

This thesis examines the nature of epistemic justification. Justification is one among several different epistemic properties by which we evaluate beliefs. Since we deeply care about having beliefs that are justified, it is important to establish how we come to have justification for our beliefs. In the epistemological literature, there are two overarching approaches to this task. On the one hand, internalism claims that justification in some special sense depends upon one's internal mental states, whereas externalism, on the other hand, denies that this is the case. The thesis takes a closer look at the internalism-externalism distinction, and it defends and develops a particular brand of internalism, both in general and with respect to specific sources of justification—such as testimony and memory.



Jonathan Egeland Harouny
Is a philosopher at Stockholm University. He works on epistemology, philosophy of science, and certain aspects of the history of philosophy.

ISBN 978-91-7911-066-6

Department of Philosophy

Internalism and the Nature of Justification

Jonathan Egeland Harouny



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Academic dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy at Stockholm University to be publicly defended on Wednesday 22 April 2020 at 13.00 in hörsal 7, hus D, Universitetsvägen 10 D.

Abstract

There are many important dimensions of epistemic evaluation, one of which is justification. We don't just evaluate beliefs for truth, reliability, accuracy, and knowledge, but also for justification. However, in the epistemological literature, there is much disagreement about the nature of justification and how it should be understood. One of the controversies that has separated the contemporary epistemological discourse into two opposing camps has to do with the internalism-externalism distinction. Whereas internalists defend certain core assumptions about justification from the pre-Gettier tradition, externalists generally think that the traditional conception is untenable and should be replaced.

In this compilation thesis, I argue for, defend, and develop a particular brand of internalism, both in general and with respect to specific sources of justification. In papers 1 and 2, I defend a couple of well-known arguments for *mentalism* and *accessibilism*. Moreover, I also point out how prominent versions of these theses are vulnerable to serious problems (e.g., about over-intellectualization and vicious regresses). Part of my goal in the first couple of papers is to figure out what commitments the internalist should take on in order to avoid the externalist's objections, while at the same time receiving support from considerations that have motivated internalism in the past. In papers 3 and 4, I start from the assumption that mentalism is true and attempt to answer the following questions: 1) which non-factive mental states can play a justification-conferring role with respect to empirical belief? And 2) why does this set of states play the epistemic role it does? In response to question 1, I argue that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance. In response to question 2, I argue that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are one's strongly representational states, and that strongly representational states necessarily provide support to certain empirical propositions. Having done so, I then defend mentalism about scientific evidence from a couple of prominent objections in the recent literature. Lastly, in papers 5 and 6, I argue for a particular brand of internalism about testimonial and memorial justification and show how that position has a dialectical advantage over its main competitors.

Keywords: *Justification, Internalism, Evidence, Rationality, Testimony, Memory.*

Stockholm 2020

<http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:su:diva-179085>

ISBN 978-91-7911-066-6
ISBN 978-91-7911-067-3

Department of Philosophy

Stockholm University, 106 91 Stockholm



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Jonathan Egeland Harouny



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ISBN print 978-91-7911-066-6

ISBN PDF 978-91-7911-067-3

Printed in Sweden by Universitetservice US-AB, Stockholm 2020

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Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisors, Åsa Wikforss and Mikael Janvid. I have benefited a lot from their comments on my work. I am especially thankful for having had two supervisors, both of whom generally have different views about epistemology from those that are endorsed and argued for in this dissertation. I genuinely believe that the most valuable kinds of comment usually are those that come from someone who has a different perspective, and I am thankful for having had Åsa and Mikael as my philosophical sparring partners.

In the last months of 2018, I worked with Duncan Pritchard and Aidan McGlynn at the University of Edinburgh. Both of them provided helpful feedback, and my papers have no doubt improved as a result. Together with Aidan, the graduate students interested in epistemology at the University of Edinburgh invited me to join their reading group. Matt Jope, Michel Croce, and Angie O’Sullivan made our discussions both fun and stimulating.

During my time as an Early Stage Marie Curie Researcher in the Diaphora philosophy network, I have had the opportunity to participate in many different workshops and conferences, visit other philosophy departments at other Universities, and network with both junior and senior academics with similar interests from all over Europe. I want to thank the network coordinator, Sven Rosenkranz, and all the other members of the Diaphora network.

I would also like to thank everyone who is a part of the Department of Philosophy at Stockholm University. This includes the PhD students, the administration, and all the other members of the Faculty. I have also appreciated and benefited from discussing with my office-mate, Conrad Bakka.

I am grateful to my parents, Gerny Egeland Harouny and Raymond Harouny, whose encouragement and support I very much appreciate. My discussions with my mother throughout the years have been valuable in so many ways. Finally, I would like to thank my partner, Matilda Lindén, who means the world to me.

Introduction

1. From Knowledge to Justification

What is knowledge?¹ This age-old problem was for a long time thought to be solved. First, whenever you know that such-and-such is the case, then such-and-such must of course *be* the case. In other words, whatever is known must be *true*. Second, whenever you know that such-and-such is the case, you must *believe* that such-and-such is the case. In other words, you cannot know something without actually believing it. Third, whenever you know that such-and-such is the case, then you must also be *justified* in believing that such-and-such is the case; lucky guesses do not qualify as knowledge. So, in other words, whatever is known must also be justifiably believed.² These three ingredients were for the longest time thought to give us the essence of knowledge: they are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for knowledge. Indeed, philosophers as diverse as Plato (*Theaetetus*, 201; *Meno*, 98), Alfred Ayer (1956, 34), and Roderick Chisholm (1957, 16) all agreed that the following analysis of knowledge was correct:

The JTB analysis: S knows that p if and only if (i) p is true; (ii) S believes that p; and (iii) S is justified in believing that p.

However, philosophical problems have a tendency to reappear or reassert themselves, and the problem of knowledge is no exception. In 1963 Edmund Gettier published a three page article (really, it was only two and a half pages) which exposed a fatal flaw in the JTB analysis: it is possible to have a justified true belief that fails to qualify as knowledge. For

¹ Here, I'm only concerned with propositional knowledge, not practical or objectual knowledge.

² The kind of justification that is necessary for knowledge is, more specifically, *epistemic* justification; i.e., justification that somehow speaks in favor of the truth of the thing believed. Proponents of pragmatic encroachment will disagree with the claim that knowledge only requires justification of the epistemic kind insofar as they think that there are pragmatic conditions on knowledge, and that those conditions may have something to do with whether one has knowledge-level justification. This is, however, an issue that I will sidestep in the dissertation. For detailed discussions of pragmatic encroachment, see Fantl & McGrath (2002); Stanley (2005); and Schaffer (2006).

example, you may be justified in believing that p , competently deduce q from p , and, as a result, justifiably believe that q as a conclusion of the deduction (where p is false and q is true). Since you have a justified true belief that q is the case, that belief should qualify as knowledge according to the JTB analysis. However, since q was deduced from a false proposition, that may disqualify your belief in it from counting as knowledge. In order to make the counterexample more lucid, consider the following scenario:

Bob's wife just got diagnosed with cancer. While driving her home from the doctor's office, Bob forms the belief that one person in the car has cancer. However, as fate would have it, the diagnosis is wrong: Bob's wife doesn't have cancer. Moreover, unfortunately, and without knowing so himself, Bob actually has cancer. So there is after all one person in the car who does have cancer.

In the scenario, Bob has a justified true belief that one person in the car has cancer, but it fails to constitute knowledge.

After Gettier had provided counterexamples to the JTB analysis of knowledge, many epistemologists tried offering an amended analysis that would prove immune to counterexample.³ One prominent strategy was to figure out what the fourth "no-Gettier" condition that would turn justified true belief into knowledge was. Perhaps knowledge should be analyzed as JTB + something else.⁴ Another strategy was to somehow strengthen the justification condition so that the JTB analysis would give the right verdict about Gettier-cases.⁵ And a third strategy was to eliminate the justification condition altogether⁶ and, in certain cases, to replace it with something else, like reliable doxastic dispositions⁷ or proper causal etiology.⁸ However, the problem of knowledge has proved to be resilient.⁹ Indeed, now, more than fifty years after the publication of Gettier's paper, there is still little agreement among epistemologists about what the proper analysis of knowledge looks like, or even whether knowledge can be analyzed into constituent parts.

³ See Shope (1983).

⁴ See, e.g., Lehrer & Paxson (1969); Nozick (1981); and Sosa (1999).

⁵ See, e.g., Chisholm (1989, ch. 6).

⁶ See, e.g., Sartwell (1991; 1992).

⁷ See, e.g., Dretske (1989).

⁸ See, e.g., Goldman (1967; 1976).

⁹ As a result of its resilience, a recent strategy has been to argue that knowledge cannot be analyzed into necessary and sufficient conditions, or at the very least to argue that JTB-inspired analyses invariably will fail. See, e.g., Zagzebski (1994); and Williamson (2000).

Following the publication of Gettier’s seminal article was not only a heightened focus on knowledge, but also on the three elements comprising the traditional JTB analysis. And, after a while, justification came to supersede knowledge as the main object of epistemological study, surrounded by its own puzzles and problems.¹⁰ However, the reason for this was only partly due to the impact of Gettier’s article. Another major contributing factor had to do with the resilience of skeptical problems and the apparent inability of our reflections on knowledge to provide satisfying solutions to (or dissolutions of) them.¹¹ In a nutshell, the problem is that when we’re pressed by the skeptic to provide grounds for thinking that our everyday beliefs actually have a lot going for them, epistemically speaking, our knowledge attributions often, if not always, appear to be unjustified. After all, do we *really know* the things we usually take ourselves to know, or might we somehow simply be deceived into thinking that we do? There appears to be several ways in which we actually might be deceived at this very moment such that it undermines our knowledge.¹² Does this mean that the skeptic has won and that our beliefs don’t have anything going for them? Not necessarily. Whereas our knowledge attributions may seem vulnerable to a host of skeptical problems,¹³ our justification attributions don’t. This is arguably the most important insight provided by René Descartes’ Evil Demon thought experiment.

In the *First Meditation*, Descartes noted that a malevolent demon could be deceiving us about the external world by somehow making our perceptual experiences systematically unreliable, and, moreover, that this kind of deception appears to undermine our knowledge of

¹⁰ Although, as we will see, there is a recent trend among proponents of the so-called “knowledge-first” program to place knowledge at the heart of epistemological analysis and research. See, e.g., Williamson (2000). In my thesis, I will discuss and criticize certain core aspects of this species of externalism (see paper 4).

¹¹ For a comprehensive study of the history and development of skepticism as a philosophy, see Popkin (2003).

¹² Consider the following *Brain in a Vat (BIV)-Based Skeptical Argument*:

1. I don’t know that I’m not a BIV.
2. If I know that I have two hands, then I know that I am not a BIV.
3. Therefore, I don’t know that I have two hands.

The first premise is motivated by reflection on the BIV scenario, and the second premise is motivated by the plausible *Closure Principle*, according to which you know whatever you competently deduce from your knowledge. Moreover, the argument seems to undermine much of what we usually take ourselves to know since it doesn’t lose any of its strength if we replace the proposition that “I have two hands” from the second premise and the conclusion with any similar empirical proposition that we usually take ourselves to know.

¹³ Many strategies have of course been devised for responding to the skeptic. One of them, popularized by G. E. Moore (1939), is to argue that the first premise of the BIV-Based Skeptical Argument is false. The argument can be presented as a *modus ponens* as follows:

1. I know that I have two hands.
2. If I know that I have two hands, then I know that I am not a BIV.
3. Therefore, I know that I am not a BIV.

The second premise is motivated as before, by the Closure Principle above, whereas the first is motivated by the idea that one’s perceptual experience is able to justify beliefs with the same (or sufficiently similar) propositional content. For more on skeptical arguments and Moore-inspired responses, see Pryor (2000); and Pritchard (2012).

the world.¹⁴ After all, if my actual perceptual experiences are subjectively identical to those that I would have *if* I were deceived by such a demon, then it appears that I can't know anything about how the world really is on the basis of them.¹⁵ However, even though Descartes' demon may undermine my knowledge of the world, it doesn't appear to undermine the justification I have for my beliefs about it.¹⁶ Indeed, this fundamental intuition is the basis of Keith Lehrer and Steward Cohen's (1983) New Evil Demon Problem for reliabilism. According to reliabilism, a belief is justified (if and) only if it is the result of a reliable doxastic disposition. However, reliabilism seems to be false since a Cartesian demon could make our beliefs about the world unreliable without undermining their justificatory status. For the purposes of my dissertation, this is a very important argument which I will revisit later in the introduction and also in much greater detail in several of the papers to come.¹⁷

So, because of the various problems facing our reflections on knowledge, justification has in many ways become a central notion of contemporary epistemology. And that, moreover, is not a cop out. Regardless of whether or not our beliefs qualify as knowledge, we care deeply about their *rational standing*; i.e., whether, and to what degree, they are justified.^{18, 19} In the next section, I will therefore take a closer look at two of the debates that are responsible for shaping the contemporary epistemological discourse on the nature of justification.

¹⁴ This is how he presents the thought experiment: "I shall suppose, therefore, that there is, not a true God, who is the sovereign source of truth, but some evil demon, no less cunning and deceiving than powerful, who has used all his artifice to deceive me. I will suppose that the heavens, the air, the earth, colours, shapes, sounds and all external things that we see, are only illusions and deceptions which he uses to take me in. I will consider myself as having no hands, eyes, flesh, blood or senses, but as believing wrongly that I have all these things." (Descartes, 1641/1968, 100.)

¹⁵ The demon scenario, which functions as a possible explanation for the perceptual evidence we have, threatens to undermine our knowledge of the world, according to Descartes, since knowledge requires immunity from doubt and the scenario has the function of making us doubt the things we usually take ourselves to know. Moreover, it also threatens our knowledge even if we don't endorse a certainty or immunity from doubt condition on knowledge. Indeed, it does so by pointing out that our evidence is compatible with both the skeptical hypothesis and the "common sense" hypotheses that we usually take ourselves to know, and this might make us sufficiently doubtful of the veracity of the common sense hypotheses that we no longer can be said to know that they are true.

¹⁶ For a disagreeing perspective, see Unger (1975, ch. 5), who argues, in a manner that anticipates some of the central points made by Williamson (2000) over two decades later, that Descartes' demon even undermines the justification we have for our beliefs about the world.

¹⁷ See especially papers 1 and 3.

¹⁸ Some philosophers, like Cohen (1984), think that a justified belief is the same thing as a rational belief, whereas others, like Lyons (2016), think that rationality and justification are different epistemic properties.

¹⁹ Some philosophers, like Sutton (2007, 7) and Williamson (forthcoming, 24), will disagree insofar as they defend the identification of justification with knowledge.

2. The Nature of Justification

In the previous section we saw how it was that justification came to the fore in the epistemological discourse. In this section, we will take a closer look at the internalism-externalism debate and the foundationalism-coherentism debate, both of which are responsible for drawing some of the most important battle lines in the literature on justification. Let's begin with the internalism-externalism debate.

2.1 Internalism vs. Externalism

Philosophers often draw a distinction between two different kinds of justification.²⁰ First, you can have justification to believe a certain proposition, regardless of whether or not you actually believe it. For example, after watching the weather forecast you can have justification to believe that it will rain tomorrow, but without having to form that belief. Second, you can also have justifiably held beliefs (or other doxastic attitudes). For example, if you believe the proposition above—that it will rain tomorrow—in a way that is properly based on that which gives you justification to believe it, then your belief is justifiably held. There are many ways in which this distinction has been characterized. Following Roderick Firth (1978), we can say that the first kind of justification is justification in the *propositional* sense, whereas the second kind of justification is justification in the *doxastic* sense.²¹ Thus, propositional justification is a property of propositions (for an epistemic agent), whereas doxastic justification is a property of doxastic attitudes (had by an epistemic agent).

Now, epistemic internalism should most plausibly be construed as a theory about propositional justification.²² It is a theory about the propositions one has justification to believe/withhold/disbelieve, or, in other words, about the doxastic attitudes one has justification to hold (regardless of whether or not one actually holds them). (Henceforth, I'll therefore use "justification" as short for "propositional justification".) More specifically, in order to be an internalist one has to endorse either of two theses. The first thesis goes by the name *mentalism* (or *non-factive mentalism*), and it claims that facts about justification supervene upon one's non-factive mental states, where a mental state is non-factive just in

²⁰ Some even operate with three kinds of justification. See, e.g., Littlejohn (2012, 5).

²¹ For other ways of characterizing the same distinction, see Goldman (1979); Conee & Feldman (1985); Pryor (2005); and Smithies (forthcoming). Wedgwood (2017, 139-141) traces the distinction back to Aristotle.

²² There are of course those who construe it as a theory about doxastic justification (see, e.g., Conee & Feldman, 2001; and McCain, 2016). However, there are important reasons as to why that is problematic, some of which I will discuss later in the dissertation.

case it doesn't necessarily have true propositional content.^{23, 24} Thus, according to mentalism, there can be no change in the facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has justification (to a certain degree) to hold without a change in one's non-factive mental states.²⁵

The second thesis goes by the name *accessibilism* or *access internalism*, and it claims that there is an internalist accessibility condition on justification. More specifically, it says that facts about justification always are *a priori* accessible, where *a priori* is used in the traditional sense that a condition is *a priori* just in case it doesn't depend on any of the sense modalities.^{26, 27} Internalists are thus committed to accepting either mentalism or accessibilism (or both, of course).

Many arguments have been offered for internalism. One of the most prominent arguments for mentalism starts by describing a deception scenario in which a subject somehow is being deceived into having a large number of false perceptual beliefs. However, the internalist notes, despite having beliefs that are false and unreliably formed, they nevertheless appear to be just as justified as they would have been if the subject were in a corresponding good scenario (without any deception going on). And, the internalist argues, the best explanation for why that is so is that mentalism is true. After all, there must be something which the subjects in the good and bad scenarios have in common that explains

²³ Proponents of mentalism include Pollock & Cruz (1999); Conee & Feldman (2001); Wedgwood (2002); Smithies (2012a); and McCain (2016).

²⁴ Some proponents of mentalism, like Pollock & Cruz (1999) and Conee & Feldman (2001), formulate it as the view that facts about justification supervene upon one's mental states—not one's non-factive mental states. This, however, opens up for the possibility that mentalism, thus construed, might be an externalist view, since one's knowledge might be thought of as part of one's mental states. That being said, Conee and Feldman (2008) clarify that they think the supervenience base of justification is exhausted by one's non-factive mental states, or, more specifically, one's experiences. Moreover, since one's knowledge usually wasn't thought of as part of one's mental states until after the publication of Williamson's (2000) *Knowledge and Its Limits* (Cf. Williamson, 1995), Pollock & Cruz's mentalism should most naturally be interpreted as an internalist position.

²⁵ Supervenience is a reflexive, transitive and non-symmetric relation. The reason I formulate internalism (or mentalism, more specifically) in terms of supervenience, instead of focusing on relations like grounding or realization, which have become increasingly popular in contemporary metaphysics and philosophy of mind, is that it avoids many of the problems in the epistemological context which it incurs when it is used in metaphysics or philosophy of mind. For example, many philosophers think that the supervenience of the mental upon the physical is necessary but not sufficient for physicalism to be true. For more about relations of metaphysical dependence in the philosophy of mind, see Tiehen (forthcoming).

²⁶ Proponents of accessibilism include BonJour (1985); Moser (1985); Chisholm (1989); Fumerton (1995); Audi (1998); Steup (1999); and Smithies (2012b).

²⁷ Thus, according to my usage of the notion, the modes of *a priori* accessibility include not only reflection and reasoning, but also introspection and other cognitive mechanisms with an experiential aspect. For more on the distinction between narrow and broad notions of the *a priori*, see Casullo (2003, ch. 2).

Moreover, whereas the notion of *a priori* accessibility or knowability is able to capture the access internalist position, it plausibly fails in the case of physicalism. The problem, however, is opposite to that of supervenience: the *a priori* entailment of all truths from all actual physical truths appears to be sufficient but not necessary for physicalism to be true. Again, for more on this issue, see Tiehen (forthcoming).

why they appear to be equally justified in having the same beliefs²⁸—the most plausible candidate being their non-factive mental states. Indeed, mentalism *implies* that our intuitive judgments about the deception scenario—i.e., that the subject’s beliefs are just as justified as they would have been in the corresponding good scenario—are true.²⁹

In response, externalists have argued in either of two ways: (i) they have argued that we³⁰ don’t have intuitions to the effect that the subject in the deception scenario has justification for his beliefs; (ii) they have argued that although we do have the intuitions which the internalist reports, mentalism doesn’t provide the best explanation for why that is so.³¹ In the first paper of my thesis I respond to both kinds of argument.³² Moreover, my strategy for doing so is outlined in the dissertation synopsis later in the introduction.

A somewhat similar internalist argument, but this time for accessibilism, starts by describing a scenario in which a subject forms a belief using an *unfamiliar faculty*—i.e., a faculty for belief production which a subject has, but without any awareness of the fact that he has it or of why beliefs produced by that faculty should be true. But, as the internalist notes, although the belief is true and reliably produced (as the scenario stipulates), it doesn’t appear to be justified. Moreover, the best explanation for why that is so seems to be that there is an accessibility condition on justification that the subject fails to satisfy: a subject can only have justification for a certain belief if it *isn’t* an accident from his first person perspective why that belief should be true. After all, without being in a position to tell what one’s beliefs rationally have going for them, they appear to be no more justified than hunches or guesses. Indeed,

²⁸ Although I occasionally write as if the topic of my discussions and arguments is what has been called *personal* justification (rather than propositional justification)—i.e., the justification *someone* has for believing/withholding/disbelieving certain propositions—this is simply for the sake of convenience since it isn’t always possible (at least not easily so) to differentiate the different types of justification in one’s writings. Moreover, although my discussions and arguments focus on propositional justification, I don’t commit myself to any particular position when it comes to the issue of how propositional justification relates to personal justification. For more detailed and disagreeing discussions about whether and how personal justification relates to propositional justification, see Kvanvig & Menzel (1990), Engel (1992), and Littlejohn (2009).

²⁹ The kind of deception scenario under consideration was first described by Lehrer & Cohen (1983) as a counterexample to simple process reliabilism, whereas the internalist argument was (for the most part) developed Wedgwood (2002). For an overview and evaluation of many of the reliabilist responses that have been offered, see Littlejohn (2012, introduction).

³⁰ Who the “we” in this claim are isn’t exactly clear. Turri (2015a; 2015b) has offered empirical evidence that most non-philosophers don’t have internalist intuitions in response to the scenario. However, it might still be the case that most philosophers do and that their intuitions should be given more weight. This issue will be further discussed in the dissertation’s first paper.

³¹ Littlejohn (2009) offers the first kind of response, whereas Williamson (2007; forthcoming) offers the second.

³² A similar response to the latter kind of argument is offered by Pryor (2001) and discussed in greater detail by Greco (forthcoming).

accessibilism *implies* that our intuitive judgments about the scenario under consideration are true.³³

In response, externalists have once again argued in either of two ways: (i) they have argued that we don't have intuitions to the effect that the subject in the unfamiliar faculty scenario doesn't have justification for his belief; (ii) they have argued that although we do have the intuitions which the internalist reports, accessibilism doesn't provide the best explanation for why that is so.³⁴ In the second paper of my thesis I respond to both kinds of argument. Moreover, my strategy for doing so is outlined in the dissertation synopsis later in the introduction.

Although these are the two most prominent internalist arguments, many others have been offered. Conee and Feldman (2004) argue from intuitions elicited by other, more mundane scenarios; Ginet (1975), Feldman (1988), Steup (1988; 1999), and Pollock and Cruz (1999) all argue from (what Goldman (1999) calls) a "guidance-deontological" conception of justification; and Smithies (2012b) argues from the paradoxicality of Moorean conjunctions, from scenarios involving subjects with blindsight (2014), and from the nature of higher-order reflection (2015).

An important source of motivation for internalism is so-called "internalist intuitions" about various scenarios. Indeed, internalists often argue for their positions by inferring plausible explanations from the intuitions elicited by different scenarios or thought experiments. Moreover, in my dissertation, I will often follow suit by making use of this common internalist strategy. However, some philosophers may find this an objectionable strategy insofar as they think that our intuitions aren't really reliable with respect to the subject matter at hand, or that it only leads to intuition mongering between proponents of different positions. In response to these worries, I briefly want to mention three reasons why I don't think that they undermine my argumentative strategy. First, as I argue in section 4 of the second paper, the claim that internalist intuitions aren't reliable is often unmotivated, and in the absence of any such motivation, they do provide us with good (albeit defeasible) reason to believe that their contents are true.³⁵ Second, although many of the arguments I make do rely

³³ This kind of argument was first presented by Bonjour (1980; 1985) and later taken up by Lehrer (1990).

³⁴ Bernecker (2008) and Lyons (2009) offer the first kind of response, whereas Bergmann (2006), Beyer & Greco (2008), Lyons (2009), Comesaña (2010), Graham (2014a; 2014b), and Ghijzen (2016) offer the second kind of response.

