knowing a proposition that answers the question *how could I pull an espresso?* If I were to do what I just watched Tiffany do, I *would* pull an

⁷ More carefully: I do *not* mean to show that it's ‘incorrect’ to say Pat knows how. I *do* mean to show that when we say Pat knows how, we mean ‘knows how’ in a sense that is not the same as the know-how SW give an account of.

⁸ Or, more carefully: the individual who knows the proposition need not be able to articulate it to know it.

espresso, so the proposition is true. But this doesn't look like knowing how—no one should trust me with their La Marzocco espresso machine on this basis.

SW develop a solution by articulating *how* someone who knows how must be related to the relevant proposition. They clarify: the relevant propositions are about ways, and ways are properties of token events. If a way is a property, “an element of a standard Russellian proposition, then it must be possible for it to be entertained under different modes of presentation” (427). Their solution, then, will be to specify the mode of presentation on which the relevant proposition (about a way) must be entertained in order for the propositional attitude to amount to knowledge-how.

They develop the requisite mode of presentation by analogy with a case that demonstrates the role of modes of presentation for Russellian propositions. They consider John, who believes he is looking through a window when he observes a man whose pants are on fire. Unbeknownst to John, he's actually looking in a mirror, and the pants are his own.

4. John believes that that man has burning pants.
5. John believes that he himself has burning pants.

In this context, (4) is true while (5) is false. But because “that man” and “he himself” have the same referent, (4) and (5) express the same proposition. So, the way to make sense of the difference in truth value is by appeal to mode of presentation. John entertains the relevant proposition under a *demonstrative* mode of presentation, whereas, for (5) to be true, he would need to entertain that same proposition under a *first-personal* mode of presentation.

SW apply this lesson to Hannah. Hannah doesn't know how to ride a bike, but she watches John ride a bike, and John says “*This* is a way for you to ride a bike!” If Hannah is paying attention, then she knows a proposition about a way for her to ride a bike.

6. Hannah knows that *that way* is a way for her to ride a bike.
7. Hannah knows how to ride a bike.

In this context, (6) is true and (7) false. The reason is that Hannah doesn't yet entertain the proposition about a way for her to ride the bike under what SW call a *practical mode of presentation* (PMP). So, knowledge-how requires that one entertain the relevant proposition under a PMP.

Stanley and Williamson remain agnostic as to whether modes of presentation are semantically relevant, so their complete account comes with two options, depending on what the reader finds most plausible. If PMPs are semantically relevant, then (7)

is true relative to a context *c* if and only if there is some contextually relevant way *w* such that Hannah stands in the knowledge-that relation to the Russellian proposition that *w* is a way for Hannah to ride a bicycle, and Hannah entertains this proposition under a practical mode of presentation. (430)

Otherwise, using (7) *pragmatically conveys* that Hannah entertains the relevant proposition under a PMP, but its truth does not depend on this.

At this point, though, it becomes evident that Stanley and Williamson have forgotten about the ski instructor. Remember Pat:

8. Pat knows how to perform a certain complex ski stunt.

On the SW view, (8) is true relative to a context *c* iff there is some contextually relevant way *w* such that Pat stands in the knowledge-that relation to the Russellian proposition that *w* is a way for Pat to perform the stunt, and Pat entertains this proposition under a PMP. (Or, the ascription pragmatically implies the PMP.) I submit there are two problems here. The first has to do with mode of presentation and the second has to do with the proposition Pat needs to know. Each problem should lead us to think that Pat *doesn't* know how to perform the ski stunt, at least not in the relevant sense, the sense in which John knows how to ride a bike. The first problem is this: it's not clear that Pat entertains the relevant proposition under the relevant mode of presentation. In order to be good at what he does,

he doesn't need to know the propositions he knows under a PMP. He's not performing the stunts himself, so it suffices for his purposes that he can articulate propositions about ways in which his students can perform stunts. So, insofar as our willingness to ascribe knowledge-how to Pat is grounded in his being an in-demand ski instructor, it's not clear that we should think what Pat knows amounts to knowledge-how on the SW view.

This first problem might be unconvincing without a fuller treatment of what it means to entertain a proposition under a PMP.⁹ Instead of wading into the weeds, I concede and move on to the second problem: mode of presentation aside, it's highly implausible that Pat knows, of some contextually relevant way *w*, that *w* is a way for *him* to perform the stunts. At least, it seems the proposition about a way for *him* to perform the stunts is irrelevant to the know-how we ascribe him: what we take him to know when we say he knows how to perform the stunts is, at best, whatever it is his *students* need to know to perform the stunts. So, he knows about ways for his students to perform the stunts. Whether one or more of these ways is also a way for *him* to perform the stunts is beside the point.

