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| <b>Institution: University of Aberdeen</b>   |
| <b>Unit of Assessment: UoA 32 Philosophy</b>   |
| <b>Title of case study: Engaging the Public with Philosophy: <i>The 10-Minute Puzzle podcasts</i></b>  |
| <p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Promoting public diffusion of philosophical research via new and online media, <i>The 10-Minute Puzzle</i> podcast series seeks to engage lay audiences with some of the central puzzles driving contemporary research in analytic philosophy. As of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013, there had been over 63,000 downloads.</p> <p>The series has two interrelated aims: to provide an innovative springboard for listeners (who may have had no previous exposure to philosophy) to engage with these puzzles on their own, and to provide a new, free resource for educators at all levels to stimulate interest in contemporary philosophy at any age.</p> <p>As of September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the three episodes of <i>The 10-Minute Puzzle</i> described in this case study had been downloaded 14,418 times, with downloads continuing steadily.</p>   |
| <p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The three episodes of this case study relate to the findings of two externally funded research projects:</p> <p><b>Project 1: “Basic Knowledge”—Podcast episodes ‘Lotteries’ and ‘Lotteries II’</b></p> <p>The AHRC-funded ‘Basic Knowledge’ project (PI: <b>Wright</b>; grant value: £650,000) ran in Aberdeen in the period 2009-2012. Two episodes entitled ‘Lotteries’ and ‘Lotteries II’ stemmed from research activity carried out under this project, in particular by <b>Dodd</b> (“Basic Knowledge” Postdoctoral Research Fellow, 2009-2012), and <b>McGlynn</b> (NIP Postdoctoral Research Fellow, 2010-2012). One of the main aims of the project was to better understand seemingly compelling sceptical lines of reasoning, according to which we have much less knowledge than we think we do. So-called ‘Lottery-scepticism’ was a prominent focus of the project, The research activity underpinning the podcasts was published in four peer-reviewed journals (<i>Noûs</i>, <i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i>, <i>Erkenntnis</i> and <i>Episteme</i>).</p> <p><b>Project 2: “Relativism and Rational Tolerance”—Podcast episode ‘Faultless Disagreement’</b></p> <p>The underlying research for this podcast was provided by the seminars, workshops and conferences held during the AHRC-funded ‘Contextualism and Relativism’ project in 2009 and, later, during the Leverhulme-funded ‘Relativism and Rational Tolerance’ project (PI: <b>Wright</b>; grant value: £250,000). Underpinning the development of this episode is the collaborative work carried out within these projects by the research team (<b>Wright</b>, <b>Sweeney</b>, <b>Plakias</b>, <b>Baker</b>, <b>Ferrari</b>) which led to two publications by <b>Baker</b> (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, ‘Relativism and Rational Tolerance’ project, 2012-present) in two peer-reviewed journals (<i>Australasian Journal of Philosophy</i>, <i>Philosophical Studies</i>).</p> <p><b>From Research to Impact</b></p> <p>This initiative was mainly developed by <b>McGlynn</b> (Postdoctoral Research Fellow 2010-2012) and <b>Luzzi</b> (Outreach and Knowledge Transfer Officer, 2010-present), using research produced by the collaborative efforts of various members of the Northern Institute of Philosophy and their suggestions on how to best present this to a non-academic audience. <b>Luzzi</b> and <b>McGlynn</b> liaised with research colleagues during script-writing, attended project seminars and events where</p> |

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relevant topics were discussed to acquire the necessary research background and, wherever possible, attended research seminars where drafts of the underpinning research outputs were presented, discussed and refined.

### 3. References to the research (all outputs available from HEI on request)

- Dodd, D. (2012). Safety, Skepticism and Lotteries, *Erkenntnis* 77: 95-120.
- Dodd, D. (2011). Against Fallibilism, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 89: 665-685.
- McGlynn, A. (2013). Believing Things Unknown, *Noûs* 47: 385-407.
- McGlynn, A. (2012). Justification As 'Would-Be' Knowledge, *Episteme* 9: 361-376.
- Baker, C. (2012). Indexical Contextualism and the Challenges from Disagreement, *Philosophical Studies* 157 (1): 107-123.

### 4. Details of the impact

The project's rationale was, firstly, that the best and most gripping contemporary philosophical puzzles require no prior knowledge of philosophy (if explained clearly and concisely enough); secondly, that there is a growing demand for academic podcasts among laypersons, with the internet providing a user-friendly and easily-accessed platform for distribution.