³⁵ Not only do one's intuitions provide evidence for certain propositions, but other people's intuitions can also provide the basis for testimonial evidence for certain propositions. If, for example, you're told by someone

on internalist intuitions about various cases, not all of them do. Moreover, just because many of the core arguments rely on such intuitions, it doesn't follow that they are unsound. After all, there is a growing literature supporting the idea that intuitions are evidentially significant,³⁶ and I will be working under the assumption that that idea is true. Third, as philosophers making arguments, I take it that we are bound to rely on intuition—for better or worse. Indeed, I doubt that there exists a single argument (philosophical or other) that doesn't rely on intuition either when it comes to the justification of its premises or the justification of its background assumptions. So given that we are bound to rely on intuition, and also that intuitions are evidentially significant, it seems that intuitions are more likely to help progress the internalism-externalism debate, rather than deter it.³⁷

However, although I take intuitions to be evidentially significant, they only provide defeasible justification that can be overridden by other theoretical considerations. Indeed, following John Rawls' (1971) method of reflective equilibrium, I believe, on the one hand, that philosophical theory building should be guided by intuition, and, on the other, that intuitions should be evaluated with respect to other theoretical considerations about the properties with which the intuitions are concerned. For internalism to be a plausible theory of justification, the intuitions on which it relies should harmonize with other theoretical properties that we generally believe justification to have. That being said, externalists can always try to defeat the evidential force of internalist intuitions. However, in order to do so, they have to provide reasons for doubting the reliability of said intuitions—simply pointing to the intuitive nature of the internalist position isn't enough.³⁸

Internalism is the traditional view, more or less assumed and unargued for up to the middle of the twentieth century, whereas externalism is the new kid on the block, trying to

trustworthy that the vast majority of mathematicians have strong intuitions that Goldbach's conjecture is true, then I take it that the testimony does provide at least some evidence for said conjecture. However, it is of course important that the testifier—i.e., the person responsible for informing you about the mathematicians intuitions—is trustworthy, or at least that one has reason to think that he is trustworthy; otherwise one would be gullible if one were to trust him. For more about testimonial evidence and gullibility, see Fricker (1994).

³⁶ See, e.g., Chudnoff (2013); Bengson (2015); Koksvik (2017); and Ramsey (2019).

³⁷ More detailed reflections along these lines are offered in sections 6 and 7 of paper 4.

³⁸ Peter Pagin, Staffan Carlshamre, and Duncan Pritchard have raised the following concern about internalist intuitions: how do we know that the intuitions which internalists base their position on are about justification in particular, rather than some other epistemic property? In response, I would like to point out that there are two reasons why I think that internalist intuitions actually are about justification. First, based on my own introspection, I clearly do have (or at least seem to have) intuitions about justification when I reflect on various scenarios, such as the New Evil Demon scenario. Second, given that the relevant discussions in the literature have developed *as if* most other philosophers also have intuitions about justification—after all, people regularly say of the individuals who inhabit various hypothetical scenarios that they seem to (not) have justification for their beliefs—I think it is safe to assume (barring defeaters) that philosophers generally do have intuitions about justification.

upset the established order.³⁹ Having considered the case for internalism, it is time to take a closer look at the opposing position. Epistemic externalism is simply defined as the denial of both the mentalist and the accessibilist thesis above. Whereas the internalist thinks that facts about justification in some special sense are internal (either because they are *a priori* accessible or because they have their basis in one's non-factive mental states), the externalist denies that this is the case. That being said, externalism comes in different varieties. For present purposes, externalist views can be separated into two more or less distinct groups.⁴⁰

First, there are those who make specific claims either about what one's justifying evidence or reasons for belief are, or about the nature of the relation of justificatory/evidential support. For example, proponents of the popular knowledge-first program claim that your evidence or reasons for belief simply are the propositions you know.⁴¹ This idea is captured by Timothy Williamson's famous E = K thesis, which says:

$E = K$: "knowledge, and only knowledge, constitutes evidence" (Williamson, 2000, 185).

And also by what we may call the R = K thesis:

$R = K$: "*p* is available to you as a reason if and only if you know *p*." (Williamson, 2007, 120.)

Another externalist view is that of William Alston (1989), who claims that there must be a reliable connection between one's justifying evidence or reasons and the doxastic attitudes they support. Moreover, he maintains that the reliability which pertains to the relation of evidential support should be understood in terms of objective probability or chance. However, it should be noted that even though Alston argues that the relation of evidential support should be understood in terms of probabilification (in the objective sense),

³⁹ And, it should be added, externalism has been very successful in doing so. In a survey by Bourget & Chalmers (2014) asking philosophers about their views on 30 central philosophical issues, 42.7% responded that they accept or lean toward externalism, whereas 26.4% responded that they accept or lean toward internalism. Moreover, 30.8% answered "other," which probably has a lot to do with disagreements or lack of clarity about how the distinction should be drawn.

⁴⁰ However, they will not necessarily be exhaustive insofar as there may be externalist views that don't neatly fit into either group. Nevertheless, they do capture the most prominent externalist positions in the literature.

⁴¹ Proponents of the knowledge first program are among those who advocate for what has been called a "factive turn" in epistemology. Those who work under that banner usually claim that evidence is factive either in the sense that it is truth-entailing or in the sense that it includes (or consists of) facts about the external world. Mitova (2018, 1), for example, summarizes the position by saying that "when you believe something for a *good reason*, your belief is in a position to enjoy all the cardinal epistemic blessings: it can be rational, justified, warranted, responsible, constitute knowledge, you name it."

he also thinks that there is an accessibility condition on one's reasons/evidence. As he sees it, a belief B is (doxastically)⁴² justified just in case it is based on an *adequate ground*, where the ground is *a priori* accessible,⁴³ and the fact that it is adequate means that it reliably indicates that B is true. Thus, since he thinks that there is an accessibility condition on one's reasons/evidence, but no such condition on the relation of evidential support, he calls his position *internalist externalism*.⁴⁴ However, since Alston is committed to denying both mentalism and accessibilism, insofar as the adequacy or reliability of one's grounds isn't *a priori* accessible and facts about justification fail to supervene upon one's non-factive mental states, his position should be considered externalist.⁴⁵

Second, there are externalists who make specific claims about the processes that lead to justified belief. For example, Alvin Goldman (1979) claims that a belief B is justified just in case the subject has a reliable belief-forming process for forming B available; i.e., a process for belief-production which produces a sufficiently high proportion of true beliefs in scenarios similar to the actual one.⁴⁶ Although Goldman's externalism resembles that of Alston insofar they both think that reliability in some sense is a necessary condition for justification, their positions differ to the extent that the kind of reliability which Goldman focuses on attaches to belief-forming processes or doxastic dispositions, whereas the reliability which Alston focuses on attaches to the support relations that hold between evidence/reasons and the doxastic attitudes they justify.

Another externalist view is proper functionalism, which claims that having cognitive faculties for belief production that function properly is a necessary condition for justification.

⁴² Although some of the externalist positions I consider are formulated with respect to doxastic justification, they should still be considered externalist positions with respect to propositional justification. The reason is simply that the externalist conditions they focus on attach to propositional justification, and not whether one's beliefs satisfy the basing requirement (which internalists usually agree is a causal or counterfactual, and hence external matter).

⁴³ "Justification is a *directly cognitively accessible* item that will contribute to making true belief into knowledge. . . I will, obviously, not accommodate those theorists who deny that a justifier must be internal in this way." (Alston, 1989, 5-6.) Cf. Alston (1989, 239): "[T]he fate of prima facie justification is determined by what is in the subject's perspective on the world, rather than by the way the world is."

⁴⁴ A similar view is endorsed by Glüer & Wikforss (2018); although they do not claim that the ground must be *a priori* accessible, only that it must be a mental state.

⁴⁵ A somewhat related position is epistemological disjunctivism, which claims (at least in paradigmatic cases of perceptual knowledge) that one's reasons for belief are both *a priori* accessible and factive (or truth-entailing). For example, Duncan Pritchard (2012, 13) argues that we often have justifying reasons for belief which are reflectively accessible in the sense that "the subject can come to know through reflection alone that she is in possession of this rational support", and that the reasons support doxastic attitudes with the same (or relevantly similar) propositional content by entailing that they are true.

⁴⁶ It is hard to overstate the impact which Goldman's reliabilism has had on contemporary epistemology; some have even said that it has undergone a "reliabilist revolution" (Williams, 2016, 3). For similar reliabilist positions, see, e.g., Greco (1999); Comesaña (2002); and Lyons (2013).

For example, Michael Bergmann (2006) argues that if a certain belief is (doxastically) justified, then it must have been produced by a properly functioning cognitive faculty. If, however, the faculty in question isn't functioning in according with its "design plan", then the beliefs it produces will somehow be defect and cannot be justified.^{47, 48}

Many arguments have been offered for externalism in general, or one of the specific varieties just mentioned in particular. Arguably, one of the biggest motivations for externalism is that it is able to accommodate the compelling idea that justification is truth-conducive.⁴⁹ An argument from the truth-conduciveness of justification for externalism has recently been formulated by Clayton Littlejohn as follows:

1. The conditions that justify belief have to be sufficiently indicative of the truth or make it sufficiently likely that the belief is true.
2. Internal conditions alone cannot make it sufficiently likely that your belief is true or provide adequate indication that your belief is true.
3. (Therefore) Justification is an externalist notion. (Littlejohn, 2012, 26.)

In response, internalists will be quick to point out that even though we all would *like* justification to be truth-conducive, reflection on certain deception scenarios seems to suggest otherwise.⁵⁰ Indeed, later on I will stress the point, which I believe some internalists have shied away from focusing on, that accepting internalist intuitions about Cartesian deception scenarios, which say that the deceived subject's beliefs are just as justified as they would have been if they were true, commits the internalist to the view that evidential or justificatory support is a necessary, rather than contingent, relation. However, making such a commitment will, at least according to some externalists, be problematic for a couple of reasons: first, some externalists are likely to find this response problematic insofar as they think that denying the truth-conduciveness of justification also strips it of any epistemic value;^{51, 52}

⁴⁷ Following Plantinga (1993, 22-24), Bergmann (2006) conceptualizes design plans as sets of circumstance–response pairs. For an alternative understanding of proper function, according to which the proper functioning of a cognitive faculty has to do with how it performed when it produced the beneficial effects that caused its continuing existence, see Graham (2014a).

⁴⁸ All of the externalist positions just mentioned will be discussed and criticized later; Williamson's in papers 1 and 4, Alston's in paper 3, Goldman's in papers 1, 2, 3 and 6, and Bergmann's in paper 2.

⁴⁹ Recently, Silins (forthcoming) has argued that the internalism-externalism distinction itself should be defined in terms of truth-conduciveness.

⁵⁰ See, e.g., Cohen (1984).

⁵¹ Interestingly enough, one of the clearest expressions of this worry is given by the internalist BonJour, who remarks: "If epistemic justification were not conducive to truth in this way, if finding epistemically justified belief did not substantially increase the likelihood of finding true ones, then epistemic justification would be irrelevant to our main cognitive goal and of dubious worth. It is only if we have some reason for thinking that

second, by denying the truth-conduciveness of justification in favor of the view that justification is a necessary relation between one's evidence and the beliefs it supports, internalists owe us an account of how the relation should be understood. By pointing to certain problems which threaten the existing accounts in the literature, externalists can make the claim that the prospects for any such account will be dim, and hence that the response to Littlejohn's argument that we're currently considering appears to be in trouble. I discuss this issue in more detail in the last section of paper 3.

Another argument for externalism turns on the issue of how to best explain what distinguishes justified beliefs from unjustified ones. Alvin Goldman (1979), for example, argues that reliabilism provides a plausible and unifying explanation of the issue, and, moreover, that internalism cannot, or at the very least has not provided any similarly plausible explanation. As he sees it, reliability is the distinguishing mark of justification—not propositions or facts that are indubitable or self-evident, as internalists sometimes suggest.⁵³

In response, internalists have made a couple of points. First, reliabilism appears to be inadequate and therefore cannot provide a plausible explanation of what distinguishes justified beliefs from unjustified ones. For example, there appears to be counterexamples to both the necessity claim and the sufficiency claim which Goldman's (1979) reliabilism is committed to.⁵⁴ Second, internalists can attempt (indeed, they have attempted) to show that they do have the resources to offer a plausible and unifying explanation of the issue.⁵⁵ For example, they can argue that you have (*prima facie*) justification for believing that *p* if it

epistemic justification constitutes a path to the truth that we as cognitive beings have any motive for preferring epistemically justified beliefs to epistemically unjustified ones." (BonJour, 1985, 8.)

⁵² In order to alleviate the internalist's worries, Madison (2017) has argued that justification does have (intrinsic) epistemic value even if it isn't truth-conducive.

⁵³ "Consider some faulty process of belief-formation, i.e., processes whose belief-outputs would be classed as unjustified. Here are some examples: confused reasoning, wishful thinking, reliance on emotional attachment, mere hunch or guesswork, and hasty generalizations. What do these faulty processes have in common? They share the feature of *unreliability*. They tend to produce *error* a large proportion of the time. By contrast, which species of belief-forming (or belief-sustaining) processes are intuitively justification-conferring? They include standard perceptual processes, remembering, good reasoning, and introspection. What these processes seem to have in common is *reliability*: the beliefs they produce are generally reliable." (Goldman, 1979, 10.)

⁵⁴ Lehrer & Cohen (1983) provide a counterexample to the necessity claim, and BonJour (1985) provides a counterexample to the sufficiency claim. Goldman (1986; 1988; 1993) responds.

⁵⁵ In paper 3, I offer such an explanation when it comes to empirical justification in particular.

seems to you that *p*, along the lines of Michael Huemer's (2007) Phenomenal Conservatism.⁵⁶

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Moreover, in addition to the arguments just mentioned, externalists have offered many besides. Goldman (1986), Alston (1989), and Feldman (2005) argue from over-intellectualization; Alston (1989) argues from epistemic poverty; Senor (1993), Goldman (1999), Greco (2005), and Williamson (2007) argue from stored beliefs; Williamson (2000) and Kelly (2008) argue from the nature of scientific evidence; and Williamson (2007) argues from intuitions supporting externalism in the philosophy of mind.⁵⁸

2.2 Foundationalism vs. Coherentism

Next, let's look at the other defining debate: the foundationalism-coherentism debate. This debate is about how our beliefs get justified in the first place. We all agree that we have a great many justified beliefs. How are they justified? Plausibly by other justified beliefs. If the reason you believe that you're healthy is that you also believe that your trustworthy doctor told you so, but your doctor has communicated to you that he bases all his diagnoses on what his terra cards tell him, then you shouldn't believe that you're healthy. And for the very same reason, in order for any belief B1 to be justified by another belief B2, B2 must itself be

⁵⁶ Huemer doesn't just intend his principle of phenomenal conservatism to be *a* principle of foundational or non-inferential justification, he intends it to be *the* principle of such justification (2001, 99-100f.). This means that seemings are both necessary and sufficient for foundational justification on his view.

⁵⁷ Cf. Wedgwood (2002).

⁵⁸ Whether or not externalism in the philosophy of mind supports externalism in epistemology by (i) entailing epistemic externalism and (ii) receiving intuitive support from reflection on various scenarios is a contested issue. To evaluate this kind of argument, it is important to note that externalism in the philosophy of mind can mean either *content externalism*, which says that some mental states have contents that are individuated in virtue of relations to the external environment, or *vehicle externalism*, which says that some mental states (as vehicles of content) are individuated in virtue of relations to the external environment. In the literature, three arguments have been offered for the view that content externalism entails epistemic externalism: Bonjour's (1992) *Accessibility Argument*, Boghossian's (1989) *Self-Knowledge Argument*, and Chase's (2001) *Process Argument*. However, all of the arguments rely on contentious premises and therefore remain unconvincing. When it comes to the view that vehicle externalism entails epistemic externalism, fewer arguments have been offered in the literature. However, a couple of recent arguments by Carter et al. (2014) and Smithies (2018) plausibly suggest that accessibilism, together with certain plausible background assumptions, is incompatible with vehicle externalism. A reasonable, albeit somewhat tentative conclusion to draw from these discussions is that although epistemic internalists will have a hard time squaring their position with vehicle externalism, they should be able to endorse externalism about content without inconsistency—at the very least, doing so seems to be "a live option", as Carter et al. (2014) put it in their review of the current literature about these issues.

That being said, it would be somewhat odd to characterize a mentalist who thinks that non-factive mental states with externally individuated content can play a role in conferring justification upon one's doxastic attitudes as an internalist, since this in effect would mean that the supervenience base of justification in some sense includes things that are external to the subject's mind.

justified. So far, so good. But what about B2; what is it that justifies *that* belief? Well, plausibly another justified belief B3. This leads to the following principle:

1. A belief can only be justified by another justified belief.

The principle seems plausible enough, but it quickly leads to trouble. The trouble, more specifically, is that if B1 is justified, then there must be another justified belief B2 supporting it, and if B2 is justified, then there must be another justified belief B3 supporting it, and if B3 is justified, then there must be another justified belief B4 supporting it, and so on *ad infinitum*. However, since it is highly doubtful that we have such an infinite stock beliefs, accepting the principle forces us to conclude that we don't have *any* justified beliefs: skepticism ensues.⁵⁹ This is known as the *epistemic regress problem*, and the foundationalism-coherentism debate is about how it should be solved.⁶⁰

Two unpopular and, as most epistemologists see it, implausible responses to the problem are (1) to accept skepticism about justification, and (2) to endorse *infinetism*. According to skepticism about justification, the fact that the principle mentioned above might lead to skepticism is actually something positive since skepticism is true: we don't have any justified beliefs. The problem with skepticism about justification, however, is that it is extremely implausible. We certainly seem to have justified beliefs, and denying that this is so is so implausible that it might actually be impossible to rationally and consistently believe it. For if one really were to believe that no beliefs are justified, then that belief (in skepticism about justification) must itself either be justified or not. If it isn't justified, then one doesn't have sufficient reason for holding it. But if it is justified, then skepticism about justification must be wrong; there is after all at least one justified belief—namely, one's belief in justification-skepticism.

According to infinitism, the principle above is unproblematic because justificatory chains can have infinite length. Thus, the infinitist thinks that we do have many justified beliefs, that the principle above correctly explains why that is the case, and that our justified beliefs are supported by infinite chains of other justified beliefs (B2, B3, B4, etc.). However, the problem with infinitism is that it appears to lead to skepticism, as we saw above. The

⁵⁹ Note that the kind of skepticism that follows is much stronger than the kind of skepticism discussed in the previous section, since it is about justification rather than knowledge.

⁶⁰ This and similar kinds of regress problem are sometimes traced back to Aristotle (*Posterior Analytics*, 72b 6-15), Agrippa, and Sextus Empiricus (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 1.164-177). Although some of the aforementioned authors sometimes raised the problem as an argument for skepticism, nowadays it is mostly being raised in discussions about the structure of justification.

reason: we don't have an infinite stock of justified beliefs. We are limited creatures with a finite number of neurons, with limited computational and memorial capacities, and who live a finite amount of time.⁶¹

Another (but this time popular) response to the problem is (3) foundationalism.⁶² Foundationalism comes in different varieties, but the core idea is that the principle above, which says that a belief can only be justified by another justified belief, is wrong. More specifically, it is wrong because the regress eventually comes to an end with what is called *basic* beliefs—i.e., beliefs that are justified by something other than beliefs, the most popular candidate being experience. Thus, according to the foundationalist, the justification we have for our beliefs can ultimately be traced back to basic beliefs which are justified by experience.⁶³ This gives us an elegant pyramidal picture of the structure of justification where, at the bottom, you have basic beliefs that are justified by experience, and to which all your other beliefs (floating above) in some sense owe their justification. However, there are some problems with foundationalism; one of which is that it appears to condone some sort of *bootstrapping* argumentation, according to which experience can justify belief in its own reliability or accuracy.⁶⁴ Another problem is what is known as the *Sellarsian dilemma*, according to which experience either has (assertive) representational content or not. If it does, then experience cannot *by itself* generate justification. But if it doesn't, then experience cannot play a justifying role at all.⁶⁵

The last response, which also has been very popular (especially in the twentieth century), is (4) coherentism.⁶⁶ According to coherentism, the principle that a belief can only be justified by another belief is true, but the chain of justification eventually circles back on itself so that the regress need not be infinite or terminate in a basic belief. This means that

⁶¹ Although see Klein (1999) who argues, by drawing a distinction between occurrent and dispositional belief, that we do have an infinite stock of (justified) dispositional beliefs. For example, someone who has taken an introductory course in logic plausibly does believe (in a dispositional sense) with justification that $p \rightarrow p \vee q$, that $p \rightarrow p \vee r$, that $p \rightarrow p \vee s$, and so on.

⁶² Proponents of foundationalism include Russell (1910-1911); Lewis (1929); Moser (1989); Fumerton (1995); Fales (1996); Pryor (2000); Huemer (2001); BonJour (2003); and Smithies (2014a).

⁶³ According to this version of foundationalism, experience thus functions as a source of what we might call *ultimate evidence*, in the sense that experience (or perhaps perceptual experience more specifically) justifies basic beliefs but without standing in need of justification itself. In paper 3 I will revisit the notion of ultimate evidence which I there discuss in relation to Conee and Feldman's (2008) view of justification and its source. However, in that paper I rely on an interpretation of Conee and Feldman's position according to which they use the notion of ultimate evidence in the same way that epistemologists usually use the notion of (regular) evidence.

⁶⁴ For more on bootstrapping, see van Cleve (1979); Alston (1986); and Vogel (2000).

⁶⁵ See Sellars (1956). See also BonJour (1985, ch. 4), who provides a good reconstruction of Sellars' somewhat intricate argument.

⁶⁶ Proponents of coherentism include Neurath (1983[1932]); Blanshard (1939); Quine & Ullian (1970); Harman (1973; 1986); Sellars (1973); Lehrer (1990); and BonJour (1985).

whereas B1 is justified by B2, B2 by B3, and B3 by . . . Bn, Bn can then circle back around and be justified by B1. The structure of justification thus has the shape of a circle in which beliefs are justified solely by the fact that they *cohere* with one another.⁶⁷ However, coherentism, just like the other responses to the regress problem, also has problems of its own. One of the objections to coherentism is the *alternative systems problem*, which says that there can be sets of belief that cohere, but which clearly are absurd. Such sets of belief don't seem to be justified, but, according to coherentism, they are. Another objection to coherentism is the *input problem*; i.e., the problem that experience does appear to be sufficient in order to have justification for certain beliefs, contrary to how coherentism would have it: if you have a visual experience of a car driving past you, then (absent any defeaters) you have justification to believe that a car is driving past you.

A lot of digital ink has been used on the internalism-externalism debate and the foundationalism-coherentism debate. Whereas internalism and foundationalism can be said to be the traditional views insofar as the majority of epistemologists before the twentieth century (including Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant) accepted them, the opposing views have gained a lot of traction lately—especially externalism. This dissertation is mainly an attempt to defend the tradition. My own view is that facts about justification are internal in the ways specified by both mentalism and accessibilism. Moreover, I think that the justification we have in some sense has its ultimate foundation in basic beliefs which are justified, but not by other beliefs. Whereas many foundationalists focus on how perceptual experience justifies such basic beliefs without itself having to be justified, I am inclined to include among the sources of such foundational justification things like intuition, so-called memory seemings, and facts about logic and mathematics. However, although I do endorse foundationalism, my focus in the dissertation will be on internalism and externalism. More specifically, I will argue for, defend, and develop a particular brand of internalism, both in general and with respect specific sources of justification, like testimony and memory.

Moreover, it should be noted that there is an important and ongoing debate about what exactly it is that is doing the justifying, or, in other words, what one's justifiers are. There are three positions in the literature that stand out as plausible answers: first, it might be that it is the propositional content of (some of) one's mental states that is doing the justifying (Fantl & McGrath, 2009); second, it might be that it is the mental states themselves that are the

⁶⁷ Coherence is usually taken to involve logical consistency, explanatory relations, and inductive/probabilistic relations.

justifiers (Cone & Feldman, 2008; Gibbons, 2014; McCain, 2014, 2016; Mitova, 2015); and third, it might be that it is facts or true propositions about (some of) one's mental states that are responsible for the justification we have (Smithies, forthcoming). In the dissertation, I will remain neutral when it comes to this debate. So even though my wording in the dissertation sometimes might seem to indicate support for some of the aforementioned positions, my papers should be considered non-committal with respect to this issue.

3. Dissertation Synopsis

The dissertation argues for mentalism and accessibilism, both of the internalist theses.⁶⁸ Mentalism and accessibilism receive strong support from our intuitive judgments about various scenarios; indeed, so much so that they provide the best explanations for our intuitions. Reflection on various scenarios thus provides grounds for a couple of abductive arguments with the conclusion that the internalist theses are true.

However, this kind of argument, which already is familiar from the literature, has come under heavy fire by proponents of externalism. The externalist objections usually either target the internalist intuitions, the abductive inferences that the arguments employ, or the internal coherence of mentalism or accessibilism. I will defend the arguments using a two-pronged strategy: first, I will argue from the assumption that the relevant scenarios do elicit internalist intuitions among many, if not most, professional philosophers when they are described with sufficient detail, that we haven't been provided with sufficient reason to think that our intuitions about those particular scenarios somehow are biased or skewed; second, I will argue that the internalist theses do provide the best explanations for why our intuitions are true since (i) they receive the most support from the evidence which our intuitions provide,⁶⁹ (ii) *reductios* and other problems internal to mentalism or accessibilism can be

⁶⁸ While many internalists endorse both mentalism and accessibilism, some only endorse one of the theses while rejecting the other. However, by endorsing either mentalism or accessibilism, while rejecting the other thesis, one becomes vulnerable to certain explanatory problems. For example, the mentalist who rejects accessibilism has to explain what it is that makes one's non-factive mental states so special that they provide the supervenience base of justification. That one always has *a priori* access to those states seems to be a good explanation, but it is of course unavailable to the mentalist who rejects accessibilism. On the other hand, the accessibilist who rejects mentalism has to provide an explanation of what the determinants of justification are, such that they always are *a priori* accessible. That the determinants of justification are one's non-factive mental states seems to be a good explanation, but it is unavailable to the accessibilist who rejects mentalism.

⁶⁹ I should say that I neither operate with a particular conception of how abductive reasoning functions, nor do I purport to make any progress when it comes to providing such a conception. Abductive arguments appear to be holistic by nature—and somewhat mysterious at that. Nevertheless, most philosophers agree that they can be used in order to generate both justification and knowledge. For more on abductive reasoning, see Douven (2017).

shown to disappear upon closer analysis, and (iii) alternative, externalist explanations face problems that the internalist views avoid. The upshot is that internalism remains motivated and as plausible as ever.