Here's why we shouldn't think that Pat knows, of some way *w*, that *w* is a way for *him* to do the stunts. Consider possible reasons Pat can't do them. It might be that his skis are broken, have been for a very long time. If his skis are broken but he knows of a way *w* that *w* is a way for *him* to do the stunts, then we have no reason to think he doesn't *have the ability* to do the stunts. His broken skis don't count against his having the ability (more on this later). But we are supposed to hold fixed that Pat doesn't have the ability, or else his case isn't a case against Entailment. So, consider the possibility that Pat can't do the stunts because he has severe arthritis. This condition is a better reason to think Pat lacks the ability to do the stunts. But if he lacks the ability for a reason like this, then it seems he doesn't know of some way *w* that *w* is a way for him to do the stunts. At best, he might know of some way *w* that *w* is a way in which he *could* do the stunts *if* he didn't have arthritis. Call this knowledge of

⁹ See Pavese (2019) for development of modes of presentation. For critical discussion, see Glick (2015).

a counterfactual way. There is good reason to think that knowledge of counterfactual ways entails ability, but here I request patience. I will pick up this thread in section V.

For now, the takeaway is that there is a core tension between the idea that Pat knows how and that he lacks the ability. If we grant that there is some way *w* for Pat to do the stunts and that Pat knows of *w* that it is a way for him to do the stunts, it becomes difficult to maintain that he doesn't have the ability. If we instead hold fixed that Pat doesn't have the ability, it becomes difficult to maintain that he knows of a way *w* for *him* to do the stunts.

Here's what has happened. SW left Pat behind at the disambiguation of 'knows how' ascriptions. SW identify four readings of ordinary 'knows how' ascriptions.

9. Hannah knows how to ride a bicycle.

can be read in each of the following ways, depending on how we fill out context:

10. (a) Hannah knows how she ought to ride a bicycle.
- (b) Hannah knows how one ought to ride a bicycle.
- (c) Hannah knows how she could ride a bicycle.
- (d) Hannah knows how one could ride a bicycle.

The reading SW care about for the purposes of developing an account of knowledge-how is (10c):

Relative to a context in which (9) is interpreted as (10c), (9) is true if and only if, for some contextually relevant way *w* which is a way for Hannah to ride a bicycle, Hannah knows that *w* is a way for her to ride a bicycle. Thus, to say that someone knows how to *F* is always to ascribe to them knowledge-that. (SW 2001, p. 426; sentence numbers modified)

So, the reading of (9) that SW tailor their account of knowledge-how to is (10c), and with good reason.

But it's the (10c) equivalent for Pat—which will be (12c)—that we have no reason to accept.

11. Pat knows how to perform a certain complex ski stunt.

can be read in each of the following ways:

12. (a) Pat knows how he ought to perform a certain complex ski stunt.
- (b) Pat knows how one ought to perform a certain complex ski stunt.
- (c) Pat knows how he could perform a certain complex ski stunt.
- (d) Pat knows how one could perform a certain complex ski stunt.

I submit that it's (12d), not (12c), that makes (11) ring true in *Ski Instructor*.¹⁰ So, while it may just as well turn out that Pat “knows how to perform a certain complex ski stunt,” the sense in which he knows how to perform a complex ski stunt is the sense in which I know how to pull an espresso on a La Marzocco: I know, generally, how *one* does it, but I don't know a way for *me* to do it.

Why harp on *Ski Instructor*? Well, it was, for SW, supposed to motivate the intuition that knowing how doesn't require ability. It acted as a *desideratum* for the development of their view: an account of know-how should be such that knowing how to φ does not entail having the corresponding ability to φ . Satisfying this *desideratum* is supposed make SW intellectualism more compelling than anti-intellectualism, which claims knowing-how requires (or just is) ability.¹¹ But SW don't end up with an account that satisfies the *Ski Instructor desideratum*. Pat knows how to perform the stunt only in a different sense of ‘knows how to’ than the one SW articulate necessary and sufficient conditions for. At best for SW, it's indeterminate whether their view of know-how is a view on which knowing how requires ability. At worst for SW, the tension I identified above is a reason to think that the relevant sense of ‘knows how to’ *does* require ability: whenever S knows, of a contextually relevant way *w* to φ ,

¹⁰ I believe Alva Noë (2005) is the first to make this particular point about the ski instructor, and he credits Kent Bach: “She can know how one jumps, or how jumping is done, after all, without knowing how to do it” (284). Cf. Pavese (2021).

¹¹ SW take Ryle's view of know-how to be an anti-intellectualist view, and it's Ryle's view that is their primary target. There is, however, good reason to think Ryle isn't the anti-intellectualist SW think. See, for example, Kremer (2017) and Small (2017a).

that w is a way for S to φ , and S entertains the proposition about w under a PMP, it follows that S has the ability to φ in way w . If it doesn't follow, the burden of proof is on SW.¹²

IV. BM intellectualism

BM, like SW, take *Ski Instructor* to show that knowing how to φ does not require having the ability to φ . But BM anticipate the above objection to *Ski Instructor*: Pat knows how *one* performs the ski stunts, but it does not follow from knowing-how-*one* φ -s that one knows how *to* φ . So, as-is, *Ski Instructor* fails to show that Pat knows how *to* φ . This objection to *Ski Instructor* introduces what BM call the 'one-to distinction'.

By way of reply, BM accept the one-to distinction, and they aim to show that, even still, what Pat has really is knowledge-how-*to*, and not mere knowledge-how-*one*. They do this by contrasting Pat with Albert.