#### 'Lotteries' and 'Lotteries II' Podcast Episodes

In 'Lotteries' and 'Lotteries II', the lottery puzzle was presented in the form of a dilemma: can you know that your lottery ticket has lost, after the draw but prior to the announcement? If you can, then it is hard to explain why you bought it in the first place, why you are unwilling to sell it for 1p, or why it's improper for you to assert 'I know my ticket has lost'. If you cannot, then any explanation of this knowledge failure seems to generalize to many other propositions that you ordinarily think you do know, e.g. that your car is now parked where you left it, or that you will go to work tomorrow. The podcast considers some of the standard responses to this puzzle and outlines their advantages and the problems that beset them. The debate on issues raised by Dodd's 2012 paper is traced in some detail.

Work on the episode script of 'Lotteries' began in September 2011 and recording and editing took place in mid-October 2011. The episode 'Lotteries' was first made available for download on October 16, 2011. As of September 19th, 2013, it had been downloaded 5,808 times. This served as the foundation for more in-depth discussion of the philosophical issues arising from lotteries, with McGlynn's recently worked-out views providing a strong impetus. Work on the episode 'Lotteries II' began in early May 2012, and the complete episode was first made available for download on June 12, 2012. As of September 19th, 2013, this episode had been downloaded 1,728 times.

#### 'Faultless Disagreement' Podcast Episode

In 'Faultless Disagreement', the debate over whether and how faultless disagreement ought to be accommodated is presented. The driving question of this debate is: is it possible for two people to genuinely disagree about some gustatory, aesthetic, or moral matter without either party being somehow mistaken? The podcast considers the contextualist, realist and relativist replies, and explains the limits of these responses observed in the current literature. Work on this episode began in early November 2011, with weekly *Relativism and Rational Tolerance* project seminars providing a fertile backdrop. 'Faultless Disagreement' was made available for download on Dec 14, 2011. As of September 19th, 2013, it had been downloaded 6,882 times.

By the same date the three episodes in *The 10-Minute Puzzle* had been downloaded a total of 14,418 times. *The 10-Minute Puzzle* has been generally well-received on the internet. It has a mailing list of 67 people and the online listener survey has been completed by 27 listeners, who rated the quality of the episodes an average rating of 8.03/10). Of the eight listeners who are teachers, 7 had not used *The 10-Minute Puzzle* as a teaching resource, but 7 stated they will use

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episodes as a teaching resource in the future.

**Online coverage/mentions**

*The 10-Minute Puzzle* has been mentioned in several blogs, including:

- <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2011/08/ten-minute-philosophical-puzzle-podcasts.html>
- <http://tar.weatherson.org/2012/04/05/philosophy-podcasts/>
- <http://insocrateswake.blogspot.co.uk/2011/06/10-minute-puzzle-podcasts.html>  
'Definitely worth checking out'
- <http://philosophy.tamucc.edu/story/aberdeen-ten-minute-puzzles>  
'A splendid series...excellent—albeit brief—introductions to thought-provoking puzzles'
- <http://crookedtimber.org/2012/04/05/philosophy-podcasts/>
- <http://corpuscularphilosophy.blogspot.co.uk/2011/08/some-puzzles.html>
- <http://www.philosophyofaction.com/Puzzles---Paradoxes.html>
- [http://www.philjoyce.com/online\\_philosophy/philosopher.shtml](http://www.philjoyce.com/online_philosophy/philosopher.shtml)

*The 10-Minute Puzzle* also featured in a recent list of the best philosophy podcasts:

- [http://www.reddit.com/r/philosophy/comments/11zcba/the\\_best\\_philosophy\\_podcasts/](http://www.reddit.com/r/philosophy/comments/11zcba/the_best_philosophy_podcasts/)  
'Highly recommended'

Some comments from the online survey:

'They are 12 minutes long. And a \*heap\* of fun to listen to and consider!'

'Your show is what I was looking for. I have a passion for Philosophy and for puzzles like the ones you talk about. I don't have much free time, so I'm glad your podcasts are short.'

'I have very little knowledge of contemporary philosophy - the podcasts have been very good at laying out the information in a way I can understand and remaining interesting.'

'Thank you for the great podcast!'

'Keep up the good work!'

'Good stuff!'

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

Download data, including breakdown by episode, for *The 10-Minute Puzzle* can be found at:  
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/philosophy/nip/tenminutepuzzle/downloads>

Survey results for *The 10-Minute Puzzle* can be found at:  
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/philosophy/nip/tenminutepuzzle/result>