The tradition will be defended, but not without incurring any criticism of its own. Although I argue that the internalist theses are correct, some of the most prominent versions of them have to be abandoned. This is especially the case when it comes to accessibilism. I will argue that some of the most prominent versions of accessibilism in the literature are vulnerable to serious problems (about, e.g., vicious regresses and over-intellectualization). Fortunately, however, there are other, more recent versions of accessibilism that avoid the problems and are plausible in their own right. Part of my task is to figure out what commitments the internalist should make in order to avoid the externalist's objections, while at the same time receiving support from considerations that have motivated internalism in the past.

Mentalism informs us about the supervenience base of justification, but it doesn't tell us *which* non-factive mental states are justification-conferring. When it comes to empirical belief (i.e., belief in empirical propositions), I suggest that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification. The suggestion is then defended, on the one hand, against expansive views which claim that other non-factive mental states also can confer justification, and, on the other hand, against contractive views which claim that not all beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification.

Lastly, I argue for internalism about some specific sources of justification, like testimony and memory. A substantial part of the recent literature on the internalism-externalism debate has focused on the different sources of justification. Here, several novel and interesting challenges have been posed to the internalist. In the dissertation I take on some of the challenges and defend internalism about testimonial and memorial justification. Doing so, I aim to offer a comprehensive and plausible internalist view about the nature of justification, both in general and with respect to specific sources of justification.

Moreover, I should note that when I make abductive arguments for internalism, I rely on an implicit assumption to the effect that our intuitions about simple epistemological issues—such as whether or not individuals in hypothetical scenarios have justification for their beliefs—generally track the truth. The explanandum will be the content of our internalist intuitions, and the explanans will be (or contain) some internalist thesis.

4. Paper Summaries

The dissertation is a compilation thesis, meaning that it is a collection of individual research papers that all relate to a single topic—in my case, the internalism-externalism debate. Some of the papers have already been accepted for publication. Below you will find summaries of the papers, including information about where they have been accepted for publication.

Paper I: The Demon That Makes Us Go Mental: Mentalism Defended

Paper 1 is about mentalism. More specifically, it argues, using Lehrer and Cohen's (1983) *New Evil Demon Problem*, that facts about justification supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. That kind of argument, however, is often criticized by externalists. The paper takes a closer look at three prominent objections—a pair of which is offered by Littlejohn (2009) and one by Williamson (2007)—and argues that none of them is successful. Its conclusion is that mentalism remains motivated, and that recent attempts by externalists to undermine the argument from the New Evil Demon scenario fail.

This paper has been accepted for publication in *Philosophical Studies*. See Egeland, J. (2019). The Demon That Makes Us Go Mental: Mentalism Defended. *Philosophical Studies*, 176(12) 1-18. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-018-1167-7>

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Paper II: The Problem with Trusting Unfamiliar Faculties: Accessibilism Defended

Paper 2 is about accessibilism. More specifically, it argues, using Bonjour (1980; 1985) and Lehrer's (1990) clairvoyance and Truetemp scenarios, that there is an accessibility condition on justification. That kind of argument, however, is often criticized by externalists. The paper takes a closer look at three prominent objections—one by Bernecker (2008), one by Ghijsen (2016), and one by Bergmann (2006; 2013)—and argues that none of them are successful. Moreover, it also explores what commitments the accessibilist should make, arguing (i) that many internalists have defended implausible versions of the view, and (ii) that the objections levelled against it only undermine those implausible versions of it. Its conclusion is that accessibilism remains motivated, and that recent attempts by externalists to undermine the argument from the aforementioned scenarios fail.

Paper III: Epistemic Internalism and the Basis of Justification

Paper 3 is about the basis of justification. Starting from the assumption that mentalism is true, it aims to answer two questions: 1) which non-factive mental states can play a justification-conferring role with respect to empirical belief? And 2) why does this set of states play the epistemic role it does? In response to question 1, it argues that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance. In response to question 2, it argues that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are one's strongly representational states, and that strongly representational states necessarily provide support to certain empirical propositions. Lastly, the paper grapples with the issue of *how* strongly representational states confer justification upon certain propositions, something which largely has been overlooked (especially by internalists) in the Internalism-externalism debate.

A version of the paper (or, more specifically, section 3.1 of the paper) has been accepted for publication in *Episteme*. See Egeland, J. (forthcoming). Imagination Cannot Justify Empirical Belief. *Episteme*, 1-7. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2019.22>

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Paper IV: Scientific Evidence and the Internalism-Externalism Distinction

Paper 4 is about scientific evidence. It explores a couple of arguments to the effect that considerations of scientific evidence eliminate internalism as a viable theory about the nature of justification. The first argument is offered by Williamson (2000), and it claims that the E = K thesis (in contrast to internalism) provides the best explanation for the fact that scientists appear to argue from premises about true propositions (or facts) that are common knowledge among the members of the scientific community. In response, the paper shows that the E = K thesis isn't supported by the way in which we talk about scientific evidence, and that it is unable to account for facts about what has been regarded as scientific evidence and as justified scientific belief in the history of science. The second argument is offered by Kelly (2008; 2016), and it claims that only externalism is suited to account for the public character of scientific evidence. In response, the paper argues that there are internalist views that can account for the publicity of scientific evidence, and that those views indeed do better in that

regard than the (externalist) view proposed by Kelly. The paper concludes that considerations of scientific evidence don't eliminate internalism as a viable theory about the nature of justification, contrary to what many epistemologists and philosophers of science assume.

Paper V: Epistemic Internalism and Testimonial Justification

Paper 5 is about testimonial justification. More specifically, it argues that testimonial justification should be understood along internalist lines. It then explores three objections offered by Wright (2016a; 2016b) and defends the argument against them. Moreover, it also argues that the version of externalism endorsed by Wright either collapses into internalism or a more robust kind of externalism that he opposes. The paper's conclusion is that externalist conditions do make an epistemic difference when it comes to our testimonial beliefs, but that they cannot make any difference with respect to their justificatory status—i.e., they are justificationaly irrelevant.

This paper has been accepted for publication in *Episteme*. See Egeland, J. (forthcoming). Epistemic Internalism and Testimonial Justification. *Episteme*, 1-17. doi:

<https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2018.48>

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Paper VI: Against Overconfidence: Arguing for the Accessibility of Memorial Justification

Paper 6 is about memorial justification. It argues, using a two-pronged strategy, that access internalism should replace preservationism as the standard view about memorial justification. First, it argues that the considerations which motivate preservationism also support access internalism. Second, it argues that preservationism faces a couple of problems which access internalism avoids. The first problem is that there is a certain scenario involving a subject who exhibits a special sort of overconfidence with respect to the memory beliefs he has and which, on the one hand, functions as a counterexample to preservationism, and, on the other hand, provides intuitive support for access internalism. The second problem is that preservationism, in light of recent research in cognitive psychology, is vulnerable to skepticism about memorial justification, whereas access internalism remains unthreatened. The paper concludes

that access internalism provides the best theoretical framework for understanding the nature and structure of memorial justification.

This paper has been accepted for publication in *Synthese*. See Egeland, J. (forthcoming). Against Overconfidence: Arguing for the Accessibility of Memorial Justification. *Synthese*, 1-21. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02604-4>

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5. Comments and Corrections

Given that some of the papers have been accepted for publication, and that Stockholm University requires that parts of a dissertation that have been accepted for publication must be presented the exact way in which they appeared when they were accepted, this has prevented me from making further changes to those papers. In order to clarify certain issues, or rectify certain mistakes, I therefore provide some comments to that effect below.

1. Paper 6 discusses Goldman's Fake Barns scenario, but without mentioning that he credits it to Carl Ginet.
2. In the second sentence of paper 6, I use the notion of *a priori* in what I call a "narrow" sense, insofar as I take a condition to be *a priori* just in case it doesn't depend on any of the sense modalities. However, that involves a mischaracterization, as I actually use the notion in what more aptly should be called a "wide" sense.
3. The argument that is presented and defended in paper 6 is offered in support for a version of accessibilism. However, the argument should more plausibly be seen as supporting mentalism about testimonial justification. When I talk about "internal reasons" in that paper, it should therefore be interpreted as the reasons one has that supervene upon one's non-factive mental states, rather than the reasons one has that are *a priori* accessible.

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Swedish Summary

Vi månar om att ha övertygelser som är berättigade. Ta som exempel följande vanligt förekommande uppfattningar:

1. Vatten utgörs av H₂O-molekyler.
2. Albert Einstein hade mustasch.
3. Det libertarianska partiets kandidat kommer inte att vinna nästa presidentval i USA.

När det gäller påståenden av detta slag så önskar vi oss i allmänhet berättigade övertygelser. Vi föredrar väl i själva verket generellt att hysa välgrundade övertygelser och anser rentav att ogrundade uppfattningar är på något vis defekta och därför bör överges. Föreställ dig exempelvis att du vill avgöra om din tilltro till det tredje påståendet ovan är välgrundad. Du överväger ämnet och ställer en serie frågor till dig själv, frågor som rör vilken evidens du har för påståendet, varför du har kommit att ha uppfattningen i fråga och om du har skäl att tro att den evidens du förlitar dig på i själva verket är vilseledande. Om det efter att du begrundat detta står klart för dig att du har robusta skäl för övertygelsen att det libertarianska partiets kandidat inte kommer att vinna nästa amerikanska presidentval så är din uppfattning berättigad. Skulle du däremot upptäcka att din övertygelse inte stöds av evidensen – kanske medger du att du knappt känner till något alls om amerikansk politik – så är den inte berättigad och du bör då om du vill vara rationell sluta omfatta den.

Eftersom vi bryr oss om huruvida våra övertygelser är berättigade är det naturligt att detta väcker frågan om berättigandets natur: vad innebär det att ha en berättigad uppfattning? I den filosofiska litteraturen finns två övergripande och oförenliga svar: det *internalistiska* alternativet hävdar att vad man är berättigad att hålla för sant på något speciellt sätt beror på ens interna mentala tillstånd, medan det *externalistiska* alternativet förnekar det. Distinktionen mellan internalism och externalism utgör en djup intellektuell klyfta som har separerat filosofer som arbetar med frågan om berättigande i två motsatta läger. För att förstå skillnaden bättre behöver vi emellertid först introducera en skillnad mellan två olika slag av berättigande.

Filosofier poängterar ofta att berättigande kan röra endera av två saker; påståenden eller övertygelser. I ena fallet kan du vara berättigad att tro på ett visst påstående, oavsett om du faktiskt tror på det eller ej. Om du till exempel har sett väderleksprognosen kan du vara berättigad att tro att det kommer att regna i morgon, och detta oavsett om du börjar hysa uppfattningen i fråga eller ej. I det andra fallet kan du ha en övertygelse som är berättigad. Om du exempelvis tror att det kommer att regna i morgon och denna uppfattning härrör från något som utgör en god grund för uppfattningen – som väderleksprognosen – så är din övertygelse berättigad.

Epistemisk internalism bör förstås som en teori om berättigande av det första slaget; det är en teori om vad som gör en övertygelse berättigad (oavsett om man hyser den eller ej). Mer specifikt, för att räknas som internalist behöver man acceptera minst en av följande två teser: Den första benämns *mentalism* och den hävdar att det inte kan ske någon förändring vad gäller vilka påståenden vi är berättigade att tro på såvida det inte sker någon förändring av våra icke-faktiva mentala tillstånd (ett mentalt tillstånd är icke-faktivt om dess påståendehåll inte nödvändigtvis är sant). Den andra tesen kallas *accessibilism* och hävdar att alla relevanta fakta som rör berättigande är åtkomliga genom reflektion. Detta innebär med andra ord att man alltid har privilegierad tillgång till de fakta som avgör vad man är berättigad att tro. Internalister behöver alltså acceptera mentalism eller accessibilism (eller båda).

Medan internalism är den traditionella ståndpunkten, vilken accepterades utan så mycket diskussion fram till mitten av förra århundradet, är externalism nykomlingen som försöker utmana den etablerade ordningen. Epistemisk externalism definieras helt enkelt som förnekandet av såväl mentalism som accessibilism. Internalisten anser att fakta som rör berättigande i någon speciell mening är interna och externalisten förnekar detta. Sålunda är det för externalisten inte fallet att vi har privilegierad tillgång till vad som gör våra övertygelser berättigade, eller att icke-faktiva mentala tillstånd är det enda som kan göra skillnad i sammanhanget. Externalisten kan exempelvis anse att vad man är berättigad att tro beror på vilken kunskap man har, eller i vilken utsträckning de processer som ger upphov till ens övertygelser är känsliga för vad som är sant.

Avhandlingen försvarar och utvecklar en särskild form av internalism både generellt och med avseende på specifika källor till berättigande såsom vittnesmål och minne. Jag menar att frågor om berättigandets natur bör hanteras utifrån ett internalistiskt perspektiv, och jag försöker ta några steg i denna riktning. Avhandlingen är en s.k. sammanläggningsavhandling

vilket innebär att den består i en samling artiklar som kretsar kring ett enda ämne – vilket i mitt fall är debatten mellan internalism och externalism.

Följande är en lämplig ingång till diskussionen: Anta att du, utan att känna till detta, är ett offer för en illvillig cartesiansk demon som bedrar dig angående den externa världens beskaffenhet. Även om dina övertygelser om världen är falska så stöds de av erfarenheter som från din subjektiva utgångspunkt är oskiljaktiga från de erfarenheter du skulle ha haft om världen var sådan du tror att den är. Fråga nu dig själv: är dina övertygelser om världen under dessa omständigheter berättigade trots att de är falska?

Ovanstående är känt i litteraturen som ”The New Evil Demon Problem” och tankeexperimentet är avsett att aktivera intuitionen att dina övertygelser under omständigheterna är berättigade, i själva verket lika berättigade som de hade varit om de hade varit sanna. Denna intuition anses av många ge stöd åt internalism. I avhandlingens första artikel försvarar jag detta argument mot tre inflytelserika invändningar från senare tid – varav två presenterats av Littlejohn (2009) och en av Williamson (2007).

Den andra artikeln behandlar accessibilism. Den hävdar, med utgångspunkt från ett par i litteraturen vanligt förekommande scenarier, att det finns ett tillgänglighetsvillkor för berättigande. Denna typ av argument har emellertid ofta kritiserats av externalister. Artikeln gör en närmare granskning av tre tongivande invändningar – av Bernecker (2008), Ghijsen (2016) respektive Bergmann (2006; 2013) – och hävdar att ingen av dem är framgångsrik. Artikeln utforskar vidare vilka åtaganden en accessibilist bör göra och gör gällande att (i) många internalister har försvarat mindre plausibla versioner av standpunkten och (ii) att invändningarna som rests endast drabbar dessa versioner. Slutsatsen är att den accessibilistiska positionen kvarstår som välmotiverad och att externalistiska försök att underminera argumentet från ovan nämnda scenarier misslyckas.

Den tredje artikeln handlar om grunden för berättigande. Utifrån antagandet att mentalismen är riktig så försöker den besvara två frågor: 1) vilka icke-faktiva mentala tillstånd kan ha en berättigande funktion för övertygelser om empiriska förhållanden? 2) varför har dessa tillstånd denna epistemiska funktion? Med avseende på fråga 1 är det föreslagna svaret att alla och endast våra övertygelser och perceptuella erfarenheter är relevanta för berättigande. Med avseende på fråga 2 är tesen att våra övertygelser och perceptuella erfarenheter är starkt representerande tillstånd – tillstånd som representerar sitt innehåll som sant – och att starkt representerande tillstånd med nödvändighet skänker stöd åt empiriska påståenden. Artikeln tar sig slutligen an frågan om *hur* starkt representerande

tillstånd ger berättigande åt vissa påståenden, vilket är en fråga som debatten mellan internalister och externalister i stort sett har förbiset.

Fjärde artikeln inriktar sig på vetenskaplig evidens. Den undersöker ett par argument som hävdar att överväganden kring vetenskaplig evidens visar att internalism inte kan vara en gångbar teori om berättigande. Det första av dessa presenterades av Williamson (2000) och hävdar att tesen $E = K$ – enligt vilken vår berättigande evidens helt enkelt är de påståenden som utgör vår kunskap – ger bästa förklaringen av förhållandet att vetenskapsmän tycks argumentera utifrån sanna påståenden som är allmänt accepterade av det vetenskapliga samfundet. Mot detta hävdas att tesen $E = K$ inte finner stöd i vårt sätt att tala om vetenskaplig evidens, och att den inte heller kan förklara sådant som har betraktats som vetenskaplig evidens och berättigad övertygelse under tidigare skeden av vetenskapshistorien. Det andra argumentet härrör från Kelly (2008; 2016) och går ut på att endast externalism förmår redogöra för den offentliga karaktären hos vetenskaplig evidens. Mot detta hävdar artikeln att det finns internalistiska synsätt som kan förklara offentligheten hos vetenskaplig evidens, och som lyckas bättre i detta avseende än det (externalistiska) alternativ som Kelly föreslår. Artikelns slutsats är att överväganden som rör vetenskaplig evidens inte utesluter internalism som en gångbar teori om berättigandets natur, i motsats till vad många epistemologer och vetenskapsfilosofer antar.

Avhandlingens femte artikel diskuterar berättigande genom vittnesmål, alltså det berättigande vi erhåller utifrån vad andra talar om för oss. Artikeln hävdar att berättigande genom vittnesmål bör förstås i enlighet med internalism. Denna ståndpunkt försvaras mot tre invändningar som framförts av Wright (2016a; 2016b). Det visar sig att Wrights version av externalism i själva verket kollapsar, antingen till internalism eller till en form av externalism som han själv inte accepterar. Artikelns slutsats är att externalistiska villkor gör en epistemisk skillnad när det gäller övertygelser som baseras på vittnesmål, men de kan inte göra någon skillnad för deras status med avseende på berättigande – de är alltså irrelevanta för berättigande.

Den sjätte och sista artikeln behandlar berättigande via minnet. Med hjälp av en tvådelad strategi argumenteras här för att accessibilism bör ersätta preservationism – givet vilken minnet bevarar den (positiva) berättigande-status som vidlåder de övertygelser som det innehåller – som standardsynsättet på berättigande via minnet. För det första görs gällande att de omständigheter som motiverar preservationism också stöder accessibilism. För det andra hävdas att preservationismen stöter på ett par problem som accessibilismen inte drabbas av. Det första av dessa problem är att det finns ett scenario vari subjektet hyser en särskild form

av överdriven tilltro till sina minnen. Detta scenario innebär ett motexempel mot preservationism men ger samtidigt intuitivt stöd för accessibilism. Det andra problemet består i att preservationism i ljuset av senare tiders kognitionsforskning inbjuder till skepticism angående berättigande via minnet, medan accessibilismen förblir ohotad. Artikeln landar i slutsatsen att accessibilismen tillhandahåller det bästa teoretiska ramverket för att förstå naturen och strukturen hos minnesbaserat berättigande.

I

The Demon That Makes Us Go Mental: Mentalism Defended

1. Mentalism

Facts about justification are not brute facts. They are epistemic facts that depend upon more fundamental non-epistemic facts. Internalists about justification often argue for of *mentalism*, which claims that facts about justification depend upon one's non-factive mental states.^{1,2} Externalists, on the other hand, reject this claim. In this paper, I will argue that the *justification facts*—i.e., the facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has justification (to a certain degree) to hold—depend upon one's non-factive mental states in the following manner:

Mentalism: the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states.

It is common to distinguish between three types of justification:

Propositional justification: the justification someone has for believing/withholding/disbelieving a certain proposition.

Doxastic justification: the justifiably held beliefs (or other doxastic attitudes) someone has.

Personal justification: someone's being justified in believing/withholding/disbelieving a certain proposition.³

The focus of this paper will be on propositional justification, as my definition of the justification facts should make clear. So although certain formulations in this article might appear to be about personal or doxastic justification, it is propositional justification that is the

¹ Proponents of mentalism include Pollock & Cruz (1999); Conee & Feldman (2001); Wedgwood (2002); Smithies (2012); and McCain (2016).

² A mental state is *non-factive* just in case it doesn't entail that it has propositional content that is true. By contrast, a *factive* mental state—like knowing *p*—entails that its propositional content is true.

³ Cf. Littlejohn (2012, 5).

topic at hand.⁴ Moreover, in contrast to the mentalist thesis above, I take facts about doxastic justification to be external. The reason is simply that doxastic justification plausibly can be defined as propositional justification plus proper basing,⁵ and that whether one satisfies the basing requirement is (at least in part) a causal, hence external, matter. So even though the externalist objections discussed in this article focus on doxastic justification, they aren't levelled against the implausible view that proper basing somehow is an internalist notion, which means that the relevant issue really is the nature of propositional justification (i.e., whether it is internal or external).⁶

Mentalism is often thought to receive support from our intuitive judgments about cases, most famous of which is the one described by Keith Lehrer and Stewart Cohen's (1983) *New Evil Demon Problem*. The New Evil Demon Problem tells you to imagine yourself the victim of a Cartesian demon who deceives you about what the external world is like, and then asks whether you nevertheless have justification for your beliefs about the external world. Internalists and externalists agree that there is something that is epistemically good or valuable about both your actual beliefs and your beliefs in the demon scenario. Internalists claim that the epistemic property which these sets of beliefs share most intuitively should be thought of as *sameness of justification*. Externalists, on the other hand, reject this claim, usually either by challenging the internalist intuition directly, or by arguing that there is a more plausible way to think about the epistemic property in question. Recently, both kinds of externalist objection have been raised against the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem for mentalism. In this paper, I will defend the argument against three of them—a pair of which attack the internalist intuition directly, and one that provides an alternative way of understanding the epistemic property in question.

This is the plan for the paper. Section 2 uses the New Evil Demon Problem to argue for mentalism. Section 3 defends this argument against three recent objections—two of which are offered by Clayton Littlejohn and one by Timothy Williamson. Section 4 concludes by

⁴ I suspect that it won't always be possible to clearly differentiate talk about the various types of justification without additional commentary.

⁵ Turri (2010) provides counterexamples to the definition. Smithies (2015) responds that we simply can define proper basing as whatever turns propositional justification into doxastic justification. Thus, "immunity from counterexample may be gained at the cost of reduction." (Smithies, 2015, footnote 19.)

⁶ Some (e.g., Engel, 1992; and Littlejohn, 2009, 2012) have argued that personal justification should be understood along internalist lines whereas doxastic justification should be understood along externalist lines. On this view, subjects in skeptical scenarios (like those that will be discussed in this paper) will be justified, whereas their beliefs won't. However, not everyone agrees that personal and doxastic justification can come apart this way. For example, Kvanvig and Menzel (1990) argue that personal justification entails doxastic justification; i.e., a person cannot be justified in believing p while his belief that p isn't justified.

taking stock and reflects on the relevance of the paper's arguments for the current state of epistemology.

2. The New Evil Demon Problem

The demon scenario, first presented by Lehrer and Cohen (1983; Cf. Cohen, 1984), goes as follows:

The New Evil Demon Problem

Imagine that, unbeknown to you, you are the victim of a Cartesian demon who deceives you about what the external world is like. Although your beliefs about the external world are false, they're supported by experiences that are, from your subjective point of view, indistinguishable from the experiences you would have if the world were exactly like you believe it to be.

Now, ask yourself whether your beliefs about the external world are justified despite being formed in ways that are unreliable. Intuitively, or so the argument goes, your beliefs in this scenario are just as justified as they would be if they were true—after all, it is conceivable that you're actually in such a scenario right now. Thus, the New Evil Demon scenario indicates that changing the reliability of one's doxastic dispositions doesn't affect which propositions one now has justification to believe.^{7,8} Instead, it seems that the facts about which propositions one now has justification to believe, and also the degree to which one has justification to believe them, remain unchanged as long as one holds fixed one's non-factive mental states. Indeed, the best explanation (or so the internalist thinks) for why epistemic agents in normal cases and epistemic agents in subjectively indistinguishable demon cases seem to be equally justified in holding the same doxastic attitudes is that they have the same non-factive mental states. By abductive reasoning we can therefore conclude that mentalism is true: the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states.

⁷ Originally, the scenario was presented as a counterexample to the claim that reliability is necessary for justification. Other counterexamples to this claim are provided by Putnam's (1981) environment scenario and, more popularly, the *Matrix* movies. On the other hand, counterexamples to the claim that reliability is sufficient for justification are provided by Bonjour (1985, 41); Lehrer (1990, 163-164); Plantinga (1993, 199); and Smithies (2014).

⁸ A variety of reliabilist responses have been offered. Goldman (1986, 1988); Comesaña (2002); Sosa (2003); and Majors & Sawyer (2005) try to come up with a reliabilist view that accommodates the intuition elicited by the New Evil Demon Problem. On the other hand, Bach (1985); Brewer (1997); Engel (1992); Sutton (2007); and Lyons (2013) claim that they don't share the internalist intuition or that it simply is wrong. For discussions of many of these objections, see Fumerton (1995, Ch. 4); and Littlejohn (2012, Introduction).

Mentalism provides a simple and natural explanation for shared philosophical intuitions about the New Evil Demon Problem. To see this, note that mentalism entails that if the non-factive mental states of epistemic agents are the same, then the facts about which propositions they now have justification to believe, and the degree to which they have justification to believe them, are also the same (Cf. Conee & Feldman, 2001, 2). And since epistemic agents in normal cases and epistemic agents in subjectively indistinguishable demon cases have the same non-factive mental states, they are therefore equally justified in believing the same propositions.⁹

Moreover, one need not consider extreme cases of global deception in order to appreciate this point. Consider the following case, which only involves local deception:

Illusory Ring

Claire is a collector of ancient artefacts. All the artefacts in her collection are bought from sources that seem highly trustworthy: she has vivid memorial beliefs¹⁰ that the sellers were honest and reliable. However, unbeknown to Claire, many of the sellers are notorious scam artists who, from time to time, sell replicas disguised as true originals. One of Claire's artefacts—the rare ring with runic inscriptions from the Viking Age—is such a replica. One day, when Claire is looking through her collection of artefacts, she recalls her impression of the sellers and forms the belief that the ring with runic inscriptions is from the Viking Age.