[Albert is] an unathletic (nonskiing) scientist who studies the mechanics of skiing, including but not limited to the mechanics of complicated ski stunts. As a result of his theoretical studies, Albert knows how *one* does the stunts (namely, by contracting such-and-such muscles in such-and-such ways). (169)

BM suppose that Pat knows these mechanics, too. So, Pat and Albert are alike insofar as both *know how one does the stunts*, and neither is able to do the stunts. The key for BM is that we should nonetheless intuit a significant difference between Pat and Albert: "only Pat knows how to do the stunts. Indeed, even though Pat cannot do them, he grasps the stunts in a way that Albert, who only knows the theory, does not" (169). If they're right, then the one-to distinction can't help the anti-intellectualist show that

¹² Which I don't think they'd meet anyway, since they acknowledge, "Thinking of a way under a practical mode of presentation undoubtedly entails the possession of certain complex dispositions. It is for this reason that there are intricate connections between knowing-how and dispositional states" (429).

Pat fails to know how in the relevant sense. So, the idea is that contrasting Pat-the-instructor with Albert-the-physiologist should help us see that Pat really does know how *to* do the stunts.

Albert hurts the BM view more than he helps it. There is no difference between Pat and Albert with respect to knowing how to do the stunts, so introducing Albert amounts to introducing another kind of expert who knows how *one* does them. I'll make the case for this, but the conclusion I reach will be a conditional: if, on the BM view, Pat knows how to do the stunts, then so does Albert. BM argue that Pat knows how to do the stunts, so, if they're right, so does Albert. This is the cost their view pays: they're stuck with the counterintuitive claim that Albert—the unathletic physiologist!—*knows how to* do the stunts. If this cost is too steep, then BM can concede that Pat and Albert only know how *one* does the stunts. But this means BM don't meet their aim in appealing to *Ski Instructor*: to show that knowing-how *in the relevant sense* doesn't entail corresponding ability.

I'll start here—why think there's no *relevant* difference between Pat and Albert? Recall that the difference we're looking for is a difference in the relation each has to *performing the stunts*. BM expect our intuitions will be that neither is able, both know how *one*, only Pat knows how *to*. I want to point out two possible influences on our intuitions here, which we should resist. Here's the first: I suspect one reason we are tempted to intuit a difference between Pat and Albert regarding *knowing how to perform the stunts* is that Pat seems more likely to be able to perform the stunts. Two ways to spell this out: there is a possible world in which Pat is able to perform the stunts that's closer than the closest possible world in which Albert is able to perform the stunts. Or, if Pat tries to perform one of these stunts, he's likely to get closer to success than Albert (even if he cannot, by stipulation, fully succeed). But, as far as BM are concerned, this is an illicit influence on our intuitions. If *this* is what motivates us to think Pat knows how *to* perform the stunts while Albert does not, then the reason we intuit that Pat has know-how in the relevant sense is that he's related to the corresponding ability in a way that Albert is not. But if this is the case, the Pat-Albert contrast (and so *Ski Instructor*) defeats its purpose—

it tips the scales in favor of Entailment, rather than against it. So, in our intuiting, we must hold fixed the fact that Pat and Albert would be equally likely to succeed if they tried.

The second temptation is to conflate Pat's knowing how to perform the stunts and Pat's knowing how to *teach* how to perform the stunts. These are different action types—knowing how to perform the stunts doesn't entail knowing how to teach them, and knowing how to teach them doesn't entail knowing how to perform them. As Gilbert Ryle (1946) makes the distinction, there's a knowing how for pedagogy, and it's not the same as the learner's knowing how: "Sometimes a man might give good advice who did not know how to behave. Knowing how to advise about behaviour is not the same thing as knowing how to behave. It requires at least three extra techniques: ability to abstract, ability to express and ability to impress" (p. 13). BM want us to intuit that Pat knows how to perform the stunts and not just that, as an instructor, he knows how to teach how to perform them.¹³ So, what we should *not* do, in thinking about Pat, is let his pedagogical abilities to abstract, express, and impress drive the intuition that he knows how *to* perform the stunts, since these abilities relate Pat to the activity of teaching, not performing the stunts.

If we are able to resist these illicit influences on our intuitions, it turns out to be very difficult to intuit a difference between Pat and Albert—that Pat knows how to perform the stunts while Albert does not. But my argument doesn't depend on this claim about intuitions. So, granting that there is nonetheless a significant, relevant difference between Pat and Albert, I'll show that BM aren't able to account for it—the BM view of know-how predicts that both Pat and Albert know how to perform the stunts.

¹³ One might think it is *in virtue of* knowing how to teach that Pat knows how to perform—if he can teach others, maybe he can teach himself! To my ear, though, this sounds like saying he could convert his knowledge-how-*one* into knowledge-how-*to because* he knows how to teach. It doesn't mean that he presently *knows how to perform the stunts*. And what BM want is a Pat who presently knows how to perform the stunts while Albert doesn't. (If Pat could teach himself, perhaps he could also teach the unathletic Albert. In which case, they're not different in the relevant sense.)

