The Synthetic Uninformative
(was “Synthetic Non-Accruable Information”)

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Suppose that Alice knows that $p$ because

i) She is informed that $p$, that is, she holds the (true) information that $p$; and

ii) She can provide the right account (justification, explanation) for $p$. 
Question:

what happens when Alice is also responsible for the system $S$ to be in the state modeled (described, represented, captured…) by $p$?

That is: what is the informational analysis of the so-called maker’s knowledge?
A SIMPLE MODEL

1. A system $S$ that changes (trans. states)
2. **Alice** the maker, the agent $A$ that changes $S$
3. A change $t$ in $S$, from $S_1$ to $S_2$
4. The message, $m$, that $p: t$ has occurred
5. **Bob** the observer, the agent $B$ that observes $t$
6. **Carol** the receiver, the agent $C$ to whom Bob communicates that $p$ through $m$.

A game...
S: chess game
A: white player
T: King’s pawn moved two steps
M: e.g. in English notation “e2-e4”
P: [the move]
B: black player
C: receiver of m
What is the maker’s knowledge?

Alice, the maker A has

1) information about t

and/or

2) an account for the information about t

that the observer B and the receiver C lack.

Defended hypothesis: 2 not 1.

(not e.g.: M’s K = know-how)
Suppose we broadcast e2-e4 to A, B, and C simultaneously.
The information is the same for all agents (so not 1) but neither A nor B can be informed (provided with the information) that e2-e4, by m, only C can.

So A’s making and B’s experiencing t are different from, and informationally more similar than, C’s receiving the message that e2-e4.
What is the difference between A’s and B’s states?
If Bob is informed about $t$, then the perceptual conditions that make Bob informed (e.g. a reliable vision) are different from the poietic conditions that make the message $e_2$-$e_4$ true. The sender of $m$ cannot become informed by $m$.

This is an anti-idealist conclusion. Perceiving something does not make that something to be the case. Bob’s is the sender’s information.
If Alice is informed about t, then the experiential conditions that make Alice informed are the same poietic conditions that make the message e2-e4 true.

The source of m cannot be informed by m.

This is a constructionist conclusion. Poiesis and alethisation are two sides of the same coin.

Alice’s is the source’s information. Her account of t is different from Bob’s. How?
To understand how Alice’s account (and hence her knowledge) differs from Bob’s we can use the classic categories of

a) analytic vs synthetic
b) necessary vs contingent
c) a priori vs a posteriori

Alice’s information about \( t \) is

a) synthetic, not analytic
b) contingent, not necessary
c) but is it a priori or a posteriori?
It is not a priori, so in a ‘negative’ sense it is a posteriori = negation of a priori. But is it a posteriori in a strong sense? Set of contraries of a priori.

Through experience (Alice), by experience (Bob), by proxy experience (communication) (Carol).

Alice’s information about t is the source’s information (synthetic and contingent), and it is a posteriori in a weak sense, through experience.

Moreover, in order to provide an account of t, Alice does not need to consult experience at all. Actually, her account for making t the case comes logically before m being true so it is a priori.
POSSIBLE HYPOTHESES

Alice (the maker) A has

1) the same synthetic and contingent information about t, as B and C (perhaps this explains epistemology’s disinterest), but it is unclear whether it is also a posteriori;

2) a source’s a priori account for the information about t that she creates which both the observer B and the receiver C lack.

Maker’s knowledge is a hybrid: a posteriori information + a priori account = poietic.

Poietic knowledge has its place in the overall map of distinctions logically available.
### SIMPLE MODEL

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1) A priori vs a posteriori not the right LoA, insufficiently finely grained. Through experience not just after. Poietic = through experience.

2) Synthetic uninformative defines information that \( p \) for the maker of \( t \) to which \( p \) refers. Criterion to identify Alice as the maker.

3) Neither Alice nor Bob can be informed by \( m \) and this is consistent with an analysis of perception in which the mutual information between the state of the system (e.g. pawn moved) and the information about that state (e.g. e-2-e4) is 1.
4) Alice need not be informed about the fact that she is informed about \( t \). Negation of II thesis (aka S4, K3, KK, reflective thesis positive introspection): 
\[
\Box \phi \rightarrow \Box \Box \phi.
\]
Consistent with B logic for being informed.

5) The message \( m \) works as a trigger for both A and B to make possible \( \Box \Box \phi \) (see double channel explanation of II).
CONCLUSION

In ethics I have tried to show that standard approaches are concerned with Alice (the source/agent when in fact more emphasis should be placed on Bob, the receiver/patient (play with the black).

In epistemology I have tried to show that standard approaches are concerned with Bob, the receiver/observer, when in fact more emphasis should be placed on Alice, the source/maker (play with the white).
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SOURCE
This presentation is partly based on Information – A Very Short Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2010) and The Philosophy of Information (Oxford University Press, 2011).

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6) Making \( t \) happen and therefore being informed that \( p \) because of such a making is intertwined with the perception that one is making \( t \) happen. Problem: Alice may no longer see clearly whether she knows that \( p \) because she made \( t \) happen or because she saw herself making \( t \) happen. Solution: making \( t \) happen and perceiving oneself making \( t \) happen can be decoupled. E.g., Alice may control Bob’s chessboard remotely (correspondence chess). If she knows that Bob’s chessboard is in state \( S \), then this is so even if she cannot perceive herself making a difference to it.
7) Bob and Carol are both outside the system producing \( t \) and hence \( e_2-e_4 \). Alice is part of the system. As the source of \( t \), Alice does not hold yet the information that \( p \), she is part of the system that made \( t \). Strictly speaking she is dealing with (generating) information as something, not about something. She holds the information that \( p \) only if she correlates her information as something (her making \( t \) happen) to the information about that something, the information about \( e_2-e_4 \).