Although Claire's belief in the Illusory Ring case is unreliable¹¹ and false, it doesn't seem any less justified than her belief would be in a subjectively indistinguishable case where the sellers actually are trustworthy and the ring is from the Viking Age. Once again, the best explanation for why Claire's beliefs are equally justified in both cases is that she has the same non-factive mental states in both. As long as one's non-factive mental states are held fixed, there can be no change in which doxastic attitudes one now has justification to hold or the degree to which one has justification to hold them.

⁹ Wedgwood (2002) similarly argues that the intuitions that underwrite the New Evil Demon Problem for reliabilism also underwrite an argument against all versions of externalism about justification.

¹⁰ I operate with a distinction between having a *memory/memorial belief*, which is a non-factive mental state, and *remembering that* something is the case, which is a factive mental state.

¹¹ I take it that in order for a belief-forming process to be reliable it must produce a sufficient amount of true beliefs both *locally* (i.e., in scenarios closely linked to the case under consideration) and *globally* (i.e., in different scenarios in a wide range of cases). For a discussion of local and global reliability, see Craig (1991).

It is often assumed in contemporary epistemology that the justification facts are a function of one's (epistemic) reasons for holding certain doxastic attitudes.¹² In the discussions that follow, I will rely on this assumption when I talk about reasons for belief (or other doxastic attitudes). And, with this assumption in place, mentalism can plausibly be interpreted as a thesis about what reasons one has. Given that the justification facts are a function of one's reasons, a plausible construal of mentalism says that one's reasons are provided by one's non-factive mental states.¹³ Alternatively, adopting the evidentialist's parlance, we can say that one's evidence is provided by one's non-factive mental states.¹⁴ Thus, insofar as concepts like *reason* or *evidence* are used in this article, this is what the internalist will be taken to be committed to.¹⁵

However, cases like these and the intuitive epistemological lessons they are supposed to teach haven't gone unchallenged. Lately, the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem for mentalism has come under heavy fire. In the next section, I will defend the argument against three objections—a pair of which is offered by Littlejohn and one by Williamson.

3. Objections and Replies

3.1 Littlejohn's First Objection

According to the first objection offered by Littlejohn, our intuitions about the New Evil Demon Problem support the following thesis:

Parity: Necessarily, if *S* and *S'* are epistemic counterparts [which is to say that they have the same non-factive mental states], *S* is justified in believing *p* iff *S'* is justified in believing *p*. (Littlejohn, 2009, 400.)

¹² For a discussion by someone who holds a dissenting view, see Broome (2013).

¹³ Plausibly, they're either identical to a subset of one's non-factive mental states or their propositional content.

¹⁴ After the publication of Williamson's *Knowledge and Its Limits* (2000), it has become common for epistemologists to think that only true propositions (or facts) can be evidence. (Williamson (2000, 185), of course, famously argues for the *E = K Thesis*: "knowledge, and only knowledge, constitutes evidence", and later (2007, 120) for what we may call the *R = K Thesis*: "that *p* is available to you as a reason if and only if you know *p*." Cf. Hyman (2006) who also endorses the *E = K* thesis, but arrives at it via another route than Williamson.) However, this is not a commitment that we need to make. Indeed, there is also an older tradition preceding Williamson that understands evidence in terms of what goes on inside the head rather than outside it, and that allows false propositions (like the content of false visual experiences) to be included in one's evidence. Here, I simply want to point out that the internalist naturally aligns himself with something more akin to the traditional view. For a useful survey of some of the ways in which the concept of *evidence* has been understood, see Kelly (2008).

¹⁵ Here, I will remain neutral on whether one's reasons/evidence is propositionally specified. For useful (and disagreeing) discussions of the issue, see Turri (2009); and Glüer and Wikforss (forthcoming).

However, as Littlejohn points out, Parity doesn't entail mentalism since epistemic counterparts can be justified in believing the same propositions, but without having the same reasons/evidence. For example, epistemic counterparts may satisfy Parity and thus be justified in holding the same beliefs, while one of them has external reasons/evidence that the other doesn't. Moreover, as a result, Parity also allows that there can be (external) factors that make the epistemic agent in the normal case *more* justified in holding certain beliefs than his counterpart in the bad case is. Indeed, for all that Parity tells us, epistemic counterparts are always justified in holding the same beliefs. But it doesn't tell us anything about what their justifiers are or the degree to which they are justified in holding the same beliefs; perhaps there are external reasons that play a justification-conferring role and that make the epistemic agent in the normal case more justified in holding the beliefs he does.

In order to rule out such a position, one must also endorse a stronger thesis:

Equality: Necessarily, if S and S' are epistemic counterparts, the fact that *q* is relevant to the justification of what S believes iff the fact that *q* is relevant to the justification of what S' believes. (Littlejohn, 2009, 406.)

However, Littlejohn claims that Equality has implausible consequences and therefore is vulnerable to a *modus tollens*.¹⁶ To see why this is so, recall the case about the Illusory Ring from the previous section. Consider Claire and an epistemic counterpart, Blaire, both of who believe that the ring with the runic inscriptions is from the Viking Age. The only difference is that in Claire's case the sellers are untrustworthy and the ring is a perfect replica, whereas in Blaire's case the sellers are trustworthy and the ring is a true original. Now, let's say that their reason for believing that the ring is from the Viking Age is that they both have a memory to the effect that they bought it from a trustworthy source.¹⁷ Blaire's reason is her memorial knowledge that the seller is a trustworthy source, whereas Claire's reason is her false

¹⁶ Another interesting view that clearly rejects Equality is *epistemological disjunctivism*. (See, e.g., McDowell (1982); Snowdon (1981-1982; 1990); and Pritchard (2012).) According to disjunctivists, the perceptual experiences (especially visual experiences) of epistemic counterparts in normal and bad cases are fundamentally different both in *kind* (see McDowell, 1982, 472ff.) and insofar as the agent in the normal case can have justification or rationality-conferring reasons that the counterpart in the bad case doesn't have (see Pritchard, 2012, 16; Cf. 2012, 42). Moreover, it is interesting to note that despite his rejection of Equality, Pritchard (2012, 1) claims that epistemological disjunctivism is the "holy grail" of epistemology because it is able to reconcile internalism (with its demand for an accessibility condition on justification) and externalism (with its demand for a strong connection between justification and truth). However, in a recent paper Madison (2014) argues that by failing to do justice to internalist intuitions and the theses they support (like Equality), disjunctivists are ultimately unable to reconcile internalism and externalism.

¹⁷ Their memory should in this instance be understood as a *motivating reason*, rather than a *normative reason*, so as not to beg any questions against the externalist. For more on this distinction, see McNaughton & Rawling (forthcoming).

memorial belief that the seller is a trustworthy source.¹⁸ Plausibly, Littlejohn tells us, knowledge of a proposition *p* is sufficient for *p*'s inclusion in one's evidence; so the proposition that the seller is trustworthy is included in Blaire's evidence and rationally supports her belief that the ring is from the Viking Age. On the other hand, the falsity of a proposition *p* is surely sufficient for the exclusion of *p* from one's evidence; so the proposition that the seller is trustworthy is not included in Claire's evidence and doesn't rationally support her belief that the ring is from the Viking Age.¹⁹ However, if Equality is true this cannot be the case since it tells us that there can be no difference in the facts that are relevant to the justification of the beliefs of epistemic counterparts like Claire and Blaire. Equality therefore has the implausible consequence that Blaire's memorial knowledge either need not be seen as providing a true proposition that is included in her evidence, or Claire's memorial belief can be seen as providing a false proposition that is included in her evidence. Littlejohn puts the issue in the form of a trilemma:

To save Equality, you either have to say that we cannot have knowledge of propositions about the external world, that there can be false propositions included in someone's evidence, or that knowledge is not enough for a proposition's inclusion in someone's evidence. (Littlejohn, 2009, 407.)

Now, there are two plausible ways of responding to this particular objection. First, one can accept the second of Littlejohn's triad of claims by affirming that there indeed can be false propositions included in someone's evidence. In the Illusory Ring case we saw that, intuitively, Claire's belief about the origins of the ring was just as justified as it would have been if she was in Blaire's epistemic position—i.e., if the sellers actually were trustworthy and the ring in fact was from the Viking Age. And since Blaire's memorial knowledge that the seller is trustworthy clearly provides evidence for her belief in the origins of the ring, so must Claire's false belief.^{20, 21}

¹⁸ This is to say that Blaire *remembers that* the seller is trustworthy, whereas Claire only has a *memory* that the seller is trustworthy.

¹⁹ In other words, whereas Claire's memory only is a motivating reason, Blaire's memory also provides a normative reason.

²⁰ Counterexamples to the claim that false propositions cannot be included in one's evidence abound. See, e.g., Warfield (2005); Fitelson (2008); Klein (2008); Arnold (2011); and Rizzeri (2011). Littlejohn (2012, 106-109) argues against this kind of example, and McCain (2016, 25-27) responds to his argument.

²¹ In other words, the internalist need not accept the Williamsonian idea, with which Littlejohn is sympathetic (although he (2011) rejects the E = K Thesis), that only true propositions can be evidence. Focusing only on the objection at hand, the present case about Blaire and Claire doesn't carry much force against the internalist. Indeed, our intuitions seem to favor the view that one's evidence is, as suggested above, provided by one's non-factive mental states and thus that false propositions can be included.

There is, undeniably, an epistemic difference between Claire and Blaire's beliefs about the trustworthiness of the seller. Whereas Claire's belief, which seems to be true from her subjective point of view, in fact is false, Blaire's belief is true and satisfies all the (externalist) conditions for knowledge. The point is just that not all epistemic differences are justificational relevant. What is relevant for the inclusion of one's mental states or their propositional content²² in one's evidence is that they satisfy non-factive epistemic conditions. For example, on a plausible view of knowledge, one needs an unGettiered (doxastically) justified true belief in order to know that something is the case.²³ Blaire therefore satisfies these epistemic conditions. But what is relevant for the inclusion of her memorial knowledge or its propositional content that the person who sold her the ring is a trustworthy source in her evidence is that the mental state (or its propositional content) satisfies non-factive epistemic conditions—like being a belief (or the propositional content thereof).²⁴ In general, if a mental state/proposition involves elements (non-factive epistemic conditions) that are sufficient for explaining certain effects (a change in one's stock of evidence) which that state/proposition produces, then it is those elements that really are responsible for those effects.²⁵ Blaire's memorial knowledge (or its propositional content) is therefore included in her evidence, but only under the guise of being a mental state (or proposition) that satisfies certain non-factive epistemic conditions. And since Blaire and Claire are stipulated to satisfy the same non-

There are, of course, other considerations that motivate Williamson and Littlejohn's views on evidence. For example, Williamson (2000, 193) argues that in normal scientific discourse, evidence is treated as true propositions that are commonly known or perhaps just widely available in the scientific community. I think this is right. However, I suspect that if the scientist or scientific community is pressed to specify what they take their evidence to be, in light of certain possible skeptical scenarios, by citing what their evidence/reasons are for various scientific hypotheses and theories in a variety of cases, that they will find themselves referring to certain non-factive mental states or their propositional content—perhaps they will endorse what may be called the *E = B Thesis*: that only propositions believed or accepted by the scientific community are evidence. For a critical, and much more detailed discussion of Williamson's views, see McGlynn (2014).

²² An anonymous referee pointed out that the proponent of the view that one's evidence is propositionally specified and can include false propositions will have a hard time maintaining *consistency*, which says that one's propositionally specified evidence must be consistent (and which is motivated by the way in which conditional probabilities are treated in probability theory). In response, the proponent of this kind of view can always pursue the idea that even though false propositions can be included in one's evidence, not all of them can—in particular, he may say that inconsistent propositions never are included. However, unless he is able to motivate this idea, the suggestion appears to be *ad hoc*.

Although this raises issues that are somewhat beyond the purposes of this article, I think one way to motivate the idea is to consider various possible scenarios involving (what appears to be) false evidence and see whether they can teach us something about which (if any) constraints there are on false evidence. Doing this, I wouldn't be surprised if we found ourselves convinced that false propositions often can be evidence, but that inconsistent propositions never can be evidence.

²³ Some epistemologists have rejected this view. For example, Foley (1993) and Alston (1989) deny that justification is necessary for knowledge, whereas Sutton (2007) claims that justification is sufficient for knowledge.

²⁴ Contrary to Williamson's knowledge first approach, this presupposes that knowledge can be factored into constituent parts.

²⁵ The same point is also made by Wedgwood (2002, 362-363).

factive epistemic conditions, they therefore have the same evidence and, hence, equally justified beliefs about the origins of the ring.

Second, claiming that our (including the internalist's) intuitions about the New Evil Demon Problem only support Parity and not Equality is question-begging. As I formulated the argument in the previous section, the New Evil Demon Problem supports the mentalist thesis according to which the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. And formulated in this manner, mentalism entails Equality. The intuitions appealed to in my presentation of the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem therefore do support Equality and, moreover, were also thought to do so from the very beginning. According to Cohen's (1984, 281) original version, ". . . on the demon hypothesis, we would have every reason for holding our beliefs, that we have in the actual world."²⁶ So even though I take the first reply to be successful, Littlejohn's objection doesn't really have what it takes to get off the ground. Instead, it simply assumes that the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem is false by claiming that our intuitions don't support Equality. In order for this claim to be able to do its intended work, Littlejohn would have to argue that our intuitions about the New Evil Demon Problem somehow fail to support Equality—and this brings us to his second objection.

3.2 Littlejohn's Second Objection²⁷

According to Littlejohn's second objection, internalist intuitions about the New Evil Demon Problem are undermined by other intuitions that support the denial of mentalism. Consider the following thesis:

Asymmetry: It is possible for there to be a pair of epistemic counterparts, S and S', such that (a) only one of the pairs has good enough reason to believe *p* and have a justified belief about *p* or (b) S has better reasons to believe *p* than S' does. (Littlejohn, 2009, 408.)

Littlejohn claims that *Asymmetry* receives intuitive support from reflection on a case involving an epistemic agent, Alice, who imagines her counterpart, Cooper, who is deceived by a Cartesian demon. In this case, Alice should believe the following two claims:

²⁶ That the new evil demon problem supports mentalism and, as consequence, Equality is also argued by Wedgwood (2002) and Smithies (forthcoming).

²⁷ What I'm here calling Littlejohn's second objection is, as will become clear, really two objections.

- (1) If there is no more reason for me to believe I have hands than there is for Coop to believe he has hands, I should not believe I have them. (Littlejohn, 2009, 408.)
- (2) If my reasons for believing I have hands are no better than his, I really have no good reason for believing I have hands. (Littlejohn, 2009, 408.)²⁸

And she should reject the third:

- (3) Even if there is no more reason for me to believe I have hands than there is for Coop to believe he has hands, there is nothing wrong with my continuing to believe I have hands. (Littlejohn, 2009, 408.)

Now, if we supply the case with a little more detail, I think most philosophers will discover that their intuitions actually speak in favor of (a slightly modified and internalist version of) the third claim and neither of the former two. Consider the first claim. The reason Alice shouldn't believe she has hands, on the assumption that she has no more reason to believe it than Coop, is that Coop's non-factive mental states don't provide him with sufficient reason to believe that he has hands. But does it seem plausible that Coop doesn't have sufficient reason to believe that he has hands? Coop has visual experiences of having hands, experiences of other people telling him that they see him having hands, and it clearly appears as if he is successfully interacting with his environment by using his hands. Indeed, from Coop's perspective, it clearly seems that he should believe that he has hands because he has several good reasons for believing that he does. And this fact—namely, that his belief that he has hands is strongly supported by his non-factive mental states—indicates that he does have sufficient reason to justifiably hold his belief.

When it comes to the second claim, the reason Littlejohn thinks that Alice has no good reason to believe she has hands, on the assumption that her reasons are no better than Coop's, is that Coop's non-factive mental states don't provide him with a single good reason to believe that he has hands. However, Coop has several kinds experience (visual, testimonial, tactile, etc.) supporting his belief that he has hands. And, once again, having visual experiences of having hands, auditory experiences of other people talking about one's having hand, and feeling and using what clearly appears to be one's hands on a daily basis seems to provide one with not just one, but several good reasons for believing that one has hands. Intuitively, it therefore seems that Coop does have good reason to believe that he has hands.

²⁸ Littlejohn also mentions two other claims. But since they are very similar to (1) and (2)—only given a third-person formulation—I'll assume that it suffices to respond to the latter ones.

Moreover, this is of course just what the New Evil Demon Problem indicates.²⁹ Our experiences and beliefs provide us with good reasons for holding beliefs about the external world, despite their fallibility and unreliability. And these intuitions also support the third of Littlejohn's claims. The reason that there is something *wrong* with Alice's belief that she has hands, on the assumption that she has the same reasons as Coop, is that there also is something wrong with Coop's belief that he has hands. Now, epistemically, there is of course something wrong with Coop's belief—even the most ardent internalists should agree.³⁰ For example, it is neither reliable nor true. However, his belief clearly seems justified. With all the aforementioned experiences to back it, his belief cannot be faulted for any rational failure. On the basis of these considerations, I therefore conclude that (3) is supported by intuition whereas (1) and (2) isn't.

However, it is always possible for Littlejohn to insist that he has intuitions to the contrary and that they have to be respected. But seeing as most professional philosophers appear to have internalist intuitions—at least judging by the literature surrounding scenarios like the ones we've considered above—it seems safe to say, at least for now, that mentalism on balance receives more support from intuition than externalism.^{31, 32}

²⁹ It is actually quite hard to see whether Littlejohn's case is supposed to differ in any significant way from the original New Evil Demon scenario. Does the fact that we now are supposed to evaluate someone (Alice) who imagines someone else (Cooper) in a demon scenario, instead of simply evaluating someone in a demon scenario, really change matters? I have a hard time seeing why it should.

³⁰ I suspect this is the real reason why Littlejohn thinks that the Alice and Coop scenario supports Asymmetry. However, the notion of *epistemic wrongness*, which (3) appeals to, needs to be unpacked. Without specifying what epistemic wrongness consists of, it cannot be considered a sufficient condition of having an unjustified belief that the belief somehow is wrong.

A natural way of interpreting epistemic wrongness is to say that a belief is wrong if and only if it is false. But it is clearly possible to have justified false beliefs. Of course, no philosophical view is immune from dissent—Littlejohn himself being a case in point. However, the idea that justification entails truth is undeniably considered quite implausible by the majority of contemporary epistemologists, with most of them finding it counterintuitive or unmotivated.

³¹ Turri (2015a; and 2015b) has recently provided empirical evidence that ordinary belief evaluation by non-philosophers tend to support externalism. However, in philosophical matters it seems reasonable that expert intuition should be given more authority. After all, I take it that few (if any) philosophers think it is reasonable to consider justified true belief sufficient for knowledge just because ordinary evaluation by non-philosophers might support a pre-Gettier conception of knowledge.

³² An anonymous referee objected that my reasoning might involve a fallacious appeal to authority, and that if it doesn't, it relies on unpopular assumptions. In response, I will simply point out that appealing to authority X isn't fallacious as long as we have good reason to think that X is a reliable source of information when it comes to the subject matter at hand. Moreover, when it comes to technical epistemological issues, like those that are the topic of this article, we should only rely on the philosopher's intuitions insofar as we have reason to think that they are a reliable source of information about those issues. And, indeed, this appears to be an assumption underlying standard philosophical practice; the whole dialectic of analysis and counterexample seems to be a case in point. Also, there is a growing literature supporting the claim that intuitions (or their propositional content) constitute evidence. For interesting discussions, see Bengson (2014); Devitt (2015); and Koksvik (2017).

Another worry Littlejohn has about internalist intuitions is that empirical research has shown that when it comes to action people usually think about justification in externalist terms, and that one should not expect people to have different intuitions about the justification of belief. The reason one shouldn't adopt a "hybrid view" which is internalist about the justification of belief and externalist about the justification of action is that anyone committed to such a view has to reject the following plausible principle:

Link: If S's belief that Φ -ing is permissible is justified, S's Φ -ing is justified.
(Littlejohn, 2009, 411.)

And that by rejecting Link, one also has to reject another intuitively plausible principle:

Fault: If S's Φ -ing were unjustified, S could be faulted for having Φ 'd. (Littlejohn, 2009, 412.)

There are different ways of responding to this worry. For example, one can endorse the "hybrid view" and claim that rejecting Fault isn't too bad after all. However, I think a better option is to argue that Littlejohn has presented us with a *false dilemma* since the proponent of the "hybrid view" only has to reject Fault on the not-so-plausible assumption that a person cannot be faulted for actions committed on the basis their justified beliefs. And this is something he acknowledges: "Surely if someone was not wrong to believe that they ought to Φ or are permitted to Φ and Φ 'd from the right sort of motives, they could not be faulted for having Φ 'd." (Littlejohn, 2009, 412.) But it is not at all obvious that the standards for praise and blame are the same when it comes to action and belief. Consider the following example:

Indoctrination Victims

Jane is a victim of indoctrination. All her life she has been provided one-sided evidence that all and only people who commit suicide before the age of 18 enter into Paradise—e.g., trustworthy people whom she knows to be reliable about metaphysical and religious matters, but who only happen to be wrong about this particular issue, have told her so for as long as she can remember. As a result, Jane believes that her only chance of entering paradise is to commit suicide before she turns 18. And motivated by her belief (and her desire to enter into paradise), tragically enough, she does.

Similarly, Twin Jane, an epistemic counterpart of Jane, is also an indoctrination victim. Just like with Jane, Twin Jane has been provided one-sided evidence all her life that all and only people who commit suicide before the age of 18 enter into Paradise by the same kind of reliable testifiers. As a result, Twin Jane believes that her only chance of entering paradise is to commit suicide before she turns 18. And motivated by her belief (and her desire to enter into paradise), she does. However, in the case of Twin Jane, her indoctrinators are actually right. Moreover, it is common knowledge among people that one will in fact enter paradise just in case one commits suicide before turning 18.

Now, it is clear from the description of the example that both Jane and Twin Jane's beliefs are justified.³³ Their evidence, one-sided though it is, supports their beliefs. However, in the case Jane, it clearly seems that her action can be faulted. There are obvious reasons for why she shouldn't have committed suicide. For example, by doing so she will not in fact enter into paradise, she will "miss out" on good experiences she could have had, and her loved ones will probably have to endure a lot of unnecessary grief and suffering as a result. For these and similar reasons, it therefore seems completely natural to say that she shouldn't have committed suicide even though her evidence supported believing that she should. On the other hand, it doesn't seem that Twin Jane's action can be faulted. Indeed, the reasons for acting as she does far outweigh the reasons for not doing so. For example, as a result of committing suicide before she turns 18, Twin Jane doesn't only enter paradise, she also doesn't miss out on any good experiences (her experiences in paradise will be far better), and her family and loved ones will not suffer the tiniest bit (let's stipulate that they've themselves already committed suicide or that they're just genuinely happy for the fact that Twin Jane is in a better place). The general point is that it is possible to separate our reactive attitudes toward an action from our reactive attitudes toward the belief(s) which (together with the appropriate desires) motivated it. Hence, as the case above indicates, a person can faulted an action committed on the basis of their justified belief(s).³⁴

³³ Not only does this seem intuitively right, it is also predicted by plausible internalist *and* externalist (e.g., reliabilist) views.

³⁴ My suggestion of course goes against the widely shared assumption that the culpability (assuming this is what Littlejohn means by being subject to "fault") of action is to be understood along internalist lines. Although undoubtedly controversial, I think the example above provides a plausible case for the opposite view. Another relevant example is the following:

Nuclear Attack

Imagine that the President of a mighty nation launches an atomic bomb against another nation (let's call it "X") that has been hostile and warmongering for decades after being persuaded by his military

Moreover, the internalist about the justification of belief can also avoid the objection by committing himself to internalism about the justification of action (which I am very sympathetic to). For example, he might do this by arguing (as I similarly did above) that even though most people have externalist intuitions about the justification of action, when it comes to professional philosophers things are different, and that expert intuition should be given more weight.³⁵ Doing this, the internalist need not argue against Littlejohn's assumption that a person cannot be faulted for an action committed on the basis of their justified belief(s). However, he can still do so. In that case, he should say that Jane's (but not Twin Jane's) action is blameworthy but justified.

3.3 Williamson's Objection

If the argument above is sound, then justification and blamelessness can come apart. But might not this create other problems for internalism? Perhaps one can object to the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem by claiming that the beliefs had by epistemic agents in demon cases are blamelessly unjustified—and that is precisely what Williamson does. According to the third objection, justification and blamelessness can come apart, and demon cases are prime examples where this is the case.³⁶ Although the beliefs had by epistemic agents in demon cases are unjustified—presumably because they either are unreliable or fail to constitute knowledge—they nevertheless have an *excuse* for holding their beliefs and therefore cannot be blamed. This is how Williamson puts it:

. . . the victim of a paradigmatic skeptical scenario is not to be *blamed* for forming false beliefs under the misapprehension that they constitute knowledge. The subject

advisors that X is close to developing their own nuclear weapons, and that unless he launches a preemptive nuclear attack X will likely terrorize and bomb the rest of the world with their own nuclear weaponry. As it turns out, however, the President's military advisors are wrong. X is not developing nuclear weapons. In fact, its leaders have recently decided, after reading Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, to live and govern in accordance with the categorical imperative.