So, how do BM mean to account for a difference between Pat and Albert? In the relevant part of their argument, BM aim to vindicate the intuition that knowledge-how is, somehow, a distinctively practical epistemic state. They want to do justice to the intuitions that motivated anti-intellectualism without ending up with an anti-intellectualist view themselves (at this point, they've already argued that anti-intellectualism is untenable). They arrive at this view:

Knowledge how to φ is a state σ such that: if x is in σ , then it is possible for there to be some individual y such that y 's exercise of σ underlies and explains y 's successfully and intentionally φ -ing—that is, σ guides y in successfully, intentionally φ -ing. (p. 177)

Knowledge-how is the kind of state that has the potential to guide action. I grant this seems to do right by Pat: although Pat is unable to perform the ski stunts, he is nonetheless in a state such that if he *were* to perform the stunt, his state *would* guide him in performing the stunt. His state is action-guiding. As BM explain:

If a ski instructor knows how to do ski stunts, then even if he or she cannot do—and thus never does—them, it remains possible that there be someone in the same state who successfully and intentionally does the stunts, and does so on the basis of exercising that very state: in this way, the ski instructor's state (his or her know-how) is such that it *can* guide the intentional execution of the stunts, even if it does not actually do so for him or her. (p. 176)

Fair enough. This makes sense of Pat's aim as an instructor: to instill in his students the same state *he* has so that that state will guide *their* intentional execution of the stunts. I won't try to show that BM are wrong about Pat. The trouble now is with Albert, since this is what is supposed to account for the significant difference between Pat and Albert: the state Pat is in is action guiding, so it's knowledge-how-*to*. The state Albert is in is not action guiding, so, at best, it's knowledge-how-*one*. But to show this, BM would need to tell us why Albert's state is such that it wouldn't guide his attempt to perform the ski stunts, if he were to try. Sure, Albert wouldn't be very good at this at first—neither would Pat!—but he nonetheless has some relevant knowledge that he can (or, at least, that *one could*) put to

use. We can imagine him thinking, while skiing a slope, “contract *this* muscle now, then relax *that* muscle in order to take *this* turn just so, and...” The fact that he might fail to move in precisely the ways he has in mind, or that he might fail to move gracefully, is no reason to think his state is not action-guiding. The point is we have no criteria for thinking Pat’s state *is* action-guiding (and so knowledge-how-*to*) while Albert’s is not (and so mere knowledge-how-*one*).¹⁴

Here’s another way of making the point. It’s worth noticing that Albert *also* has knowledge that would be valuable to a student who wants to learn how to do the stunts. Albert might be a poor teacher—he might lack the instructor’s ability to express and impress—but Albert’s *state* is nonetheless such that it looks like the kind of thing a student would benefit from if Albert could ‘express and impress’. If this is right, Albert is in a state σ such that “it is possible for there to be some individual y such that y ’s exercise of σ underlies and explains y ’s successfully and intentionally ϕ -ing—that is, σ guides y in successfully, intentionally ϕ -ing” (177). It looks like Albert knows how to do the stunts.¹⁵

I’ve argued that the BM view predicts that both Pat and Albert know how to perform the stunts although neither is able to perform the stunts. This might seem like a win for BM, who set out to develop an account according to which Entailment is false. Here we have two knowers-how without ability. However, the cost is that *Albert knows how to do the stunts, too*. BM clearly think this is counterintuitive since it’s why they appealed to Albert in the first place. And if they’re right, that not

¹⁴ I won’t press this, but I have a deeper worry here. One might wonder whether there is such a thing as a state that is distinctively action guiding. Are there kinds (or instances?) of knowledge that can’t guide action? (Consider, e.g., my knowledge that P should guide my answering questions like “P?” Is there a way of knowing P that doesn’t entail my ability to answer whether P?)

¹⁵ Here, BM might point out that although Albert knows what muscle movements to make and when to make them, his knowledge doesn’t amount to knowing how those movements constitute the target action type, performing the stunt. Albert’s expertise provides him with knowledge at a different level of description than Pat’s—Pat’s amounts to knowing how those muscle movements constitute the target action type. *This*, they might say, is why Pat knows how *to* perform the stunts while Albert merely knows how *one* performs them. However, I don’t think this works. This is for two reasons: (1) this isn’t a reason to think Albert’s state *doesn’t* satisfy their definition of knowledge-how-*to*; (2) Albert’s expertise *is* about how to perform the stunts—he’s a physiologist who has applied himself to studying ski stunts. We have reason to think he *does* know about muscle movements under the right level of description, same as Pat. So, this possible response is a non-starter. Thanks to Sandy Goldberg for drawing my attention to this.

many people will intuit that Albert knows how to perform the stunts,¹⁶ it's a failure of the BM view that it can't rule out Albert's know-how.