Now, there is clearly a sense in which the President shouldn't have bombed X even though he was justified in believing that he should. Indeed, it will in fact cause many deaths and extreme amounts of unnecessary suffering. And, for those reasons, one may think that the President does deserve (at least some) blame for his action.

³⁵ Littlejohn (2012, Ch. 6) raises other objections against internalism about the justification of action, and in order to properly defend that kind of view those objections have to be met. However, the point I'm presently making is simply that the argument hinted at above provides an answer to the particular objection under consideration, rather than a full-fledged defense of internalism in the realm of action.

³⁶ Some internalists have thought that justification and blamelessness come down to the same thing; i.e., they are the same epistemic property. See, e.g., Ginet (1975); Bonjour (1985) and Chisholm (1989).

has a cast-iron excuse for having formed those beliefs. . . [However,] excusable failure is not normatively equivalent to success. (Williamson, 2007, 116-117.)³⁷

So, in other words, whereas the epistemic agent in the normal case is blameless and justified, the counterpart in the demon case is blamelessly unjustified.

However, the objection fails to recognize the way in which our intuitions about justification are sensitive to a distinction between perceptual failings and cognitive failings. In order to illustrate this, James Pryor (2001, 117) has us consider three victims of skeptical scenarios.³⁸ The first victim is neither blameless nor justified: he fails to respect his perceptual evidence and simply believes whatever he feels like believing. The second victim is blameless but unjustified: he tries his best to form beliefs that are supported by his perceptual evidence, but fails due to brainwashing or some reason-distorting drug he's been given. The third victim is both blameless and justified: he successfully forms the beliefs that are supported by his perceptual evidence. By claiming that victims who respect or try to respect their perceptual evidence when forming beliefs about the world simply are blamelessly unjustified—like the second and third victims above—Williamson's proposal collapses an intuitive distinction between justified perceptual failings and unjustified cognitive failings.³⁹

Recently, Williamson (forthcoming) has responded to this worry by distinguishing the act of *following* a norm and merely being *disposed* to follow a norm. His claim is that while victims of skeptical scenarios are unable to follow the norms of justification, they may be disposed to do so—in which case they have an excuse for their beliefs which they wouldn't have had if they weren't so disposed. The upshot is that a victim's beliefs are only really blameless (or excusable) when formed as a result of a disposition to follow norms that normally would produce justified beliefs.^{40, 41}

³⁷ The same objection is also offered by Sosa (2003), Littlejohn (2009), and Pritchard (2012).

³⁸ Following Pryor, Smithies (forthcoming, Ch. 2) also uses the three victims to argue that Williamson's objection fails.

³⁹ It might be objected that my Indoctrination Victims example does the same. However, it should be clear that Jane and Twin Jane aren't subject to anything as severe as what I here call cognitive failings.

⁴⁰ "But once we realize how easily norms for belief which one violates in sceptical scenarios generate secondary and tertiary norms [i.e., higher order norms about one's dispositions to follow the lower order norms] with which one complies in those scenarios, we should abandon the naïve idea that the normative status which the subject's beliefs share in the good and bad cases might be justification, as opposed to blamelessness." (Williamson, forthcoming, 22.)

⁴¹ Another response offered by Littlejohn (forthcoming) is that internalist arguments involving skeptical scenarios, like Pryor's three victims or the New Evil Demon Problem, are false dilemmas (or, as Littlejohn calls them, "Contrast Arguments"). As he sees it, they involve the following pattern of reasoning:

1. The beliefs of the victim of a skeptical scenario have something positive going for them.

However, the problem with this response is that it doesn't really account for the way in which our intuitions about justification are sensitive to the difference between perceptual failings and cognitive failings.⁴² To see why this is so, consider Pryor's second and third victims again. Both of them are generally disposed to form justified beliefs, which means they are blamelessly unjustified. But, intuitively, an obvious justificatory difference still persists between them: it is only the third victim which forms his beliefs on the basis of his perceptual evidence. Now, Williamson might claim that the brainwashing/reason-distorting drug somehow changes the dispositions of the second victim so that he no longer is disposed to comply with the norms for justification. But that wouldn't help to clarify the intuitive difference between the victims. For if the second victim neither is blameless nor justified, then he seems to be in the same epistemic position as the first victim. But that would be absurd: simply believing whatever one feels like, without any effort to respect one's evidence, is clearly more blameworthy than doing one's best in forming beliefs that conform to the evidence one has. Moreover, one can also come up with similar cases where the victim's dispositions are guaranteed to remain uncompromised, in which case the intuitive difference between *that* victim and Pryor's third victim still goes unaccounted for. In fact, Williamson himself provides such a case:

Brain Scrambler

A special device emits waves of some sort with a selective scrambling effect on brains. The waves inflict no permanent damage, and do not even change what 'programme' the brain is running, but they occasionally alter the contents of unconscious short-term working memory, so that some computations produce incorrect results. Thus a normal subject may confidently announce that $17 + 29 = 33$. Similarly, consider Connie, a normal subject and competent mathematician who sincerely and confidently announces that 179 is and is not prime, because a scrambled piece of reasoning yields

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2. The victim's beliefs are either blameless or justified.
 3. They are not merely blameless.
 4. Therefore, they must be justified. (See Littlejohn, forthcoming, 7-8.)

But, Littlejohn (forthcoming, 8-11) claims by following Strawson (1962) and others, the victim's beliefs may satisfy other positive epistemic properties, such as being *excusable* or *exemptible*. However, Madison (forthcoming, 9-11) has recently pointed out a plausible line of response for the internalist. According to Madison, the internalist can replace the third premise with a more comprehensive one saying that the victim's beliefs are not simply blameless, or excusable, or exemptible, etc. This way, the fact that the victim's beliefs may satisfy other epistemic properties besides justification or blamelessness doesn't threaten the conclusion by rendering the argument fallacious.

⁴² Cf. Smithies (forthcoming, Ch. 2).

that conclusion, and a scrambled application of a contradiction-detector failed to sound the alarm in retrospect. (Williamson, forthcoming, 14.)

As Williamson makes clear, Connie is disposed to form justified beliefs about mathematics and confidently exercises that disposition. Nevertheless, since her beliefs are the result of a brain-scrambling machine that makes her prone to cognitive failings, they are, just like those of Pryor's second victim, blamelessly unjustified. Williamson's response therefore fails to account for the intuitive distinction between justified perceptual failings and unjustified cognitive failings.

4. Concluding Remarks

Let me conclude by taking stock. In section 2, I used Lehrer and Cohen's New Evil Demon Problem to argue for mentalism. In section 3, I defended the argument against three recent objections—a pair of which is offered by Littlejohn and one by Williamson.

Mentalism is an intuitively compelling thesis about how facts about justification depend upon more fundamental non-epistemic facts. By assessing the justificatory status of epistemic agents in various skeptical scenarios, we can infer that the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. However, this kind of argument from cases has recently come under heavy fire by proponents of a factive turn in epistemology. Philosophers like Littlejohn and Williamson argue that the intuitions supporting internalist views of justification can be undermined, and that in doing so they pave the way for an alternative kind of view according to which facts about justification depend upon facts about the external world, factive mental states, or other externalist conditions. The goal of this paper has been to show that the objections raised by Littlejohn and Williamson fail to undermine the intuitions that support internalism about justification. Although the factive turn has redirected much of contemporary epistemology away from its Cartesian roots, I conclude that a *volte-face* toward the traditional non-factive paradigm is warranted.

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II

The Problem with Trusting Unfamiliar Faculties: Accessibilism Defended

1. Accessibilism

Epistemic internalists claim that facts about justification in some special sense depend upon one's *internal states*. Traditionally, there are two different ways in which this idea has been developed. On the one hand, some internalists support mentalism; i.e., the view that facts about justification supervene upon one's non-factive mental states.¹ On the other hand, others support accessibilism or access internalism; i.e., the view that facts about justification always are *a priori* accessible (henceforth, I'll just use the term “accessible”)—where *a priori* is used in the traditional sense that a condition is *a priori* just in case it doesn't depend on any of the sense modalities.^{2,3} This paper focuses on the latter of the two internalisms, namely accessibilism.

Accessibilism is often thought to receive support from intuitions about cases involving unfamiliar faculties, like clairvoyance. The general idea is that beliefs produced by unfamiliar faculties aren't justified, and that the best explanation for why that is so is that it must be possible for one to tell—at least in principle—what one's beliefs rationally have going for them, if they are justified. Recently, however, this kind of argument has come under heavy fire by proponents of epistemic externalism; i.e., the view that internalism is false. This paper will defend the argument above by responding to three different objections developed in the literature; one of which criticizes the internalist intuitions, and two that criticize the abductive inference that the argument employs. Doing this, the purpose of the paper is to demonstrate

¹ Proponents of mentalism include Pollock & Cruz (1999); Conee & Feldman (2001); Wedgwood (2002); Smithies (2012a); McCain (2016); and Egeland (forthcoming).

² Thus, the modes of *a priori* accessibility include not only reflection and reasoning, but also introspection and other cognitive mechanisms with an experiential aspect. For more on the distinction between narrow and broad notions of the *a priori*, see Casullo (2003, ch. 2).

³ Proponents of accessibilism or access internalism include BonJour (1985); Chisholm (1989); Fumerton (1995); Audi (1998); Steup (1999); and Smithies (2012b).

that the argument withstands recent externalist objections, and, consequently, that accessibilism remains as plausible as ever.

This is how the paper is structured. In section 2, I identify and answer core questions about what commitments the accessibilist should make, while also pointing to prominent, but implausible, versions of accessibilism in the literature. In section 3, I present a couple of well-known scenarios—Laurence Bonjour's (1980; 1985) clairvoyance case and Keith Lehrer's (1990) Truetemp case—and argue that the intuitions they elicit strongly support the accessibilist view endorsed in the previous section. In sections 4 to 6, I defend this argument against three objections recently developed in the literature. The first objection bites the bullet and says that the beliefs of the subjects in Bonjour and Lehrer's scenarios actually are justified; the second says that there are alternative, externalist explanations of the intuitions elicited by the aforementioned scenarios that are more plausible than the one offered by the accessibilist; and the third is Michael Bergmann's (2006) dilemma, which is a *reductio* against accessibilism. Having responded to these objections, I summarize and conclude in section 7.

2. What Kind of Accessibilist Should You Be?

Before I present and defend the main argument, I want to spend a few pages on what commitments the accessibilist should make. This is important, not just because many internalists have defended implausible versions of the view, but also because many of the objections levelled against it only undermine those implausible versions of it. Let's therefore begin by taking a closer look at what commitments the accessibilist should make. My discussion will revolve around three core questions, the first of which is:

2.1 What Kind of Justification Is Accessible?

It is common to draw a distinction between two kinds of justification.⁴ First, you can have justification to believe a certain proposition, regardless of whether or not you actually believe it. For example, after listening to a history lecture you can have justification to believe that the Viking Leif Erikson was the first European to discover North America, but without actually believing it. Second, you can also have justifiably held beliefs (or other doxastic attitudes). For example, if you come to believe the proposition above in a way that is properly based on

⁴ Some even operate with three kinds of justification. See, e.g., Littlejohn (2012, 5).

that which gives you justification to believe it, then your belief is justifiably held. Following Roderick Firth (1978), we can say that the first kind of justification is justification in the *propositional* sense, whereas the second kind of justification is justification in the *doxastic* sense.⁵ Given the above characterization of the distinction, it is clear that propositional justification is necessary, but not sufficient, for doxastic justification.

Now, which of these kinds of justification is accessible? Although I don't know of any internalist who thinks that one always has a special sort of access to facts about doxastic justification, it's not hard to see how such a view would go. The internalist who advocates this kind of view thinks that facts about which beliefs one now justifiably holds somehow are within the subject's cognitive grasp. The problem, however, is that, according to the analysis above, doxastic justification is propositional justification plus proper basing,⁶ and it is highly doubtful that one always has access to whether one satisfies the basing requirement. In other words, one has a justifiably held belief just in case (i) one has justification for holding that belief, and (ii) one holds it by properly basing it on that which gives one justification to hold it; but it is implausible that whether one satisfies the second condition is something that is accessible to one.

In order to illustrate why the basing requirement, which converts propositional justification into doxastic justification if satisfied, isn't accessible, consider Jonathan Schaffer's (2010) debasing demon. A debasing demon can make the beliefs one holds unjustified in the doxastic sense by undetectably changing the basis on which they are held, while still having it seem to the victim as if his beliefs are held on their proper justificatory basis: "[The debasing demon] throws her victims into the belief state on an improper basis, while leaving them with the impression *as if* they had proceeded properly." (Schaffer, 2010, 231.) The debasing demon is conjured by acceptance of the following claims:

1. Knowledge [and doxastic justification] requires the production of belief, properly based on the evidence.
2. Any belief can be produced on an improper basis.

⁵ Other epistemologists use different terminology to draw the same distinction. See, e.g., Goldman (1979); Conee & Feldman (1985); Pryor (2005); and Smithies (forthcoming).

⁶ Turri (2010) provides counterexamples to the analysis. Smithies (2015a) responds that we simply can define proper basing as whatever turns propositional justification into doxastic justification. Thus, "immunity from counterexample may be gained at the cost of reduction." (Smithies, 2015a, footnote 19.)

3. It is always possible, when a belief is produced on an improper basis, for it to seem later as if one had produced a belief properly based on the evidence. (Schaffer, 2010, 232.)

Moreover, as Schaffer points out, there are strong reasons for accepting each of the claims. The first is accepted by almost all contemporary epistemologists; the second is motivated by the idea that any belief can be held in an evidentially insensitive manner on the basis of, say, wishful thinking, blind guesses, or random hunches; and the third is supported by the idea that our awareness of one's past mental processes is fallible. Taken together, it follows from these claims that the basing relation isn't accessible: it is possible that there is a demon that debases one's beliefs, but while still having it seem as if they are properly based on one's evidence.^{7, 8} Hence, accessibilism should be formulated as a thesis about propositional justification, rather than doxastic justification.⁹

2.2 What Does Having Access to Facts About Justification More Specifically Require?

Let's define the *justification facts* as the facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has propositional justification (to a certain degree) to hold. Plausibly, one has access to the justification facts only if one has access to (facts about) one's *justifiers*¹⁰; i.e., to whatever confers justification upon the doxastic attitudes one now has justification to hold. Indeed, it is

⁷ According to Bondy and Carter (forthcoming), Schaffer's argument fails since the debasing scenario isn't possible. Beginning from the assumption that it is possible, they try to establish their conclusion by *reductio*. They do this by showing how the scenario is inconsistent with the most prominent analyses of the basing relation in the literature. However, a problem with their objection is that Schaffer's argument isn't committed to any of those analyses. Indeed, since all of them are subject to counterexamples (as Bondy and Carter rightfully point out), there are good reasons for why he shouldn't be committed to any of them. Instead, insofar as we have a good *intuitive* grasp of the basing relation, Schaffer can theorize about it without being committed to any particular analysis of the notion or the consequences that follow from it.

⁸ Another worry about Schaffer's argument is that it doesn't apply to doxastic theories of the basing relation, according to which having a meta-belief B2 to the effect that that one has a reason *r* supporting one's belief B1 is sufficient for B1 to be based on *r* (see, e.g., Leite, 2008). However, I do not think that this kind of doxastic theory about the basing relation is successful. For example, it appears to be possible to have the relevant meta-belief B2, but without the belief B1 satisfying the basing requirement. For a counterexample along these lines, see Korcz (2015).

⁹ Henceforth, I will therefore only focus on propositional justification (as does the argument that is presented in the next section). However, I suspect that it won't always be possible to clearly differentiate talk about the various types of justification without additional commentary.

¹⁰ In the literature, there is a discussion among internalists about whether accessibilism should be analyzed in terms of one's access to one's justifiers or in terms of one's access to true propositions/facts about one's justifiers. I generally sympathize with the second view. More specifically, I think that what we have access to is true propositions to the effect that one now is/isn't in possession of a certain justified *J*—where *J* typically will be a belief or an experience (cf. paper 6). This, moreover, means that the version of accessibilism that I prefer doesn't rely on any sort of Russellian acquaintance. However, that said, I don't pursue this particular issue in this paper as it is somewhat orthogonal to its larger purpose.

(at least in part) in virtue of one's access to one's justifiers that the justification facts are accessible. This has led many epistemologists, internalists and externalists alike, to formulate accessibilism (or internalism more generally) as a thesis about one's access to one's justifiers. Here are a few examples:

The basic thrust of internalism in epistemology, therefore, is that the properties that confer warrant upon a belief are properties to which the believer has some special sort of epistemic access. (Plantinga, 1993a, 6.)

What we shall call "accessibilism" holds that the epistemic justification of a person's belief is determined by things to which the person has some special sort of access. (Conee & Feldman, 2001, 2.)

What all forms of internalism have in common is that they require, for a belief's justification, that the person holding the belief be aware (or at least potentially aware) of something contributing to its justification. . . I shall take the following to be the canonical formulation of this requirement: *The Awareness Requirement*: S's belief B is justified only if (i) there is something, X, that contributes to the justification of B—e.g., evidence for B or a truth-indicator for B or the satisfaction of some necessary condition of B's justification—and (ii) S is aware (or potentially aware) of X. (Bergmann, 2006, 9.)

However, a problem with these formulations is that having access to one's justifiers is only a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for having access to the justification facts. They therefore fail to capture the sort of accessibility that internalism requires.¹¹ By way of illustration, consider someone—let's call him Johnny—who has justification for believing that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland. The reason Johnny has justification for believing that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland is that he has a memory belief to the effect that a trustworthy geography teacher told him so (this is his justifier). Moreover, let's say that Johnny has access to his memory belief, but not to the fact that it supports believing the proposition above. From Johnny's first person perspective, his memory belief that a trustworthy geography teacher told him that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland has no bearing whatsoever on the belief that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland. Now, it is clear that Johnny's

¹¹ However, Bergmann (2018, 111-112) doubles down and argues not just that his original formulation above captures the sort of accessibility that internalism requires, but also that the stronger formulation which I endorse below actually fails to qualify as an internalist position.

access to his memory belief isn't sufficient for the kind of accessibility that internalism demands; i.e., access to the justification facts.¹² The reason is simply that, from his subjective perspective, there's nothing supporting the proposition that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland (not even his memory belief does). Indeed, the weaker access requirement satisfied by Johnny and suggested in the formulations above is captured by William Alston's (1989) externalist position—which he calls *internalist externalism*—according to which one's justifiers are accessible, but the facts in virtue of which they confer justification (which Alston takes to be facts about reliability, understood in terms of objective probability) are not.¹³

In order to remedy this problem, we should instead say that the justification facts are accessible if and only if *both* one's justifiers *and* the facts about which doxastic attitudes they support (and the degree to which they support them) are accessible. This will rule out that someone like Johnny can have justification for holding a certain belief, but without being in a position to tell what that belief rationally has going for it. Thus, accessibilism can be formulated as the thesis that the justification facts are accessible, or, alternatively, as the thesis that one's justifiers and the facts about justificatory support (i.e., which doxastic attitudes one's justifiers support, and to what degree) are accessible.

2.3 How Are the Justification Facts Accessible?

Lastly, let's consider what kind of access we have to the justification facts. Generally speaking, there are two ways in which the accessibility in question has been understood. First, some internalists argue that the justification facts are *psychologically* accessible, in the sense that the subject always either has a committal attitude (like belief or knowledge) with respect to them or the ability of form such an attitude. For example, according to Bonjour (1985), one has justification to believe that *p* only if one has a (justified) higher-order belief to the effect that one has justification to believe that *p*. As he says in his argument against foundationalism, a belief *B* is justified only if there is an argument of the following form:

- (1) *B* has feature Φ .
- (2) Beliefs having feature Φ are highly likely to be true.
- (3) Therefore, *B* is highly likely to be true.

¹² Consequently, according to internalism, Johnny's doesn't have justification for believing that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland.

¹³ Glüer and Wikforss (2018) also endorse this view.

[And] in order for B to be justified for a particular person A (at a particular time), it is necessary, not merely that a justification along the above lines exist in the abstract, but also that A himself be in cognitive possession of that justification, that is, that he believe the appropriate premises of forms (1) and (2) and that these beliefs be justified for him. (BonJour, 1985, 31.)

Similarly, according to Roderick Chisholm (1989), one has justification to believe that *p* only if one is *able* to know, in virtue of reflection alone, that one has justification to believe that *p*. This is how he puts the point.

The internalist assumes that, merely by reflecting upon his own conscious state, he can formulate a set of epistemic principles that will enable him to find out, with respect to any possible belief he has, whether he is *justified* in having that belief. (Chisholm, 1989, 76.)

However, proponents of the psychological accessibility of justification face a couple of problems. First, they face a regress problem insofar as one has justification for a first-order belief only if one has (the ability to form) a second-order belief to the effect that one has justification for one's first-order belief, and one has justification for this second-order belief only if one has (the ability to form) a third-order belief to the effect that one has justification for one's second order belief, and so on *ad infinitum*. But since no human is able to have such and infinite stock of higher-order beliefs of ever-increasing complexity, it follows that no human has justification for their first-order beliefs, and this is clearly absurd.¹⁴

Second, they also face an over-intellectualization problem insofar as there are unreflective creatures (e.g., children, non-human animals, or the mentally disabled) who seem to have justification to hold certain beliefs, even though they don't have the reflective or conceptual abilities to form higher-order beliefs about which lower-order beliefs they have justification to hold. Thus, the view that the justification facts are psychologically accessible again has counterintuitive consequences.¹⁵

¹⁴ Alston (1989, ch. 8); Fumerton (1995, ch. 3); Bergmann (2006, ch. 1); and Kornblith (2012, ch. 1), to mention just a few, argue that internalism faces regress problems.

¹⁵ The over-intellectualization problem is raised by Goldman (1986); Alston (1989); Feldman (2005); Burge (2013); and Janvid (2017).

For these reasons, I think we should explore the other way in which the notion of “access” has been understood.¹⁶ On this view, the accessibility in question is understood in *epistemic* terms, but in a way that doesn't presuppose anything about one's psychological abilities or states. For example, according to Declan Smithies (2012b), one has justification to believe that p only if one has justification to believe that one has justification to believe that p . This idea is captured by the following iteration principle:

The JJ Principle: $Jp \rightarrow JJp$. (Smithies, 2012b, 274.)¹⁷

Similarly, Maria Lasonen-Aarnio (2014) claims that internalism (which she opposes) should be understood as the view that a necessary condition for having (first-order) justification to hold a certain doxastic attitude is that one has higher-order justification to believe that one does.

A natural way of putting more meat on these bones is as follows. Whenever you have (first-order) justification to hold a certain doxastic attitude—let's just say a belief—toward a proposition p , you also have (higher-order) justification to believe that you do. This higher-order justification is provided by one's faculty of introspection and one's faculty of reflection. You thus have higher-order introspective and reflective justification to believe that you have the lower-order justification that you in fact do have. By way of example, let's say that you have a piece of evidence (e.g., a certain visual experience) e that gives you justification to believe that there is a chessboard in front of you. Now, according to the proposal at hand, a necessary condition for having any evidence is that you have introspective justification to believe that you do have that evidence: $e \rightarrow Je$. Moreover, another necessary condition on e is that you have reflective justification to believe that it supports the proposition(s) p it in fact does support: $e_{supp} \rightarrow Je_{supp}$. Also, having introspective justification to believe that you have evidence e and reflective justification to believe that e supports p is sufficient for having (higher-order) justification to believe that you have (first-order) justification to believe that p :

¹⁶ There are, of course, other internalists who define the relevant kind of accessibility in psychological terms, but who do so in a much weaker sense that avoids the problems above (see, e.g., Fumerton (1995)). However, a problem with views of this kind is that they aren't really supported by the considerations that motivate accessibilism in first place. For a larger discussion of this issue, see Bergmann (2006, ch. 2).

¹⁷ Smithies calls it *The Positive Self-Intimation Thesis*. Moreover, he actually supports principles that are a lot stronger than this. More specifically, he thinks propositional justification has the following structure:

The Accessibility Thesis:

Positive: one has justification to believe that p iff one has justification to believe that one has justification to believe that p ($Jp \leftrightarrow JJp$).

Negative: one lacks justification to believe that p iff one has justification to believe that one lacks justification to believe that p ($\sim Jp \leftrightarrow J\sim Jp$)." (Smithies, 2012b, 273.)

$(Je \wedge Je_{sup}p) \rightarrow JJp$. Thus, if you have (first-order) justification to believe that there is a chessboard in front of you, then you have (higher-order) introspective and reflective justification to believe that you do.^{18, 19}

Now, notice how this kind of view doesn't tell us anything about our psychology. For example, in order to have justification to believe a certain proposition, it doesn't require that we actually believe (or have any other attitude or mental state toward the fact) that we do. Thus, the vicious regress problem²⁰ and the over-intellectualization problem are avoided. This way, proponents of the epistemic accessibility of justification have a way of conceptualizing the relevant kind of accessibility, but without falling prey to common externalist objections. Moreover, I do not doubt that there are other plausible ways for the proponent of this kind of position to understand the accessibility in question. However, for present purposes, when it comes to how the justification facts are accessible, I will take the accessibilist to be committed to something like the JJ principle.²¹

In sum, these are the core commitments that the accessibilist should make. First, he should claim that facts about propositional, and not doxastic, justification are accessible. Second, he should claim that the justification facts are accessible just in case both one's

¹⁸ There are of course other ways of fleshing out the JJ principle, but I think this is a plausible first proposal. A similar suggestion is hinted at (but not endorsed) by Silins (forthcoming) and developed and argued for in great detail by Smithies (forthcoming).

¹⁹ Having discussed the JJ principle with colleagues, I have found that some of them feel that it somehow is too weak to capture the kind of accessibility that the internalist is (or should be) interested in. In response to this kind of worry, I simply want to point out that there isn't any general agreement among internalists about what the relevant kind of access involves. Rather, the idea is that reflection on certain kinds of cases (what I'm in this paper calling unfamiliar faculty cases) supports the idea that facts about justification are *a priori* accessible in some sense or other, and that the internalist should figure out how to spell out this access condition. That being said, the JJ principle seems like a perfectly fine proposal.

²⁰ It still generates an infinite regress insofar as having first-order justification to hold a certain doxastic attitude ultimately requires an infinite regress of higher-order justifications to believe that one has the lower-order justifications. However, as Smithies (2012b, 277) points out, since this is a regress of *propositional* justification—in order to have first-order justification for a doxastic attitude it is not required that one actually believe any of these higher-order propositions—it is benign. Indeed, having such a stock of infinite (higher-order) justifications doesn't seem any more problematic than it is for someone who has justification to believe that p to also have justification to believe that $p \vee q$, justification to believe that $p \vee r$, and so on. Moreover, neither case of infinite justifications seems to require that the agent must be *able* to form the relevant beliefs. After all, the disjunctive propositions just mentioned may be too many or too large for any finite mind with finite computational capacity to believe.

²¹ A particularly tricky issue concerns the conceptually possible case where you have someone who has justification J to believe p , but who either doesn't have the concepts to form the higher-order belief that they have J , or who doesn't have the concepts to form the belief that J supports p . The issue, more specifically, is whether, in this case, the subject still has access to the fact that he has justification to believe p . Or, in other words, does having access to the justification facts in the epistemic sense require that one has the *concepts* to take advantage of this access (even though it doesn't require that one has the ability to do so)? Personally, I am undecided with respect to this issue. Moreover, if it turns out that having the kind of access with which I am concerned does require that one has the concepts to take advantage of it, then I would be happy to conclude that accessibilism only holds true of cases which don't involve conceptual deprivation.

justifiers *and* the facts about justificatory support are accessible. Third, he should claim that the justification facts are epistemically, and not psychologically, accessible. Taken together, this enables us to formulate the following plausible position, which avoids many of the traditional problems that have plagued the internalist:

Accessibilism: necessarily, one always has propositional justification to believe the justification facts (i.e., the facts about what which doxastic attitudes one now has propositional justification (to a certain degree) to hold), or, alternatively, what one's justifiers are and how they support the doxastic attitudes they do.

3. The Argument from Unfamiliar Faculties

According to simple process reliabilism, like that of the early Alvin Goldman (1979), the justification facts are a function of the reliability of one's doxastic dispositions. However, by now, many counterexamples to this analysis are on the table. The counterexamples usually either demonstrate that reliability isn't necessary for justification or that it isn't sufficient for justification.²² One of the most famous counterexamples to the sufficiency claim is provided by BonJour and goes as follows:

Clairvoyance

Norman, under certain conditions which usually obtain, is a completely reliable clairvoyant with respect to certain kinds of subject matter. He possesses no evidence or reasons of any kind for or against the general possibility of such a cognitive power or for or against the thesis that he possesses it. One day Norman comes to believe that the President is in New York City, though he has no evidence either for or against this belief. In fact the belief is true and results from his clairvoyant power under circumstances in which it is completely reliable. (BonJour, 1985, 41; Cf. 1980.)

Now, according to simple process reliabilism, since Norman's belief about the President's whereabouts is reliably produced (and there are no undefeated defeaters), it is justified. However, intuitively, the reliabilist verdict is clearly wrong; Norman's belief doesn't seem any more justified than a random hunch. Hence, simple process reliabilism is wrong.

Consider now another counterexample provided by Lehrer:

²² The most famous counterexample to the necessity claim is provided by Lehrer and Cohen (1983).

Truetemp

Suppose a person, whom we shall call Mr. Truetemp, undergoes brain surgery by an experimental surgeon who invents a small device which is both a very accurate thermometer and a computational device capable of generating thoughts. The device, call it tempucomp, is implanted in Truetemp's head . . . and acts as a sensor to transmit information about the temperature to the computational system in his brain. . . Assume that the tempucomp is very reliable, and so his thoughts are correct temperature thoughts. . . Now imagine, finally, that he . . . accepts [these thoughts] unreflectively, another effect of the tempucomp. Thus, he thinks and accepts that the temperature is 104 degrees. It is. (Lehrer, 1990, 163-164.)

Once again, simple process reliabilism tells us that Truetemp's belief about the temperature is justified, since it is reliably produced (and there are no undefeated defeaters). However, just as with Norman, this is the wrong verdict: intuitively, Truetemp's belief is clearly not justified. Hence, simple process reliabilism is wrong.

Moreover, when diagnosing where exactly simple process reliabilism goes wrong, Bonjour and Lehrer provide the resources necessary for formulating an argument, based on the intuitions elicited by the scenarios above, for accessibilism. The argument makes use of the fact that the beliefs of the subjects in the scenarios above are produced by what we may call an *unfamiliar faculty*;²³ i.e., a faculty for belief production which a subject has, but without any awareness of the fact that he has it or of why beliefs produced by that faculty should be true. Consider the following passage, where Bonjour offers his diagnosis:

One reason why externalism may seem initially plausible is that if the external relation in question genuinely obtains [i.e., the reliable relation between one's belief and the truth], then Norman will in fact not go wrong in accepting the belief, and it is, *in a sense*, not an accident that this is so: it would not be an accident from the standpoint of our hypothetical observer who knows all the relevant facts and laws. But how is this supposed to justify Norman's belief? From his subjective perspective it is an accident that the belief is true. And the suggestion here is that the rationality of justifiability of

²³ The term is borrowed from Moon (2018).

Norman's belief should be judged from Norman's own perspective rather than from one which is unavailable to him. (BonJour, 1985, 43-44.)²⁴

Similarly, Lehrer writes:

Though he [i.e., Truetemp] records the information because of the operations of the tempucomp, he is ignorant of the facts about the tempucomp and about his temperature telling reliability. Yet, the sort of causal, nomological, statistical, or counterfactual relationships required by externalism may all be present. Does he know [or have justification to believe] that the temperature is 104 degrees when the thought occurs to him while strolling in Pima Canyon? He has no idea why the thought occurred to him or that such thoughts are almost always correct. He does not, consequently, know [or have justification to believe] that the temperature is 104 degrees when that thought occurs to him. (Lehrer, 1990, 164.)

What BonJour and Lehrer here tell us is that simple process reliabilism (and other forms of externalism) cannot be correct since it counts reliably produced beliefs that are wholly arbitrary or unsupported from the subject's first person perspective as justified. However, as the Clairvoyance and Truetemp scenarios above indicate, a subject can only have justification for a certain belief if it *isn't* an accident from his perspective why that belief should be true. In other words, beliefs produced by unfamiliar faculties cannot be justified since the truth of those beliefs would be completely accidental to the subject who has them. Indeed, according to the internalist, the most plausible explanation for why the intuitions elicited by the cases above are true—namely, that Norman and Truetemp's beliefs are unjustified—is that one must always have a special sort of access to the justificatory status of one's doxastic attitudes, if they are justified.²⁵ By abductive reasoning, we can therefore conclude from these intuitions that accessibilism is true.

Recently, the argument from unfamiliar faculties for accessibilism has been heavily criticized. In the next three sections, I will respond to three different ways in which the argument above has been challenged. Doing this, the goal is to demonstrate that the argument withstands recent externalist objections, and that its conclusion remains as plausible as ever.

²⁴ Cf. BonJour and Sosa (2003, 32): “[Norman is] being epistemically irrational and irresponsible in accepting beliefs whose provenance can only be a total mystery to [him], whose status is as far as [he] can tell no different from that of a stray hunch or arbitrary conviction.”

²⁵ Internalists take it to be the best explanation because it is the explanation that is most virtuous. For example, it is very *simple*, and it provides a *unified* explanation that accounts for both BonJour and Lehrer's scenarios, but with the *power* to generalize to other similar cases as well.

4. The Bullet-Biting Response

Some externalists have responded to the argument above by arguing that the intuitions elicited by cases involving unfamiliar faculties actually support externalism. For example, Sven Bernecker claims that the argument from unfamiliar faculties somehow is biased against reliabilism by assuming that those kinds of faculties aren't really reliable, and that if we properly acknowledge the fact that they are (in the relevant scenarios), then we will also realize that the beliefs they produce are justified. Focusing on Bonjour's clairvoyance case, this is how he puts it:

I think it is questionable whether the clairvoyance example poses a threat to externalist reliabilism. The intuitive plausibility of the thought experiment hinges on the presumption that clairvoyance is *not* reliable. Yet if a clairvoyant faculty actually existed, then either it would prove itself reliable or not. If it proved itself reliable, then intuitively there would be no reason to deny clairvoyants justification and knowledge. Bonjour's internalist interpretation of the thought experiment presupposes a bias against clairvoyance. (Bernecker, 2008, 166.)

Here, Bernecker is making the point that (presumably) there aren't any reliable clairvoyants in the *actual* world, and that if there are reliable clairvoyants in the possible world that Norman finds himself in and he happens to be one of them, then we should have intuitions to the effect that his belief about the President's whereabouts is justified.²⁶ Moreover, if I understand Bernecker correctly, the reason most of us don't have those intuitions is that we let certain facts about our world (that there aren't any reliable clairvoyants or temperature-tellers) skew our judgments about certain facts (the justificatory status of Norman or Truetemp's beliefs) in other possible worlds.

However, in response, I will make two points against Bernecker. First, claiming that if clairvoyance (or the tempucomp) really is reliable, then "there would be no reason to deny clairvoyants justification and knowledge" is simply wrong. The majority of philosophers appear to be swayed by internalist intuitions when it comes to cases involving unfamiliar faculties (at least judging by the current state of the literature), and that does provide us with

²⁶ Lyons (2009, 119) seems to make an analogous point with his Nyrmoos case.

good reason to deny that beliefs produced by unfamiliar faculties are justified.²⁷ Moreover, the internalist also has a good—indeed, I've argued, the best—explanation for why so many who reflect on the clairvoyance and Truetemp scenarios deny that the subjects in those cases have justification: namely, one must always have a special sort of access to the justificatory status of one's doxastic attitudes, if they are justified.

Second, Bernecker's alternative explanation of internalist intuitions about the clairvoyance case—namely, that they are biased or skewed due to the fact that the faculty in question (i.e., clairvoyance) doesn't really exist—is problematic. To see why that is so, we must ask ourselves whether it is only the intuitions elicited by the clairvoyance case that are biased in the way Bernecker suggests? If so, then the Truetemp case still supports accessibilism and Bernecker's response fails. If, however, it isn't only the intuitions elicited by the clairvoyance case that are biased, then he needs to say something about which kinds of cases are likely to give rise to biased intuitions. If he thinks this is the case when it comes to *all* scenarios involving unfamiliar faculties (which I suspect he does), then, unless he is able to provide some principled motivation for this view, it is clearly *ad hoc*. After all, why should intuitions about reliable clairvoyants or temperature-tellers be less trustworthy than intuitions about, say, Gettier-cases, brains-in-vats, demon's victims, epistemic akrasia or belief in Moorean conjunctions? A possible response hinted at in the passage quoted above is that our intuitions are trustworthy only insofar as they are about cases involving phenomena that exist in the actual world—which, of course, reliable clairvoyants and temperature tellers don't. However, there are a couple of problems with this view. First, it is committed to denying the commonly accepted position that modal or counterfactual intuitions can teach us about things that are merely possible.²⁸ For example, it seems that modal intuitions about, say, Sherlock Holmes and his extraordinary abilities can teach us that such a man possibly *could have existed*, but, according to the view at hand, they cannot. Second, it is hard to see what kind of considerations could motivate the view, especially since Bernecker doesn't provide any. It does of course save the reliabilist from having to give counterintuitive judgments about various cases, but that is of course a completely *ad hoc* reason for the view when the

²⁷ Here I'm not making the claim that most philosophers have internalist *opinions*, but that they have internalist *intuitions* about unfamiliar faculty cases. When looking at the literature that has developed around these kinds of cases, it seems that externalists generally tend to share the internalist intuitions, but rather give more weight to other theoretical considerations that speak against them.

²⁸ See, e.g., Bealer (2002); and McGinn (2004).

plausibility of reliabilism itself is in question. For these reasons I think that Bernecker's response ultimately fails.²⁹

5. The Alternative Explanations Response

On balance, most philosophers appear to agree that Norman and Truetemp don't have justification for their beliefs. According to accessibilism, the best explanation for this intuitive datum is that the justification facts always are epistemically accessible. However, this is not the only plausible explanation. Indeed, many externalists have offered their own explanations for the intuitive datum that Norman and Truetemp don't have justification for their beliefs. For example, Bergmann (2006) and Graham (2014a; 2014b) claim that the reason they don't have justification is that their beliefs aren't produced by properly functioning cognitive faculties; Breyer and Greco (2008) claim that the faculties responsible for their beliefs aren't properly integrated with their cognitive character; Lyons (2009) claims that their beliefs lack the appropriate etiology; and Comesaña (2010) claims that they aren't supported by reliabilist evidence. In a recent paper, however, Harmen Ghijzen (2016) has plausibly argued that all of these alternative explanations ultimately fail.³⁰ Moreover, in order to remedy their shortcomings, Ghijzen offers his own externalist explanation of why neither Norman nor Truetemp has justification for their belief. In this section, I will take a closer look at Ghijzen's explanation and argue that it too ultimately fails.

According to Ghijzen (2016, 102), we (as cognitively sophisticated agents) have certain largely unconscious *monitoring mechanisms* that detect and respond to the origins of the information we receive and its coherence with other information we possess. If, for example, these monitoring mechanisms detect information that comes from an unreliable source or information that doesn't cohere with certain other beliefs or experiences, then they reject it. Drawing on the work of Alvin Plantinga (1993a) and Peter Graham (2014a), Ghijzen

²⁹ Another bullet-biting response is offered by Janvid, who argues as follows: "From an externalist perspective, Norman is in the same predicament regarding his clairvoyant powers as many people are regarding their perceptual abilities. We cannot deny that Norman is warranted in his clairvoyant beliefs unless we also are willing to deny that these people are in positive epistemic states regarding their perceptual beliefs without having collected evidence, at least track records, in favor of the reliability of their perceptual mechanisms." (Janvid, 2017, 106.)

In response, I think this way of biting the bullet ends up begging the question, since internalists like myself will be quick to *contrast* clairvoyance and perception precisely because only the latter faculty provides internally accessible reasons or evidence, like visual and auditory seemings, that can be known through reflection to provide justificatory support to certain propositions.

³⁰ Although I don't have the space to go deeper into the issue here, let me just note that I think Ghijzen's criticisms are successful. Moreover, I'm not alone in doing so: see, e.g., Moon (2018).

claims that, taken together, these monitoring mechanisms make up one's *defeater system*; i.e., a system whose proper function is the reliable prevention of forming or maintaining false beliefs. This is why he says that there is a "Proper Functionalist Defeat (PFD)" condition on justification, which he formulates as follows:

PFD *S*'s belief in *p* at *t* is justified only if *S* does not have a defeater system *D* such that, had *D* been working properly, it would have resulted in *S*'s not believing *p* at *t*. (Ghijsen, 2016, 106.)

Moreover, according to Ghijsen, PFD plausibly explains why Norman and Truetemp's beliefs are unjustified. Since their defeater systems would have rejected their beliefs if they had been functioning properly, they cannot be justified:

[T]he information presented by their special senses is not corroborated by any of their other senses, nor does the information stem from a recognizable trustworthy source. This should give their monitoring mechanisms sufficient cause to prevent the information from rising to the status of belief. (Ghijsen, 2016, 108.)

Now we have two plausible, but competing, explanations of the Clairvoyance and Truetemp scenarios. On the one hand, the accessibilist says that the reason Norman and Truetemp's beliefs are unjustified is that they have been produced by unfamiliar faculties and, as a result, their truth is completely arbitrary or accidental from their subjective point of view. On the other hand, Ghijsen says that the reason their beliefs are unjustified is that their defeater systems aren't functioning properly, since they would have prevented the formation of those beliefs if they had. How are we to decide between these explanations? In light of the scenarios presented above in section 3, this is rather difficult since both of them respect the intuition that Norman and Truetemp's beliefs are unjustified. In order to decide between them, we therefore need another scenario where they yield different verdicts. Continuing, I will present a scenario offered by Ghijsen himself (in response to Graham) and develop a slightly modified version of it where accessibilism and PFD disagree about how it should be interpreted.

Consider the following variation on BonJour's original clairvoyance case:

Norbert

Norbert is the son of a mother and father who both have reliable clairvoyant abilities and have been able to reproduce because of the benefit these clairvoyant abilities have

provided for them. However, there are not (yet) many people who have these clairvoyant abilities, and their existence is kept secret. The abilities are due to specialized internal organs that pick up on special energy waves in the environment, and then output brief visual images which represent that such-and-so is currently the case at some distant place. Furthermore, the abilities usually become active quite suddenly some time after puberty. Norbert's parents have decided not to tell him about the existence of his clairvoyant abilities, and Norbert has no evidence for or against their existence in general or his own having them. Some time after puberty, Norbert suddenly experiences a brief visual image of the President being in New York City and on that basis believes that the president is in New York City. (Ghijsen, 2016, 98.)

Ghijsen tells us that, intuitively, Norbert's belief is unjustified despite being reliably formed—and with this the accessibilist agrees. The explanations that Ghijsen and the accessibilist offer are of course different, but the intuition elicited by the example is called into question by neither.³¹ However, the case can easily be modified—or perhaps I should say expanded upon—so that it yields another result. Consider the following case, which I call Norbert Jr.

Norbert Jr.

Hundreds of years after Norbert developed his clairvoyant abilities, clairvoyance has become a widespread phenomenon with the majority of people now developing clairvoyant abilities, but *without* any associated visual imagery, shortly after puberty. The reason is that clairvoyants have an enormous evolutionary advantage; their chances of surviving and reproducing are far greater than those of people without clairvoyant abilities. Moreover, clairvoyance has now become such an integrated part of most people's cognitive lives that the people who have that ability also have defeater systems whose proper function no longer is to prevent the formation or

³¹ This is somewhat of a simplification. Personally I have conflicting intuitions about the case due to the fact that Norbert's clairvoyant faculty is stipulated to output visual images that are (presumably) internally accessible. For this reason, the clairvoyant faculty might appear to function more or less as a quasi-visuoperceptual faculty, differing mainly insofar as it is able to provide the subject with visual representations of things that are happening at a far greater distance than regular perception. Thus, Norbert's clairvoyant belief might appear to be justified in more or less the same way and to more or less the same degree as regular visual beliefs. For this reason, I will stipulate in the scenario below that the subject (Norbert Jr.) doesn't have the kind of clairvoyance induced visual experiences that Norbert does. Doing this, the case is presented in such a way that Ghijsen and the accessibilist will offer different verdicts, but without relying on unnecessary elements (visual imagery) that only serves to complicate the scenario and our intuitions about it.

maintenance of clairvoyant beliefs.³² Norbert Jr. is one of Norbert's descendants. The community in which he lives (including his friends and family) has decided not to tell him about the clairvoyant abilities of his species, and Norbert Jr. has no evidence for or against their existence in general or his own having them. Some time after puberty, Norbert spontaneously forms the clairvoyant belief that the President is in New York City.

Intuitively, Norbert Jr.'s belief is unjustified. After all, his epistemic position appears to be no better than that of Norbert. And according to the accessibilist, that is correct. Indeed, accessibilism tells us that the best explanation for why Norbert Jr.'s belief is unjustified is that it has been produced by an unfamiliar faculty and, as a result, its truth is completely arbitrary or accidental from his first person perspective. However, according to Ghijsen this cannot be correct. Since Norbert Jr.'s defeater system is functioning properly, his belief about the President's whereabouts should be justified. But this just does not seem plausible. Of course, Ghijsen can always insist that Norbert Jr.'s belief is unjustified, but that the right explanation for why that is so should be sought somewhere else; after all, PFD is only a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for justification. However, this would be a very problematic move: not only does it undermine the motivation for PFD (i.e., its ability to plausibly explain the intuitions elicited by clairvoyance-style cases), but it also puts Ghijsen in a position where he has to come up with another explanation for the Norbert Jr. case—and why not accessibilism? Hence, in light of the Norbert Jr. case, Ghijsen's PFD either gives what clearly appears to be the wrong verdict, or it loses its motivation.

6. Bergmann's Dilemma

The third objection I want to consider is offered by Bergmann. According to Bergmann, accessibilism is motivated by its ability to avoid what he calls “The Subject's Perspective Objection (SPO)”:

*The Subject's Perspective Objection*³³: If the subject holding a belief isn't aware of what that belief has going for it, then she isn't aware of how its status is any different from a stray hunch or an arbitrary conviction. From that we may conclude that from

³² The clairvoyant beliefs might thus perhaps be a bit like spontaneous beliefs about the dangerousness of snakes for us. For more on snake-beliefs and proper function, see Moon (2018).

³³ The SPO encapsulates why beliefs produced by unfamiliar faculties intuitively cannot be justified; the reason is that their truth is completely accidental or unsupported from one's subjective perspective.

her perspective it is an accident that her belief is true. And that implies that it isn't a justified belief. (Bergmann, 2006, 12.)

However, as he sees it, accessibilism faces a dilemma, thus making it unfit to explain the intuitions elicited by unfamiliar faculty cases. The dilemma he presents is as follows³⁴:

A Dilemma for Internalism

1. An essential feature of internalism is that it makes a subject's actual or potential *awareness* of some justification-contributor a necessary condition for the justification of any belief held by that subject.
2. The awareness required by internalism is either *strong* or *weak* awareness.
3. If the awareness required by internalism is strong awareness, then internalism has vicious regress problems leading to radical skepticism.
4. If the awareness required by internalism is weak awareness, then internalism is vulnerable to the SPO, in which case internalism loses its main motivation for imposing the awareness requirement.
5. If internalism either leads to radical skepticism or loses its main motivation for imposing the awareness requirement (i.e., avoiding the SPO), then we should not endorse internalism.
6. Therefore, we should not endorse internalism. (Bergmann, 2006, 13-14.)

In order to get a better grip on how the dilemma actually goes, we need to say a little bit about what Bergmann means by “weak” and “strong” accessibility/awareness. Strong awareness, more specifically, involves “*conceiving of* the justifier that is the object of awareness as being in some way relevant to the justification or truth of the belief” it supports (Bergmann, 2006, 13); i.e., it requires that one somehow conceptualizes the justifier as supporting the belief in question. Weak awareness, on the other hand, doesn't require this sort of conceptualization. So Bergmann's dilemma tells us that proponents of accessibilism either support weak or strong accessibilism. If they support strong accessibilism, then they face vicious regress problems that lead to radical skepticism. But if they support weak accessibilism, then they become vulnerable to the SPO. In either case, accessibilism fails.

In the literature, both premise 3 and premise 4 have been challenged. For example, Thomas Crisp (2009) and Rogers and Matheson (2011, 65ff.) argue that premise 3 is false by

³⁴ An early and somewhat underdeveloped version of the dilemma was first presented by Fumerton (1995, 63-65).

presenting a version of strong accessibilism that doesn't face vicious regress problems. However, since I have some reservations about their argument, I will focus on premise 4 instead.

When it comes to premise 4, Bergmann tells us that weak accessibility/awareness of a justifier isn't sufficient to make the truth of the doxastic attitude it supports non-accidental from the subject's perspective and therefore not sufficient to justify said attitude (i.e., it is vulnerable to the SPO). This is the case, according to Bergmann, for both *conceptual* and *nonconceptual* versions of weak accessibilism. According to nonconceptual versions of weak accessibilism, there is a weak accessibility condition on justification that doesn't require the subject to conceive of the justifier in any way. However, as Bergmann sees it, such conceptualization is *necessary* in order to avoid the SPO:

[S]ince the awareness required is nonconceptual, a person can have the required awareness of [the justifier] without conceiving of [it] in any way—without categorizing it according to any classificatory scheme. But then [a subject] can be nonconceptually aware of [the justifier] without conceiving of [it] as relevant at all to the appropriateness of his belief. According to the SPO, if [the subject] does not conceive of [the justifier] as something relevant to the appropriateness of his belief, it is an accident from [his] perspective that his belief is true. Clearly this supposed problem is not solved by requiring [the subject] to be *nonconceptually* aware of [the justifier]. (Bergmann, 2006, 20.)

Similarly, according to Bergmann, conceptual versions of weak accessibilism also face the SPO. According to conceptual versions of weak accessibilism, there is a weak accessibility condition on justification that *does* require the subject to conceive of the justifier, but *not* in any way that makes it relevant to the appropriateness of the belief (or other doxastic attitude) it supports. However, once again, conceiving of the justifier *as supporting the belief it does* is necessary in order to avoid the SPO:

Would it help if we added instead the requirement that [a subject] has a *conceptual* weak awareness of [the justifier]? Here again the answer is 'no'. For [the subject] could satisfy this sort of requirement simply by being aware of [the justifier] and applying some concept or other to it. . . And that means that [the subject] can have a conceptual weak awareness of [the justifier] without conceiving of [it] as relevant in any way to the appropriateness of his belief B. But then, according to the SPO, even if this added

requirement were satisfied, it would still be an accident from [the subject's] perspective that B is true. For although [the subject] applies a concept to [the justifier], he doesn't apply the *right sort* of concept to it. He doesn't apply a concept that involves his conceiving of [the justifier] as contributing in some way to B's justification (or as indicating that B is likely to be true or some such thing). The only way to guarantee that he *does* apply such a concept to [the justifier] is to have B satisfy a strong awareness requirement. Thus, we are forced to concede that by imposing only a conceptual weak awareness requirement, the internalist is vulnerable to the SPO. (Bergmann, 2006, 20-21.)

Thus, the upshot for Bergmann is that weak accessibilism—whether it is of a conceptual or non-conceptual version—becomes unmotivated since it is vulnerable to the SPO.