Here is what the argument of this section has been. BM appeal to *Ski Instructor* to show that knowledge-how can occur without corresponding ability. Pat has the knowledge-how without ability. To the objector who responds that Pat has mere knowledge-how-*one* and not the target knowledge-how-*to*,¹⁷ BM recommend Albert—someone who has knowledge-how-*one* while clearly lacking Pat's *je ne sais quoi*. We are supposed to see that Pat's *je ne sais quoi* just is his knowing-how-*to* because it's what Albert lacks. What makes the difference, on the BM view, is that Pat's state is action-guiding while Albert's is not. However, once we agree that Pat's state is action guiding, the pressure becomes overwhelming to say the same thing of Albert. We have no reason to think Albert's state isn't the same as Pat's. If this is right, then *Ski Instructor* gives us no reason to prefer the BM view over anti-intellectualism, which at least would not need to distinguish Albert from Pat.

At best, what SW and BM show with *Ski Instructor* is that knowledge-how-*one* comes without ability. But this isn't the kind of knowledge-how that either the intellectualist or the anti-intellectualist cared to account for in the first place.¹⁸ Before I move on, it is worth noticing that *Ski Instructor* brings out a more general point: once we fix the relevant sense of know-how (knowledge-how-*to*), it becomes very difficult to see how someone who knows how could fail to have the corresponding ability. As soon as we agree that Pat knows, of some contextually relevant way *w* to perform a certain ski stunt, that *w* is a way for *him* to perform that stunt, and Pat entertains the proposition about *w* under a PMP, it becomes difficult to see why he wouldn't have the ability perform the stunt. Applied to the BM view, as soon as we allow that Pat's conception of how to perform the stunt is action-guiding, it's

¹⁶ I take this to be a reason to judge that Pat doesn't know how to perform the stunts, either.

¹⁷ As I did above, but see also Noë (2005), who mentions that Kent Bach is also on board for this objection. Carlotta Pavese (2021) also makes use of it.

¹⁸ See Glick (2012) for careful reasoning about the relevant sense of know-how.

difficult to see why he wouldn't have the ability to do the stunt in the way he knows how to. Of course, Pat is not alone. Intellectualists appeal to other cases as counterexamples to Entailment. In the next section I show that what was true of *Ski Instructor* is true of these other cases as well: they're either not cases of know-how in the relevant sense, or they're not instances of know-how without ability.

V. Maestra et al.

I've argued that *Ski Instructor* is not a counterexample to Entailment. The key point, so far, has been that Pat either fails to know how in the relevant sense (i.e., fails to know how *to*), or he knows how in the relevant sense and has the corresponding ability. Here I extend my argument to other cases and show that they share this structural feature.¹⁹

Here is a case from SW: "A master pianist who loses both of her arms in a tragic car accident still knows how to play the piano. But she has lost her ability to do so" (416).²⁰ Alva Noë (2005) calls this pianist 'Maestra'. Before the accident, Maestra indisputably knows how (in the relevant sense!) to play the piano, and she has the ability to play the piano. The thrust of this case, call it *Pianist*, is that it is counterintuitive to think Maestra loses her know-how just because she loses her hands (and, thereby, her ability to play the piano). So, it seems best to say that, after the accident, Maestra knows how to play the piano and lacks the ability to play the piano. *Pianist* represents a general kind of case: S knows how to φ and regularly exercises their ability to φ . S suddenly loses their ability to φ and yet *knows how to* φ .²¹ What I have to say about *Pianist* should apply just as well to other instances of this case type.

¹⁹ I will skip the cases that are too similar to *Ski Instructor* to merit independent treatment, but here some from BM (2011, p. 169): knowing how to run a marathon and being unable to (e.g., because of asthma), knowing how to dunk a basketball without being able to (e.g., because of inadequate height), and knowing how to sink a long, perfectly straight putt without being able to (because this is extremely difficult to do). Cf. Two example sentences from SW (2001, p. 426):

- (a) The warden of the prison knows how to escape from it.
- (b) The expert pitching coach knows how to pitch to a dangerous switch-hitter.

²⁰ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for convincing me of the importance of this case.

²¹ Cf. Hawley's (2003) amputee cyclist.

Before I respond, notice that even if Maestra after the accident has know-how (in the relevant sense) without ability, her case is not a counterexample to *Weak Entailment* (i.e., that knowing how to ϕ requires having had the ability to ϕ). I will argue that her case isn't a counterexample to *Strong Entailment*, either, but it's worth pointing out that if neither *Ski Instructor* nor *Pianist* is a counterexample to *Weak Entailment*, then the intellectualist has no case against *Weak Entailment*. This is significant. As BM see the debate, accepting *Weak Entailment* amounts to accepting the anti-intellectualist's thesis, that "having the ability to ϕ , or having had the ability to ϕ at some time in the past, is necessary for knowing how to ϕ " (167). What's more, if *Weak Entailment* is true, knowing how depends on ability in a meaningful way. And if knowing how is an epistemic state, as the intellectualist argues, it will behoove the intellectualist to either (a) offer an account of how epistemic states in general depend on ability, or else (b) offer an account of why knowing how is unique among epistemic states.²²

I do not think that only *Weak Entailment* is true, so here is a first-pass defense of *Strong Entailment*. We intuit that Maestra knows how to play the piano after the accident,²³ but it matters whether her know-how amounts to knowledge-how-*to*, or mere knowledge-how-*one*. So let's take stock. It seems true that she is in the action-guiding state that BM argue knowing how *to* is.²⁴ But this doesn't mean that Maestra has the relevant knowledge-how-*to*. Recall the conclusion from above: if Pat knows how to do the ski stunts, then so does Albert. The same goes here: If Maestra knows how *to* play the piano, so does the theorist who's never touched a piano. Insofar as this consequence is counterintuitive, we don't have reason to think Maestra has the relevant know-how after the accident. So, let's try the SW view. It seems true that Maestra knows, of some way *w*, that *w* is a way she used to play the piano. So

²² To be fair, there are extant accounts of knowledge as ability that an intellectualist could endorse (see, e.g., Hyman 1999 and 2015, Kern 2017). Michael Kremer (2016) also develops a knowledge-as-ability view on Ryle's behalf, though I suspect that intellectualists such as SW and BM—who take themselves to be defending views opposed to Ryle's—would be disinclined to adopt a Rylean view of knowledge.

²³ Except where I indicate otherwise, the subject of discussion is Maestra *after* the accident.

²⁴ Even though the state can no longer guide *her* in successfully and intentionally playing the piano, it used to, so it can guide *someone* in successfully and intentionally playing the piano.

she knows, of w , that w is a way one *could* play the piano. But w isn't a way she could play the piano *now*, after the accident, so it's not a way for *her* to play the piano. Circumstances have changed too drastically. Maestra no longer knows of a way she can play the piano, so it appears she no longer knows how in the relevant sense. If this is right, *Pianist* is not a counterexample to *Strong Entailment*.

Now, here is an objection to my first-pass defense of *Strong Entailment*. One might think I get my intended result—that Maestra does not know how *to*—only because I've failed to acknowledge this: that ascriptions of know-how are relativized to normal circumstances.²⁵ For example, when we say “Hannah knows how to ride a bike,” we do not typically mean that Hannah knows how to ride a bike even in a hurricane or on a mountain trail. We mean she knows how to ride a bike under circumstances normal for bike riding. So when we say “Maestra knows how to play the piano” we don't mean that she knows how to play the piano *even without hands*. We mean that she knows how *to* play the piano in normal circumstances, circumstances in which she has hands.

I can think of a few ways to understand ‘S knows how to φ in normal circumstances’, and so a few ways to fill out the objection. I will focus on two.²⁶ The first way to understand the ascription is to take ‘in normal circumstances’ to qualify the action or task that S knows how to do. Katherine Hawley (2003) argues that circumstances differentiate tasks in this way. She compares knowing how to get upstairs with a broken leg with knowing how to get upstairs in the dark, or in high heels. Hawley suggests that when we say something like ‘S knows how to get upstairs’, we pick out one or more tasks within a family of tasks like this. So, when we say ‘Maestra knows how to play the piano’, the task we pick out is ‘playing the piano with hands’ and *not* ‘playing the piano without hands’. This way of

²⁵ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for convincing me of the importance of relativizing know-how ascriptions to normal circumstances.

²⁶ Briefly, here's one that's a non-starter. One could take ‘in normal circumstances’ to qualify the conditions for S's knowing how to φ : only under normal circumstances does S know how to φ . But this can't be the substance of an objection to Entailment, because this amounts to conceding that Maestra does not know how to play the piano after the accident, when circumstances are no longer ‘normal’ for her. What's more, this way of understanding know-how ascriptions will fail to capture whatever it is that remains the same for Maestra after the accident—the cognitive/epistemic state that doesn't change just because she lost her hands.

understanding know-how ascriptions seems to capture what remains the same for Maestra after the accident—what she knows how to do is how to play the piano with hands.

This seems to me like a fine way of reasoning about circumstances and action types, but it does not reinstate *Pianist* as a counterexample to *Strong Entailment*. Let's grant that the activity φ at issue in *Pianist* is *playing the piano with hands* and that Maestra knows how to play-the-piano-with-hands. For *Pianist* to be a counterexample to Entailment, it must be that Maestra lacks the corresponding ability, the ability to play-the-piano-with-hands.²⁷ Whether she lacks this ability will depend on how we understand ability. We have two notions of 'ability' to choose between.²⁸ Here I follow Alfred Mele's (2003) formulation of the distinction: a *general* practical ability is the "kind of ability to φ that we attribute to agents even though we know they have no opportunity to φ at the time of attribution" (p. 447; I've replaced Mele's notation, 'A', with ' φ '); what Mele calls a '*specific* practical ability' is the kind of ability that an agent lacks when they lack the opportunity to φ . A pastry chef who has the *general* ability to make laminated dough does not have the *specific* ability to make laminated dough when they've run out of butter. Parties to the debate about know-how will agree that specific ability is far too fickle to match with a phenomenon, knowing how, that we understand to be relatively stable. After all, the pastry chef without butter still knows how to make laminated dough even though they are not able (i.e., specifically able) to make laminated dough here and now, without butter. So, the notion of ability at issue in our know-how ascriptions must be general ability.²⁹

²⁷ The point here is not that we should distinguish practical abilities this way, but that *if* we specify the φ that S knows how to do in this fine-grained way, as Hawley suggests, we must specify the φ that S has the ability to do in the same way. See Will Small (2017b) for compelling reasons not to distinguish abilities in such a fine-grained way.