In response, Rogers and Matheson (2011) have argued that versions of weak accessibilism that appeal to “seemings” as justifiers—including Michael Huemer's *phenomenal conservatism*³⁵—provide counterexamples to premise 4. As they see it, seemings, defined as inclinations to form certain beliefs,³⁶ can satisfy the weak accessibility/awareness condition:

[T]he seeming may result for the subject as a result of merely *weak* awareness of some object of first-order awareness. This being the case, an individual can be in a state wherein he hosts the seeming that some proposition is true while remaining in a state of weak—or even nonconceptual—awareness of that seeming, or while having no higher-order *awareness* of the seeming at all, and all while remaining in a state of weak awareness concerning the object of first-order awareness that gives rise to that seeming. (Rogers & Matheson, 2011, 60-61.)

Moreover, not only can such justifying seemings satisfy weak awareness, they also escape the SPO. Absent any relevant defeaters, if it seems to one that *p*, then *p*'s truth *isn't* accidental from one's subjective perspective. This appears to be correct. If a certain proposition—for example that I'm currently reading a philosophy paper, or that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland—seems true, then the truth of that proposition isn't accidental or surprising from one's

³⁵ See Huemer (2001; 2007).

³⁶ Cf. Swinburne (2001, 141-142); and Conee (2004, 15), who also claim that seemings are inclinations to believe. However, not everyone agrees. Huemer (2007), for example, argues rather plausibly that seemings and inclinations to believe are conceptually distinct and therefore can come apart.

first-person perspective. Referring back to BonJour's Clairvoyance scenario, Rogers and Matheson put the point as follows:

There is a clear subjective difference, for example, between the belief that inexplicably (from his own perspective) pops into Norman the clairvoyant's head as a result of the operation of his clairvoyant powers, on the one hand, and a subject's belief in some proposition as a result of the proposition's actually *seeming true* to him upon his understandingly considering it and being weakly aware of some object of awareness (e.g., conceptual inclusion relationships), on the other. After all, in the latter case, the proposition *seems true* to the subject—to use the language of Plantinga (1993[b]), the subject feels 'pushed' or 'impelled' toward believing it. (Rogers & Matheson, 2011, 61.)

Moreover, even though I think the authors mentioned above are correct insofar as versions of weak accessibilism that appeal to seemings as justifiers do provide genuine counterexamples to Bergmann's fourth premise,³⁷ I want to argue that the version of accessibilism that has been the focus of this paper—something akin to the JJ principle of section 2.3—also provides a counterexample to it. Consider again the JJ principle. It says that one has justification to believe (or, alternatively, withhold/disbelieve) that *p*, only if one has higher-order justification to believe that one has justification to believe (or, alternatively, withhold/disbelieve) that *p*. By way of example, the principle says that if you have

³⁷ Bergmann (2013, 170-171) objects by presenting a couple of scenarios with the purpose of making it intuitive that it is possible to have a conscious seeming that *p* (that satisfies the weak accessibility condition), but that it is an accident from one's perspective that *p* is true. The scenarios he presents have the same structure: there is an epistemic agent who has the relevant kind of seeming and who holds the corresponding belief, but who is *incapable* (due to severe cognitive failings or malfunctions) to conceive of the seeming as relevant to the truth of the corresponding belief. Instead, the agent simply holds the belief for silly or irrational motives, and not because of the seeming itself. As a result, according to Bergmann, it is intuitive that the truth of the agent's belief is completely accidental from his first person perspective; in which case Rogers and Matheson's proposal falls prey to the SPO.

However, Moretti and Piazza (2015) have plausibly responded by arguing that Bergmann's scenarios fail to show that beliefs properly based on, or justified by, seemings fall prey to the SPO since the agents in the scenarios hold the relevant beliefs in an irrational manner that *isn't* properly based on the seemings. This is how they put it: "It [i.e., Bergmann's example] only teaches us that if a subject *S* is just weakly aware of a seeming that *P*, believes that *P* but bases her belief that *P* on neither her seeming that *P* nor on any other source of epistemic justification, then it is an accident from *S*'s perspective that her belief that *P* is true (if the belief is true at all). Thus Bergmann's example gives us no reason for claiming that *S*'s weak awareness of her seeming that *P* cannot prevent *S*'s belief that *P* from being accidentally true from *S*'s own perspective when *S*'s belief that *P* is based on her seeming that *P*." (Moretti & Piazza, 2015, 1279.)

Moreover, another problem with Bergmann's (2013) scenarios is that since the agents suffer from severe cognitive failings or malfunctions that make them unable to conceive of the seemings as relevant to the truth of the beliefs they hold, they might not actually have any genuine seemings after all. If it "seems" to one that *p*, but one doesn't have the cognitive capacity to recognize it as in any way relevant to the truth the belief that *p*, then the "seeming" might not be a proper seeming after all.

justification to believe, say, that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland, then you have (higher-order) justification to believe that you have justification to believe that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland. Now, there are two things to notice here. First, the JJ principle satisfies the weak awareness condition. It tells us that the justification facts are accessible in the sense that they are accompanied by higher-order justifications that enable the subject to believe with doxastic justification what those facts are, *if* he can take advantage of his epistemic position.³⁸ So, in other words, the subject need not be *psychologically* capable of believing the justification facts or even to have conceptualized the justifier as in any way relevant to the belief in question.

Second, the JJ principle isn't vulnerable to the SPO. If one has higher-order justification to believe that one has justification to believe that *p* whenever one does have justification to believe that *p*, then *p* isn't accidental or unsupported from one's first person perspective; after all, by taking advantage of one's epistemic position and believing in accordance with one's higher-order justification, the subject will know what the justification facts are. Sure, the subject may not *consciously* recognize what the belief in question has going for it, but it doesn't follow from this that its truth would be accidental from his perspective. Consider the proposition about the capital of Iceland above. Let's say that you have justification to believe that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and higher-order introspective and reflective justification to believe that you do. Let's also stipulate that you aren't *consciously* aware of your justification for belief in the proposition about the capital of Iceland above. It may, for example, be that your justifier is a memory belief to the effect that a trustworthy person told you that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and that you're either unable to recall that memory at this particular moment or that you haven't even bothered trying. Still, it doesn't seem that the truth of the proposition that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland is accidental from your subjective perspective. After all, you have introspective justification to believe that you have the aforementioned memory belief, and you have reflective justification to believe that it supports the proposition that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland. And since you're already in *possession* of justifiers that enable to you *consciously* recognize and know that you have justification to believe that Reykjavik is the capital of

³⁸ Another way of cashing out this point is by using Smithies' (2015b) notion of an *ideally rational counterpart*. An ideally rational counterpart is someone who is identical to you in every relevant way (e.g., you have the same (relevant) justifiers/reasons/evidence), but who always takes advantage of their epistemic position by believing what they have justification to believe—at least as long as they hold any doxastic attitude about the matter. We can then say that the justification facts are accessible in the sense that your ideally rational counterpart always believes them with doxastic justification (as long as they hold any attitude toward them).

Iceland, provided that you can exercise your introspective and reflective faculties in a sufficiently virtuous manner, there is indeed something that strongly speaks in favor of holding that belief from your subjective perspective. Hence, the JJ principle avoids the second of horn of Bergmann's dilemma and *can* figure as a plausible explanation of our intuitions about unfamiliar faculty cases.

7. Conclusion

According to accessibilism, justification is in some special sense accessible to the subject who has it. Accessibilism is mainly motivated by intuitions elicited by unfamiliar faculty cases. Recently, however, the view has come under heavy fire from a variety of positions. In light of this, the purpose of this paper has been twofold. First, I have clarified what commitments the accessibilist should make. Doing this, I have shown why the most prominent versions of accessibilism are vulnerable to objections that the version endorsed in this paper avoids. Second, I have defended the main argument (from unfamiliar faculty cases) for accessibilism against three prominent objections levelled against it. The upshot of my discussion is that accessibilism, as understood in this paper, remains the best explanation for the evidence which our intuitive judgments about unfamiliar faculty cases provide: one must always have a special sort of access to the justificatory status of one's doxastic attitudes, if they are justified.

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III

Epistemic Internalism and the Basis of Justification

1. Epistemic Internalism

This paper begins from the internalist assumption that one's non-factive mental states provide the basis of epistemic justification. However, not all non-factive mental states have justificatory relevance. Only a proper subset of one's non-factive mental states can play a justification-conferring role. In this paper, I answer what I call the relevance question—i.e., the question of which non-factive mental states can play a justification-conferring role—and the explanatory question—i.e., why this set of states plays the epistemic role it does.

The debate between internalism and externalism in contemporary epistemology is about the nature of justification. Epistemic internalists argue that the *justification facts*—i.e., the facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has justification (to a certain degree) to hold—supervene upon one's *internal states*.¹ The most common way of interpreting the notion of internal states is to say that one's internal states are one's non-factive mental states, where a mental state is taken to be non-factive just in case it doesn't necessarily have true propositional content. This version of internalism is known as mentalism, and it will be the version which I focus on in this paper.² Epistemic externalists, on the other hand, deny that the justification facts supervene upon one's internal states in this sense.

This paper begins from the internalist assumption that the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. From there, it provides an answer to the relevance question. Plausibly, the paper argues, all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences

¹ Formulated in this manner, internalism is a thesis about propositional, rather than doxastic, justification. Considering that doxastic justification just is propositional justification plus proper basing, and that the nature of the basing requirement plausibly is causal, this seems preferable. Here, I use the now standard terminology first introduced by Firth (1978).

² Proponents of *mentalism* include Pollock & Cruz (1999); Conee & Feldman (2001); Wedgwood (2002); McCain (2016); Egeland (forthcoming); and Smithies (forthcoming).

have justificatory relevance.³ Moreover, the paper explains why beliefs and perceptual experiences play the epistemic role they do by pointing to their *representational force*: the answer I give to the explanatory question is that the reason justification has its basis in one's beliefs and perceptual experiences is that they are one's *strongly representational states*, and that strongly representational states necessarily provide evidential support to certain inferentially connected propositions. Briefly put, the paper thus argues for the conditional claim that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are the basis of justification due to the representational force they have, assuming that epistemic internalism is true.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2, I present the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem for mentalism. I will assume that the argument is sound and, as a consequence, that mentalism is true. In section 3, I answer the relevance question by arguing that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are the basis of justification. I will defend this claim, on the one hand, against views that want to *expand* the supervenience base to cover other non-factive states as well, and, on the other hand, against views that want to *shrink* the supervenience base to cover only a proper subset of one's beliefs and perceptual experiences. In section 4, I argue that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are one's strongly representational states, and that this explains why all and only beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance. Doing this, I will build upon recent suggestions by Glüer and Pryor concerning the distinct representational force that belief and perception have. In section 5, I grapple with the issue of *how* strongly representational states confer justification upon certain propositions, and I argue that this raises an explanatory problem which internalists and externalists alike must face. In section 6, I summarize and conclude.

2. Mentalism

One of the more popular externalist theories of epistemic justification is reliabilism. According to a simple version of reliabilism, the justification facts depend upon the reliability or truth conduciveness of one's doxastic dispositions.⁴ However, by now, many counterexamples to reliabilism are on the table. These counterexamples either undermine the claim that reliability is necessary for justification or the claim that reliability is sufficient for

³ To be more precise, my claim is that all and only beliefs and perceptual experiences can justify empirical belief in propositions about the *external world*. Other non-factive mental states, like hoping or desiring to become rich, can arguably justify belief in propositions about the *internal world*—like that one now hopes or desires to become rich—but this is not the kind of belief I'm interested in. I will have more to say about this later in the paper.

⁴ For a classical presentation and defense of reliabilism, see Goldman (1979).

justification. The most famous counterexample to the necessity claim is given by Keith Lehrer and Stewart Cohen (1983; Cf. Cohen, 1984) and is known as *The New Evil Demon Problem*.

The scenario it presents is as follows:

The New Evil Demon Problem

Imagine that, unbeknown to you, you are the victim of a malevolent Cartesian demon who deceives you about what the external world is like. Your perceptual experiences, for example, are all hallucinations induced by the demon's machinations. As a result, your beliefs about the external world are false, even though they're supported by experiences that are subjectively indistinguishable from the experiences you would have if the world were exactly like you believe it to be.

Now, the objector to reliabilism asks, are your beliefs in the demon scenario justified despite being formed on the basis of radically unreliable doxastic dispositions? Intuitively, according to the objector, the answer is yes; your beliefs in the demon scenario are no less justified than they would be if they were formed on the basis of reliable doxastic dispositions. Reliability is therefore not necessary for justification.

Moreover, in addition to providing a counterexample to reliabilism, the New Evil Demon Problem is often thought to provide a powerful argument for mentalism.⁵ To see this, note that the justification facts not only appear to remain unchanged *despite* the change in reliability, they also appear to remain unchanged *because* your non-factive mental states are held fixed. Since your experiences in the demon scenario are subjectively indistinguishable from your experiences in normal scenarios—i.e., things seem to be just as if you actually are having veridical experiences of the external world—your beliefs are just as justified as they would be if you were in a normal scenario. Indeed, the best explanation for why you and your epistemic counterpart in the demon scenario appear to be equally justified in holding the same doxastic attitudes is that you have the same non-factive mental states. We can therefore conclude, using abductive reasoning, that the following thesis is true:

Mentalism: The justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states.

Contemporary epistemologists often assume that the justification facts are a function of one's (epistemic) *reasons* for holding certain doxastic attitudes.⁶ When I talk about reasons

⁵ For a more detailed presentation of the argument from the New Evil Demon problem for mentalism, see Wedgwood (2002).

⁶ Broome (2013), for example, has a dissenting view.

for belief (or other doxastic attitudes) later in the paper, I will rely on this assumption. And, with this assumption in place, mentalism can plausibly be construed as a thesis about one's reasons. Given that the justification facts are a function of one's reasons, a plausible construal of mentalism tell us that one's reasons are provided by one's non-factive mental states. Alternatively, we can say that one's *evidence* is provided by one's non-factive mental states, if we adopt the evidentialist's parlance.⁷ Thus, to the extent that concepts like *reason* or *evidence* will be used in this paper, this is what the internalist will be taken to be committed to.

Many objections to the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem for mentalism have been offered. Roughly, they can be separated into two distinct categories. On the one hand, you have objections that in various ways criticize the internalist intuitions directly.⁸ And, on the other hand, you have objections that criticize the internalist intuitions indirectly by arguing that there is a more plausible way to think about the epistemic status of the agent in the demon scenario; for example, instead of having justified beliefs, he only has blameless or excusable beliefs.⁹ I have responded to several of these objections elsewhere.¹⁰ For the present purpose, however, I will just assume that the argument is sound and, as a result, that mentalism is true.

Now, given that the argument from the New Evil Demon Problem goes through, is it possible to further restrict the scope of states with justificatory relevance, or should we say that the whole set of non-factive mental states is the basis of justification? In other words, is it the case that *all* non-factive mental states can justify our doxastic attitudes, or is it just *some* of them that can? In the next section, I will answer the relevance question by arguing that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance. This I will do by considering a scenario involving a pair of epistemic agents who only share the same beliefs

⁷ After the publication of Williamson's *Knowledge and Its Limits* (2000), many epistemologists seem to think that only true propositions (or facts) can be evidence. However, this is not a claim we need to be committed to. Indeed, preceding Williamson there is an older tradition that understands evidence in terms of what goes on inside the head (e.g. in terms of one's phenomenally specified states) rather than outside it, and that allows false propositions (like the content of false perceptual experiences) to be included in one's evidence. Here, I just want to show the way in which internalism naturally aligns itself with the traditional view. For a useful survey and discussion of some of the ways in which the concept of *evidence* has been understood, see Kelly (2008).

⁸ For examples of this kind of objection, see Littlejohn (2009; forthcoming); Lyons (2013); and Turri (2015a; 2015b).

⁹ For examples of this kind of objection, see Williamson (2007a; forthcoming); Pritchard (2012); and Littlejohn (forthcoming).

¹⁰ See Egeland (forthcoming).

and perceptual experiences, and, by assessing the justificatory status of the agents, inferring which kinds of mental state have justificatory relevance.

3. Answering the Relevance Question

In order to see how the kind of argument I have in mind goes, recall the scenario presented by the New Evil Demon Problem above. There, the demon's victim was stipulated to have exactly the same non-factive mental states that you, being in a normal scenario, now are having, while differing with respect to your factive mental states (and other external conditions). For example, you and your counterpart in the demon scenario have the same beliefs and subjective experiences of the world, but it is only your beliefs that are true. In other words, we can therefore say that your counterpart in the demon scenario is a mental twin who only shares your non-factive mental states. Moreover, we also saw that, intuitively, you and your mental twin are equally justified in believing the same propositions; that is, despite the difference in factive mental states, the justification facts are the same for both. And by abductive reasoning this led to the conclusion that only non-factive mental states can confer justification. The argument thus puts pressure on proponents of epistemic externalism, like for example Timothy Williamson who supports *factive mentalism*—i.e., the view that (all and) only factive mental states have justificatory relevance.¹¹ Continuing, I'm going to present a new scenario, using the same kind of argument, in order to further specify what the scope of justification-conferring mental states is.

When it comes to empirical belief (and other doxastic attitudes) about the external world, not all non-factive mental states carry justificatory force. Indeed, if we focus on the justification facts as they are with respect to empirical belief—which is what I will do in this paper—then most kinds of non-factive mental state appear to be completely irrelevant for their justificatory status. A seemingly natural way of drawing the distinction between the kinds of non-factive mental state that can justify such belief and those that can't is to say that only beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification. And in order to motivate this claim, I present the following scenario:

The Believing and Experiencing Twin

¹¹ Williamson (2000, 185) famously argues for the *E = K Thesis*: “knowledge, and only knowledge, constitutes evidence”, and later (2007a, 120) for what we may call the *R = K Thesis*: “that *p* is available to you as a reason if an only if you know *p*.”

Twin-Lars is an epistemic counterpart of a normal epistemic agent, Lars, with respect to his beliefs and perceptual experiences. For example, two of the beliefs both Lars and Twin-Lars have are that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and that there is a sandwich on the table before them. Their belief that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland is supported by their other belief that a knowledgeable and trustworthy geography teacher told them so a couple of years ago; and their belief that there is a sandwich on the table before them is supported by their (subjectively indistinguishable) perceptual experiences of a sandwich on a table before them. However, whereas both Lars and Twin-Lars's beliefs about the capital of Iceland and the sandwich are supported by their (other) beliefs and perceptual experiences, Lars, but not Twin-Lars, has other non-factive mental states with the same (or relevantly similar) propositional content. While Lars also desires, hopes, wishes, and imagines that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and that there is a sandwich on the table before him, Twin-Lars doesn't have any desires, hopes, wishes, or imaginings at all.

Intuitively, Lars and Twin-Lars's beliefs about the capital of Iceland and the sandwich before them are both propositionally justified to the same degree. And since they only share the same beliefs and perceptual experiences, it appears that those are the only kinds of non-factive mental state with justificatory relevance. After all, even though Lars and Twin-Lars are dissimilar insofar as Lars also has desires, hopes, wishes, and imaginings with the same or relevantly similar propositional content, that does not change the fact that they seem to be alike with respect to the justification facts. It is true that these additional non-factive mental states that Lars has justify beliefs about his internal world—say, beliefs about his desires, hopes, wishes, or imaginings—but, as already point out above, I'm only interested in empirical beliefs about the external world. Moreover, if we add to the list of additional non-factive mental states that Lars has—we may for example say that he also supposes, considers, or merely thinks about the propositions under consideration—Lars still appears to have no more (nor no less) justification for believing that Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and that there is sandwich on the table before him than Twin-Lars does. The claim that only beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance therefore seems intuitively plausible and well-motivated.

Moreover, given that epistemic internalism is true and that *only* beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification, I can't see any convincing reason why the internalist should think that it isn't the case that *all* beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer

justification. Sure, one may for example have beliefs that are irresponsibly formed—for example on the basis of wishful thinking—or experiences that clearly fail to represent the external environment as it really is—for example due to the ingestion of hallucinatory drugs. For the present purpose, let's say that such beliefs and experiences are *epistemically inadequate*. However, in such cases, one is either in a position to know about the epistemic inadequacies of one's beliefs and experiences, or one isn't. On the one hand, if one is in a position to know that one has a belief or experience that is epistemically inadequate, then it still has justificatory force even though it is defeated by other reasons one has either for doubting that the belief/experience in question is true or that some incompatible proposition is true.¹² In other words, we can say that the belief/experience functions as a justifier, but, due to the presence of a defeater, is prevented from exercising its justificatory force.

On the other hand, if one has a belief/experience that is epistemically inadequate, but isn't in a position to know so, then I take it that it does confer justification. By way of illustration, let's say that you believe on the basis wishful thinking that it's Saturday, and, moreover, since you know that you never have to go to work on Sundays you infer that you won't have to go to work tomorrow. Now, if you are in a position to know that your belief that today is Saturday was irresponsibly formed, then of course your belief that you won't have to go to work tomorrow isn't justified. However, if the fact that your belief that today is Saturday was irresponsibly formed is completely inaccessible to you—for all you know, you formed the belief after looking at the calendar or consulting someone you know to be trustworthy—then your belief that you won't have to go to work tomorrow seems to be justified; in fact, it seems to be no less justified than it would be if you actually came to hold your belief that today is Saturday after looking at the calendar.^{13, 14} And, moreover, since I can't see any other reason why the internalist should think that only some, but not all, beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification, I suggest that the most plausible answer to the relevance question is that justification has its basis in all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences. In other words, one's evidence or reasons for holding certain doxastic attitudes is provided by one's beliefs and perceptual experiences, assuming that the justification facts are a function of one's evidence/reasons.

¹² These two ways in which a belief/experience can be prevented from exercising its justificatory force correspond to Pollock's (1986, 38-39) distinction between *undercutting defeaters* and *rebutting defeaters*.

¹³ The analogous point concerning epistemically inadequate experiences is illustrated by the New Evil Demon scenario in the previous section.

¹⁴ This answers Sylvan & Sosa's (2018) objection that there is no general story as to why mere undefeated belief is sufficient for possessing a normative justifying reason.

3.1 Against Expansive Views

My claim that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are the basis of justification is challenged by views that want to include other non-factive mental states in the supervenience base. In this subsection, I will take a closer look at the epistemology of imagination, and, in particular, at a recently defended view to the effect that imaginings can confer justification. The upshot of my discussion will be that the arguments presented in favor of the view fail, and that it therefore doesn't undermine my answer to the relevance question.¹⁵

In the last couple of decades, philosophers have increasingly started to look at imagination as a phenomenon of epistemological interest.¹⁶ One important question they've asked is: can imaginings teach us anything about the world? A standard answer has become that imaginings can either provide justification for modal beliefs about what is possible (and perhaps counterfactual conditionals too),¹⁷ or no justification (except for trivial beliefs about the internal world) at all.¹⁸ One reason it is standardly believed that imaginings cannot teach us about how the world actually is is that imaginings are governed by the subject's own volition and therefore don't exhibit the necessary sort of sensitivity to what the world is like. This has recently been called the *Up-To-Us Challenge* by Magdalena Jackson (2018), and the idea, as Peter Langland-Hassan (2016, 62) has put it, is that imagination cannot improve your epistemic position any more than “handing yourself a dollar” can improve your finances. Consider, for example, the following passage from Colin McGinn:

Imagining is subject to the will, while believing is not. . . Belief is a commitment to truth, and the truth cannot be willed into being. But imagining is not a commitment to truth, even possible truth, so there is no obstacle to willing it; imagining is simply contemplating it, holding it before the mind. . . That there is strong evidence against a proposition is no bar to imagining that it is true, since I am not, *qua* imaginer, in the business of conducting an investigation of how the world is. . . When I am in the

¹⁵ Another expansive view says that one can have pragmatic reasons for belief, like reasons that are grounded in one's desires. Although I don't see any principled reason why that can't be the case, I also don't see any convincing reason to think that pragmatic reasons confer *epistemic*, rather than pragmatic, justification. And since I'm only interested in epistemic justification, I therefore don't consider pragmatic reasons a threat to my view. For someone who thinks that there are pragmatic reasons for belief, see Reisner (2009).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Williamson (2007b, ch. 5-6).

¹⁷ Williamson (2016, 115) says that “one might regard imagination [at least metaphorically] as a form of attention to possibilities.” Cf. Yablo (1993); Menzies (1998); and Chalmers (2002).

¹⁸ For a useful discussion about imaginings, the conceivability-possibility link, and justification, see Gendler & Hawthorne (2002, Introduction).

business of investigating the world, I adopt an attitude of evidential sensitivity, and my beliefs are formed accordingly; but not so when I am merely imagining. Here I am indifferent to how things actually are. (McGinn, 2004, 132.)¹⁹

Recently, however, in a couple of articles, Amy Kind (2016; forthcoming) has argued that just because imagination is under the imaginer's volitional control, it doesn't follow that it cannot teach us anything about the world. More specifically, she tells us that as long as the "imaginative project" satisfies (or at least comes close to satisfying) a couple of important conditions, it can justify belief in propositions about how the world actually is. Paraphrasing a bit, the conditions are as follows:

The Reality Constraint: The world must be imagined as it really is in all relevant respects.

The Change Constraint: If one's imaginative project requires one to imagine a change to how one believes the world to be, then it must be constrained by all and only the relevant consequences of that change. (Kind, 2016, 150-151.)^{20, 21}

Having thus informed us about conditions under which imagination can justify belief about how the world is, in order to support her view, Kind draws our attention to the animal scientist and inventor Temple Grandin. Grandin reportedly has an amazing ability to visually imagine how things work. Moreover, as Kind tells us, in her design process she uses her imagination much in the same way designers nowadays use three-dimensional computer

¹⁹ Cf. Wittgenstein (1981, §632): "Imaginings tell us nothing about the external world . . . Imaginings are subject to the will. . . It is just because forming an imagining is a voluntary activity that it does not instruct us about the external world."