²⁸ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for convincing me of the importance of specifying the relevant notion of 'ability'.

²⁹ There is a second distinction that's worth mentioning. One notion of 'ability' is entailed by success at a given action type. Here's an example from Mandelkern (forthcoming): Susie is an ordinary five-year-old who hits a bullseye. There's a sense in which she *was able* to hit the bullseye. But there's also a sense in which she doesn't *have the ability* to hit the bullseye—she doesn't have the ability to hit the bullseye *with control*. Even the anti-intellectualist about know-how will agree that Susie doesn't know how to hit the bullseye just because she succeeded at hitting the bullseye. So, it's this 'with-control' notion of ability that is relevant to our ascriptions of know-how.

What matters to whether *Pianist* is a counterexample to *Strong Entailment* is whether Maestra has the *general* ability to play-the-piano-with-hands after the accident. I see no reason to think she loses this ability. Notice that it's the *specific* ability to play-the-piano-with-hands that she loses when she loses her hands. Consider a Maestra whose hands are miraculously restored to her, or who learns to use prosthetics. What she gains with this change in her circumstances is the *specific* ability to play-the-piano-with-hands. This wouldn't be possible if she *didn't* already have the corresponding general ability.³⁰ So, on this analysis of 'normal circumstances', it turns out that Maestra knows how to play-the-piano-with-hands *and* has the relevant ability to play-the-piano-with-hands. *Pianist* is not a counterexample to *Strong Entailment*.

Now consider instead an SW analysis of 'S knows how to φ in normal circumstances'. An SW analysis might go like this: S knows, of some way w , that w is a way for S to φ in normal circumstances, where 'normal circumstances' qualifies what S knows.³¹ On this analysis, the w (about which S knows that it is a way for them to φ) must be such that, in normal circumstances, S could φ in way w . About Maestra, then, SW might say she knows, of some way w , that w is a way in which she could play the piano if she had hands. Notice that this is knowledge of a counterfactual way, the same kind of knowledge I ascribed to Pat in section III. Here I pick up that thread.

Let's grant that the S who knows, of some way w , that w is a way in which they could φ in normal circumstances, knows how in the relevant sense. Applied to *SKI Instructor* and *Pianist*, both Pat and Maestra know how in the relevant sense. Now, say that S is not in normal circumstances (just as Pat and Maestra are not). This means that they cannot now φ in the way they know how to. The crucial point, however, is that it does not follow that S lacks the relevant ability to φ . This was the point of

³⁰ The verdict I reach here is similar in spirit to what Noë (2005) says about Maestra, but our reasons differ.

³¹ For this to be true, of course, S would have to entertain w under a practical mode of presentation. Let's grant that S, for any S at issue here, does.

the pastry chef with no butter: that ‘cannot φ ’ does not entail ‘lacks the general ability to φ ’. So the question we have to answer about S is this: does S have the corresponding ability? Predictably, I think they do. The reason is that if they didn’t have the general ability to φ in way w , then we would have no reason to think w is a way in which they *could* φ (if circumstances were normal).³² To see this, think of the pastry chef again. The pastry chef knows, of a way w , that w is a way in which they could make laminated dough if they had butter. It would be odd to think that they knew of a way w in which they *could* make laminated dough (if they had butter) if they didn’t have the general ability to make laminated dough in that way. So here is what we should say about *Pianist*: if Maestra knows, of a way w , that w is a way in which she *could* play the piano if she had hands, then she has the ability to play the piano in way w . She just can’t exercise her ability without hands. About *Ski Instructor*: if Pat knows of a way w in which he *could* do the ski stunts if he did not suffer from arthritis, then he has the ability to do the ski stunts in way w . He just can’t exercise his ability while he has arthritis. So, if Maestra and Pat have know-how in the relevant sense, then they have the abilities that correspond to their know-how, too.

So far, the picture is this: neither *Ski Instructor* nor *Pianist* is a counterexample to Entailment. Because the intellectualist depended on these cases to reject Entailment, we end up with no compelling reasons to reject Entailment. It is, however, worth entertaining two more cases, since they seem to have unique features. In one, a knower-how seems to have technical or procedural knowledge-how-*to* without corresponding ability. *Pi*, from BM, is this kind of case:

Pi. Louis, a competent mathematician, knows how to find the n^{th} numeral, for any numeral n , in the decimal expansion of π . He knows the algorithm and knows how to apply it in a given case. However, because of principled computational limits, Louis (like all ordinary human beings) is unable to find the 10^{46} numeral in the decimal expansion of π . (170)

³² See David Boylan (forthcoming) for a linguistic analysis that leads to a very similar conclusion.

This is not a case of know-how without ability. If Louis can embark on calculating the 10^{46} numeral in the decimal expansion of π , then he has the ability that corresponds to his knowing-how to calculate the 10^{46} numeral in the decimal expansion of π . What's more, he can exercise this ability. It's just that he'll never complete the activity that is the exercise of his ability. So this kind of case is not a counterexample to Entailment.

Finally, consider a swampman case:

Swampman. Alpha is an adult human who knows how to swim. Omega is the Davidsonsque swampman counterpart to Alpha, and Omega comes into being at time t . Omega is a cognitive and physical duplicate of Alpha, but Omega has never gone swimming. (see BM 2011, fn. 17)

Does Omega know how to swim? BM think that if Alpha knows how to swim, then so does Omega. As-is, though, this case isn't a compelling case of know-how without ability because it gives us no reason to think that Omega *lacks* the ability to swim. Never-having-gone-swimming does not entail inability to swim. Try a variation:

Swampman II. Phelps is an adult human who knows how to swim. Schmelps is the Davidsonsque swampman counterpart to Phelps (currently age 38). Schmelps comes into being at time t , where t is 50 years from now. Schmelps is a cognitive and physical duplicate of Phelps, age 88 at t , but Schmelps has never gone swimming.

The idea behind this variation is that, because Schmelps is a duplicate of an 88-year-old Phelps, his physical condition is such that he probably can't swim. So, let's grant that Schmelps can't swim. There are two possibilities for response here, depending on how we fill out the case. Here's the first: grant that Schmelps has the relevant knowledge-how-*to* because he knows, of a way w , that w is a way he *could* swim in circumstances normal for swimming (i.e., circumstances in which he's in the physical condition of a 38-year-old Phelps). If Schmelps *could* swim in way w if he were in this physical condition, then we should say the same of Schmelps that we said of Pat and Maestra. Schmelps has the ability to swim when he's in the physical condition of 38-year-old Phelps, it's just that he can't

exercise it now.³³ Here's the second possibility for response: deny that Schmelps has the ability to swim because his circumstances are not normal for swimming, he's not in the necessary physical condition. Now it's just implausible that Schmelps knows how *to* swim, that he knows, of a way *w*, that *w* is a way for *him* to swim.³⁴ It's implausible that Schmelps knows how in the relevant sense. Either way, whether we grant that Schmelps has knowledge-how-*to* or that he lacks the ability to swim, *Swampman II* is not a counterexample to Entailment.

VI. Concluding remarks

Ski Instructor and *Pianist* are the intellectualist's best cases against Entailment, and I've argued that neither in fact counts against Entailment. The pattern that emerges in *Ski Instructor* and *Pianist* applies broadly to cases of these types, where the pattern is this: either S fails to know how to φ in the relevant sense, or S has the corresponding ability to φ .³⁵

What this pattern suggests is that the debate itself is fixed on a notion of know-how that entails ability. One might think this means that the subject of debate is fixed in the anti-intellectualist's favor. However, this is not so. I've shown that neither SW nor BM develop a view of know-how according to which knowing how does not entail ability. So, Entailment is actually consistent with these two prominent intellectualist views. The intellectualist who notices this—that intellectualism is consistent

³³ It might seem that this claim in Schmelps' case is less plausible than it was above, in the discussion of Pat and Maestra. If it does seem less plausible, it may be because there's something odd about including an agent's general physical condition in what it is for circumstances to be normal for an action type. I think this oddity is merely rhetorical—specifying whatever feature of Schmelps' physical condition makes it such that he can't swim should resolve the trouble. Nonetheless, one might think that we shouldn't count physical conditions as features of 'normal circumstances' for action types. I'm not sure this second option can be a principled exclusion, since we would want to say that a runner with a sprained ankle is not in circumstances normal for running. Finally, one might think the implausibility has something to do with the permanence or irreversibility of Schmelps' physical condition, but there's always the philosopher's solution to what seems permanent: a pill or remedy that works only in thought experiments or science fiction.

³⁴ Cf. Glick (2012), about the feeble octogenarian who was a former ski jumper (p. 552).

³⁵ Notice that it's consistent with my view that some know-how does not entail ability. It's just that the know-how that does not entail ability is not the target know-how. Cf. Glick (2012), where he argues that at least some knowledge how to φ is the ability to φ .

with Entailment—should see the debate differently: what’s central to the debate is not whether knowing how to ϕ entails ability to ϕ , but whether ability to ϕ *suffices* for knowing how to ϕ . It turns out that anti-intellectualism is distinct from its counterpart only insofar as it rejects the necessity of *knowing* for knowing-how. I’ll just point out that this makes anti-intellectualism a tenuous position, since it follows that knowledge is not necessary for skillful action. I doubt the anti-intellectualist can show this without over-intellectualizing knowledge itself.³⁶

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³⁶ A full defense of these claims is the subject of another paper, but it’s worth pointing out that the anti-intellectualist has two hills to climb: (1) show that knowledge itself is not a kind of ability (as, e.g., Hyman 1999 and 2015, Kremer 2016, and Kern 2017 argue it is); (2) show that skillful or intelligent actions (actions on the basis of which we ascribe know-how) do not require knowledge for their success. I don’t think the anti-intellectualist can accomplish (2) without over-intellectualizing knowledge. (My hunch is that the cases anti-intellectualists appeal to depend on a rogue distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge; for brief discussion, see, e.g., Stanley and Krakauer 2013. Cf. Joshua Habgood-Coote’s 2019 notion of what it is to over-intellectualize knowledge-how.)

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