²⁰ Cf. Gendler's (2003) condition of imaginative *mirroring*.

²¹ Williamson seems to think that when we are engaged in imagination, we usually satisfy these and other similar conditions: "The default for the imagination in its primary function may be to proceed as 'realistically' as it can, subject to whatever derivations the thinker imposes by brute force . . . Thus the imagination can in principle exploit all our background knowledge in evaluating counterfactuals." (Williamson, 2007, 143.)

Similarly, a few pages later he says: "The best developed simulation theories concern our ability to simulate the mental processes of other agents (or ourselves in other circumstances), putting ourselves in their shoes, as if thinking and deciding on the basis of their beliefs and desires . . . Such cognitive processes . . . would involve just the sort of constrained use of the imagination indicated above. How would Mary react if you asked to borrow her car? You could imagine her immediately shooting you, or making you her heir; you could even imagine reacting like that from her point of view, by imagining having sufficiently bizarre beliefs and desires. But you do not. Doing so would not help you determine how she really would react. Presumably, what you do is to hold fixed her actual beliefs and desires (as you take them to be just before the request); you can then imagine the request from her point of view, and think through the scenario from there. Just as with the falling rock, the imaginative exercise is richly informed and disciplined by your sense of what she is like." (Williamson, 2007, 148.) Cf. Williamson (2016).

simulations, and supposedly with no less efficiency. One of the inventions Grandin developed in this way was a new dip vat design with the purpose of making it easier to rid cows of parasites. Before Grandin's invention, cows entering the dip vat would often panic, making things difficult for both the animals and the farmers. However, according to Kind,

By taking a 'cow's eye view' of the situation, Grandin diagnosed the problems with the existing structures and was able to create an alternative in which the cows would calmly enter and exit the equipment voluntarily, without any use of force. Her design process, however, took place entirely in her mind. (Kind, forthcoming, 9.)

Moreover, Grandin confidently believed in the efficiency of her new design, even before she saw it in action. Kind lists three propositions it is plausible to think that Grandin believed after imagining the new dip vat design:

Dip vats built to these specifications are more effective than currently existing dip vats.

An entry built to these specifications makes things easier on the cows than the entry on currently existing dip vats.

Cows entering a dip vat built to these specifications don't panic. (Kind, forthcoming, 10.)

And, Kind tells us, it seems intuitively plausible that Grandin's beliefs were justified. Also, if we consider someone running a computer simulation of Grandin's new dip vat design, showing cows peacefully entering and being immersed in the pesticide, watching the simulation does appear to provide justification for belief in the three propositions above. And since computer simulations are sufficiently similar to what Kind calls "imaginative simulations"—especially Grandin's—the same is true of them too. (See Kind, forthcoming, 11-12.)

Now, the problem with this argument is not that Grandin doesn't have justification for her beliefs. Rather, it is that it isn't her imagination that is responsible. A more plausible explanation of the scenario above is that Grandin's imagination contributes to the formation of her beliefs, but not to their justification. It is, I suggest, her background beliefs and perceptual experiences that really are responsible for justifying them.

However, Kind anticipates this objection and says that Grandin's background beliefs and perceptual experiences aren't sufficient for justifying her beliefs about the new dip vat

design because she also needs an “understanding” of how cows will react to the new design. And, she says, it is her imagination that provides this understanding. In order to illustrate her point, Kind asks us to consider an owner of a cattle-handling facility with lots of knowledge about cows and dip vats. Indeed, the owner has “all the beliefs that are embedded in the programming of [a] computer simulation” that is able to demonstrate how cows are likely to react to any particular dip vat. Before the owner has run and observed the simulation, he lacks the necessary “understanding” for having justified beliefs about the efficiency of Grandin's new design. It is only after the simulation is run and he acquires a “cow’s eye view” of the situation that his beliefs about the design are justified. And, moreover, since the computer simulation is sufficiently similar to Grandin's “imaginative simulation,” it is only after she is done imagining her design in action that her beliefs become justified. (See Kind, forthcoming, 13.)

Here I agree that there is a difference in the justificatory status of Grandin's beliefs before and after the “imaginative simulation” and that the difference is due to the “understanding” it provides her with. However, I think the difference most plausibly should be understood as a difference in doxastic justification, not propositional justification. Let me elaborate. Grandin's “imaginative simulation” is constrained by her background beliefs and perceptual experiences of cows and dip vats. It is an attempt to try to figure out what is going to happen when the cows go through the dip vat *given* the information that she already has about cows and dip vats. Likewise, the cattle facility owner's computer simulation tries to figure out what is going to happen when the cows go through the dip vat given the information that he has about cows and dip vats (recall that we’re told his beliefs exhaust the programming of the simulation). Now, the simulations in these cases don't provide any *new* information about the world that isn't already somehow contained in Grandin or the owner's beliefs and experiences; they only try to figure out what their consequences actually are.^{22, 23} As a result, they don't confer any justification upon their beliefs about the efficiency of the new dip vat design. However, the simulations do provide them with an “understanding” that

²² Cf. Sartre (1972, 7): “The image teaches us nothing. . . . No matter how long I look at an image, I shall never find anything in it but what I put there.”

²³ Kind (forthcoming, 17) tells us that “a computer programmer can be provided with new information by the outputs of her program, even though the program contains nothing but what she put in it.” Normally, this is of course the case. However, since the owner of the cattle-handling facility in the example above has “all the beliefs that are embedded in the programming of the computer simulation,” this is not the case for him. And since Kind's claim is that Grandin's “imaginative simulation” is analogous to that of the owner of the cattle facility, and not the regular computer programmer, the fact that the regular computer programmer can learn something new about the world from the outputs of her program doesn't tell us anything about why the same should be true of Grandin and her imaginings.

enables them to take advantage of their background beliefs and perceptual experiences. More specifically, they give a clear picture of what the consequences of their beliefs and experiences are, and, as a result, Grandin and the owner of the cattle facility are able to take advantage of the justification they already have by forming (doxastically justified) beliefs about the efficiency of the new design on their proper justificatory basis. Grandin's imagination therefore helps her to convert propositional justification into doxastic justification, thereby improving the justificatory status of her beliefs, but without conferring any justification upon them.²⁴

It is for this reason that I think imaginings cannot confer any justification; the kind of realistic imaginings Kind focuses on simply don't provide any new information about the world.²⁵ However, another problem Kind identifies as she responds to her imaginary interlocutor is that a denial that imagination can confer justification amounts to a denial that perception can confer justification. And, by *modus tollens*, since everyone should agree that perception can confer justification, they should also agree that imagination can too. This is how she puts her point:

Suppose that Grandin did not engage in her imaginative simulation and that she didn't herself develop the specifications for a dip vat with this new design—instead, it was designed and built by one of her rivals. Normally, we would think her seeing her rival in action would contribute to the justification of her belief in its efficacy. But on the line currently being pursued by the proponent of [the view that the imagination cannot confer justification], that can't be right. Given that she has the prior beliefs that she does, her seeing the design in action is epistemically irrelevant to the justification of her belief in its efficacy. And this seems absurd. The fact that someone has a vast store of prior knowledge about cows does not mean that they couldn't learn something from seeing the device in action. And likewise, the fact that one has all this prior knowledge

²⁴ Kind (forthcoming, 18) also talks about examples having to do with which shoes to wear, whether one's children are ready to watch a scary movie, which kinds of office one prefers, and whether a colleague's ill-advised emails were sent with nasty intentions. The response offered above also applies to these cases. Imagining the relevant scenarios doesn't confer any justification, but rather enables you to take advantage of the justification you already have.

²⁵ Although it seems to me unclear exactly how the argument of Williamson (2016) should be understood, there is at least one reading of it under which it is making the same point as Kind's argument. Now, if that indeed is the correct reading, then my response to Kind applies equally well to Williamson. If, however, that isn't the correct reading, then Williamson appears to be making a similar point to one I make—namely, that imagination can help us improve our epistemic position by taking advantage of epistemic resource that we already are in possession of.

does not mean that one couldn't learn anything from imagining the device in action.
(Kind, forthcoming, 14.)

The problem with this piece of reasoning, however, is that it *begs the question* against the position I advocate by assuming that imaginings are epistemically analogous to perceptual experiences insofar as they either both can or can't confer justification. But, as I've argued, imagination, in contrast to perception, cannot confer justification since it doesn't provide any new information about the world that isn't already somehow contained in one's prior beliefs and perceptual experiences. Kind's response to the objection that the imagination can contribute to the formation of belief, but not to their justification, therefore fails.

3.2 Against Contractive Views

My claim that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are the basis of justification is also challenged by views that want to exclude some belief or experiences from the supervenience base. In this subsection, I will take a closer look at two such views—one of which says that only beliefs can confer justification, and the other of which says that only experiences can confer justification—and argue that neither of them is able to undermine my answer to the relevance question.

Let's begin with the latter view. According to Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, which beliefs (and other doxastic attitudes) you have justification to hold is a function of your current experiences.²⁶ More specifically, they think that the justification facts are determined by your evidence and that all ultimate evidence is experiential:

All ultimate evidence is experiential. Believing a proposition, all by itself, is not evidence for its truth. Something at the interface of your mind and the world—your experiences—serves to justify belief in a proposition, if anything does. What we are calling your 'ultimate evidence' does this without needing any justification in order to provide it. (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 88.)

As they see it, only experience, and not belief, can confer justification.²⁷ Moreover, since they think that your ultimate evidence²⁸ not only includes perceptual experiences, but

²⁶ A related view is *phenomenal conservatism*, which says that if it "seems" or "appears" to you that *p*, then you have defeasible justification for believing *p*. (See Huemer, 2007.)

²⁷ There is some unclarity about whether this really is how the passage should be interpreted. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as making the foundationalist claim that only experience can be a source of foundational

also experiences like feelings of certainty or conviction, Conee and Feldman in some sense want to shrink the scope of justification-conferring states and in another sense to expand it. However, by way of objection, I will present three well-known problems from the epistemology of memory and argue that they undermine both the claim that beliefs cannot confer justification and the claim that feelings of certainty or conviction can.²⁹ Moreover, I will also demonstrate why my claim that justification has its basis in one's beliefs and perceptual experiences isn't threatened by the problems.

First, consider the *problem of stored belief*. As Alvin Goldman (1999) points out, most of our beliefs are stored in memory rather than conscious judgments. Beliefs about your personal information, history, geography, or about the members of your family are good examples. Moreover, it is clear that many, if not most, of these beliefs are justified. However, very few of them are justified by your current experiences. Indeed, Goldman (1999, 278) tells us that “no perceptual experience, no conscious memory event, and no premises consciously entertained at the selected moment will be justificationaly sufficient for such a [stored] belief.”³⁰

Conee and Feldman (2001, 7-8) respond by drawing a distinction between *occurrent* and *dispositional* senses of being justified. The idea is that a belief can be justified in the occurrent sense, but only if one has conscious experiential evidence supporting it. On the other hand, a belief can be justified in the dispositional sense, but only if one has “stored justification” or evidence, like “non-occurrent memories of perceptual experiences” (Conee & Feldman, 2001, 8), that support it. And with this distinction in mind, the idea is that our stored beliefs are justified, but usually only dispositionally.

There are, however, a couple of problems with this response. One, it seems that the stored justification or evidence that is supposed to dispositionally justify our stored beliefs

justification for basic beliefs. Perhaps this is what Conee and Feldman mean when they write that whatever justificatory force beliefs have is inherited from experience: “We hold that experiences can be evidence, and beliefs are only *derivatively* evidence.” (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 87, the emphasis is added by me.) However, since they later, in the same text, say that they are coherentists (albeit of a non-traditional kind) (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 18), I lean toward the former interpretation and will therefore treat the passage under consideration as saying that only experience can confer justification.

²⁸ They seem to use the notion of “ultimate evidence” in the same way that “evidence” usually is used in epistemology.

²⁹ They also undermine Feldman's (2004, 95) earlier suggestion that “S has *p* available as evidence as *t* iff S is currently thinking of *p*”, which also includes conscious beliefs or judgments in one's evidence.

³⁰ The problem of stored beliefs is often raised a problem against epistemic internalism in general. See, e.g., Huemer (1999); Williamson (2007a); and Senor (2009). Frise (2018), however offers an interesting response to the problem of stored belief, arguing that it fails to undermine internalism since, according to recent research in cognitive psychology, there are no stored (or memorial) beliefs in the first place.

cannot be experiences—at least not all of it. Take for example the “non-occurrent memories of perceptual experiences” they mention. Plausibly, these non-occurrent memories cannot be experiences since we’re told that they aren’t conscious or occurrent. Rather, a better way of construing them is as *memory beliefs*. But if they cannot be experiences, then Conee and Feldman’s view clearly fails.³¹

Two, saying that most of our stored beliefs only are justified in a dispositional sense seems to commit them to a sort of skepticism about the epistemic status of those beliefs. Indeed, Conee and Feldman seem to admit that stored beliefs aren’t really justified or constitute knowledge:

In the most fundamental sense of ‘justified,’ a belief can be justified for a person only by the person’s current evidence, and one’s current evidence is all conscious. In this sense, non-occurrent beliefs are typically not justified. (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 7.)

On my view, in the most fundamental sense, one does not know things such as that Washington is the capital when one is not thinking of them. (Feldman, 2004, 99.)

However, this is extremely counterintuitive. It seems that my stored beliefs about, say, the capitals of various nations or about the events of the Second World War are completely justified and constitute knowledge. Conee and Feldman therefore fail to respect the intuitions elicited by the problem of stored belief.

In contrast, the view endorsed in this paper is clearly able to respect the intuitions we have about stored beliefs. Since both beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification, I suggest that whenever one has stored beliefs that are justified, but not by one’s conscious beliefs or perceptual experiences, then they are justified by other stored beliefs.³² So, for example, my stored belief that Washington is the capital of The United States of America is justified by my other stored belief that a trustworthy source told me that this is true. Thus, the problem of stored belief threatens to undermine Conee and Feldman’s view, but not mine.

³¹ It is common to draw a distinction between *propositional memory* and *episodic memory*. Propositional memory involves memorial belief in a proposition, whereas episodic memory is what you have when you recall an *event*. Moreover, note that even if the stored justification/evidence Conee and Feldman are thinking about only involves episodic memory, it cannot be exhausted by one’s experiences since it isn’t conscious. For more on propositional and episodic memory, see Squire (2009).

³² Another plausible suggestion is offered by Madison (2014), who argues that our stored beliefs often are justified by what he calls “memory-seemings.”

Second, consider the *problem of stored defeat*. Sometimes you have beliefs that are supported by your current experiences, but that nevertheless are unjustified because of a defeater stored in your memory. In order to illustrate this kind of scenario, Feldman has us consider the following example:

Precarious Peak

Suppose my friend Jones tells me that the hike up to Precarious Peak is not terribly strenuous or dangerous, and that it is the sort of thing I can do without undue difficulty. Assume that Jones knows my abilities with respect to these sorts of things and that he seems to be an honest person. On the basis of his testimony, I believe that the hike is something I can do. It seems that it is rational for me to believe this proposition. But suppose I've failed to think about the time Jones told me that I could paddle my canoe down Rapid River, something he knew to be far beyond my abilities. He just gets a kick out of sending people off on grueling expeditions. If you were to say to me, "Remember when Jones lied about the canoe trip?" I'd say "Yes! How could I have failed to think of that?" Once I was reminded of this episode, it would no longer be rational for me to believe that I can complete the hike, unless I had some additional information supporting the view that Jones was not lying this time.

(Feldman, 2004, 84-85.)

Here you have a scenario where your belief that you can summit Precarious Peak is supported by your current experiences, but where you also have stored in memory counter-evidence which you could have been aware of. And, for that reason, your belief appears to be unjustified.³³ But how can Conee and Feldman account for the intuition that your belief is unjustified considering that they view justification as a function of your current experiences?

Feldman responds by considering another example which he takes to be epistemically analogous and in which your belief does appear to be justified. And this supports the view that your belief in the example above also is justified, despite appearances to the contrary. The example he considers is as follows:

Suppose that the information about the falsity of my friend's claim about the hike is not stored in memory but rather is contained in a book—*A Pocket Guide to the*

³³ Alternative ways of describing the scenario is to say that your belief that you can summit Precarious Peak is *prima facie* justified, but not *ultima facie* justified; or that it is supported by your testimonial evidence, but not your *total* evidence. For a classic discussion about total evidence and how that is what determines what you have justification to believe, see Hempel (1960).

Difficulty of Hikes in the Precarious Peak Area—that I have in my pocket. Since I trust my friend, I don't bother to look up the difficulty of the proposed hike in the guidebook. (Feldman, 2008, 96.)

Feldman tells us that your belief in this second scenario is completely rational or justified, and, moreover, since your epistemic position is the same as in the first scenario, your belief is justified there as well.³⁴

However, the problem with his response is that there is a crucial difference in your epistemic positions in the two scenarios. Whenever you have some evidence or relevant information stored in memory that you fail to take into consideration, you do (at least to some extent) fail to take advantage of your epistemic position. Consider, for example, someone who believes that Sydney is the capital of Australia, but who also was told the day before by their geography teacher that Canberra is the capital of Australia. If the person's memory is functioning properly so that he can, if prompted, recall his teacher's testimony, then it is clear that his belief that Sydney is the capital of Australia isn't justified because he has a defeater stored in his memory that he could have taken into consideration. In contrast, failing to consider the information contained in your pocketbook doesn't necessarily involve a failure of rationality. If, say, you find yourself in a library, then none of the potential defeaters lurking in the many books undermine the justification you already have for your beliefs—unless you read them, of course.³⁵ Your epistemic positions in the two scenarios thus differ insofar as the information stored in your memory is included in your evidence, whereas the information

³⁴ “In the two versions of the example my belief is equally current-state rational, and there is no need, in order to account for our intuitive assessments of rationality, to say that the evidence I actually have in the two cases differs. Since it is clear that in the revised case I do not already have the counter-evidence provided by the book, there is no good reason to say that I have (in the relevant sense) the evidence I fail to think of in the original case.” (Feldman, 2004, 97.)

³⁵ Kornblith (1983, 36) provides a related example involving a young physicist who, after presenting a novel theory, fails to hear an objection raised by a senior colleague due to his obsession with his own success. After this, Kornblith tells us that the physicist's belief in the correctness of his theory is no longer justified since he violates an obligation to gather evidence in a responsible manner. However, considering that important details are left out in his presentation of the example, my view is that whether the example is more like Feldman's original or revised example above depends on how these details are spelled out. If the physicist in no way even is aware that an objection is being made, then I take it that he finds himself in a similar position to that of the person who fails to look in his pocketbook; both of them have justified beliefs that are supported by their evidence, even though there is defeating information that they easily could have gathered if they were so inclined. On the other hand, if the physicist is aware that an objection is being made, but chooses to ignore it, then I take it that he finds himself in a similar position to that of the person who fails remember that Jones isn't trustworthy; both of their beliefs are unjustified since they fail to take into consideration relevant information that they are aware of. Moreover, note that my view doesn't imply that responsible evidence gathering is epistemically insignificant, just that it doesn't have any direct bearing on the justification facts.

stored in your pocketbook isn't.³⁶ Conee and Feldman's view therefore fails to respect the intuitions elicited by the problem of stored defeat.

In contrast, the view endorsed in this paper is clearly able to respect the intuitions we have about stored defeaters. Since both beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification, I suggest that whenever one has a stored defeater—like in the example about Precarious Peak—it takes the form of a stored/memory belief. Thus, the problem of stored defeat threatens to undermine Conee and Feldman's view, but not mine.

Third, consider the *problem of stored evidence*. There are cases in which you have justified beliefs, and where your evidence for them appears to be (other) beliefs stored in memory. By way of example, Feldman provides the following scenario:

The Expert Bird-Watcher

Suppose, for example, an expert bird-watcher sees a bird that she immediately identifies as a scarlet tanager. We can imagine that she does not consciously think of the field marks of these birds when she forms the belief that she sees one. She just looks at the bird and classifies it. Do the stored beliefs she has about the distinguishing features of scarlet tanagers count as part of her current evidence? (Feldman, 2004, 84.)

Now, the reason this is problematic for Conee and Feldman is that the only available evidence (besides her visual experiences) the expert bird-watcher has for her (justified) belief that she's looking at a scarlet tanager appears to be beliefs stored in her memory. Yet, as they see it, this cannot be the case.

Feldman (2004, 101) responds to this worry by saying that the expert bird-watcher doesn't need to consciously consider the distinguishing marks of scarlet tanagers in order for her belief to be justified. Instead, all she needs is an experience or feeling of certainty about her identification of the bird. It is this, Feldman tells us, that distinguishes the justificatory

³⁶ Smithies (2018a) uses the same kind of reasoning to argue against Clark and Chalmers' (1998, 12) *Extended Cognition Thesis*, which says that "beliefs can be constituted partly by features of the environment, when those features play the right sort of role in driving cognitive processes." Clark and Chalmers consider similar scenarios to those offered by Feldman above, and argue that information stored in a notebook can instantiate a person's beliefs. Smithies responds by pointing to epistemic disanalogies grounded in the norms of justification between the two scenarios.

status of the belief of the expert bird-watcher from that of a novice who doesn't know what the distinguishing marks of scarlet tanagers are.³⁷

However, a problem with his response is that simply feeling certain that the bird is a scarlet tanager isn't sufficient for justifying the expert's belief. To see why that is so, let's say that the novice, for whatever reason, also feels certain that the bird is a scarlet tanager. According to Feldman, the expert and the novice are now in the same epistemic position. But this is absurd. The novice doesn't all of a sudden get justification for her belief just because she becomes confident that it's true; justification isn't that easy to come by! Rather, the reason the expert's belief, and not the novice's, is justified, is that she has a bunch of background beliefs that support the proposition that the bird she's looking at is a scarlet tanager. And, moreover, this is something the view endorsed in this paper can account for. Thus, the problem of stored evidence threatens to undermine Conee and Feldman's view, but not mine.

Turning now to the other contractive view that I'm going to consider, it says that only beliefs can confer justification. Famously, it is held by Keith Lehrer (1974) and Donald Davidson (1986, 310), the latter of which says that "nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief."³⁸ On this view, there are no experiences that can confer justification. Indeed, it amounts to a form of skepticism concerning the epistemic role of experience, something Davidson acknowledges³⁹:

³⁷ Feldman (2004, 101) also considers the response that "'operative' background beliefs, beliefs that are playing an active role in sustaining one's current state, are also [available as evidence]." However, this of course just is to abandon the view that only experiences can confer justification. Also, it is doubtful that all background beliefs that we want to say confer justification are sustaining our current (justified) belief state. For example, my newly formed belief that a Third World War isn't going to break out the next week is justified by many background beliefs. However, it's not the case that all of them play an active role in sustaining my belief. In fact, I would not be able to bring even the majority of them into consciousness when I inferred that next week won't witness another World War.

³⁸ Cf. Lehrer (1974, 187-188): "In whatever way a man might attempt to justify his beliefs, whether to himself or to another, he must always appeal to some belief. There is nothing other than one's belief to which one can appeal in the justification of belief. There is no exit from the circle of one's beliefs. This might not seem obvious. It might, for instance, seem that one can appeal directly to experience, or the testimony of others, to justify one's beliefs. But this is illusory."

³⁹ Although Davidson was a skeptic concerning the justificatory role of experience, he nevertheless thought that most experiential beliefs are true since they're *directly caused* by the objects they're about. Thus, he tells us that "what stands in the way of global skepticism of the senses is, in my view, the fact that we must, in the plainest and methodologically most basic cases, take the objects of a belief to be the causes of that belief." (Davidson, 1986, 317-318.) So, for example, even though your experience that *p* cannot even justify the trivial belief that you now have an experience that *p*, the fact that the belief is caused by the experience guarantees its truth: "We cannot be wrong about how things appear to us to be. If we believe we have a sensation, we do; this is held to be an analytic truth, or a fact about how language is used. . . But in any case, it is unclear how, on this line, sensations justify the belief in those sensations. The point is rather that such beliefs require no justification, for

Sensations cause some beliefs and in *this* sense are the basis or ground of those beliefs. But a causal explanation does not show how or why the belief is justified. (Davidson, 1986, 311.)

I suggest that we give up the idea that meaning or knowledge is grounded on something that counts as an ultimate source of evidence. No doubt meaning and knowledge depend on experience, and experience ultimately on sensation. But this is the ‘depend’ of causality, not of evidence or justification. (Davidson, 1986, 313-314.)

In order to support his view, Davidson tells us that an experience can confer justification only if it has propositional content that is assessable as true or false, accurate or inaccurate. However, as he sees it, experiences are raw feels or sensations without propositional content. It therefore follows that experiences cannot confer justification.⁴⁰ The argument can be presented as follows:

- 1) If experiences can confer justification, then they must have propositional content.
- 2) Experiences don’t have propositional content.
- 3) Therefore, experiences cannot confer justification.

Before evaluating the argument, note that an obvious issue with Davidson’s (in)famous slogan is that it seems to be saying that something is a reason for belief only if it is another belief. However, when your belief that *p* gives you a reason for believing that *q*, your reason is typically taken to be *p* and not your belief that *p*. In other words, your reason for believing *q* is *p*, which is provided by your belief in that proposition, but which nevertheless is distinct from your belief in it. A problem with Davidson’s formulation is therefore that it makes reasons needlessly subjective by saying that they are identical with contingent beliefs of a person, at least if we interpret his slogan in a literal manner, whereas it seems that something can be a reason regardless of which beliefs anyone has.⁴¹ However, for the purpose

the existence of the belief entails the existence of the sensation, and so the existence of the belief entails its own truth.” (Davidson, 1986, 311.)

⁴⁰ This is how Davidson in a later paper formulates his argument: “There is a simple explanation for the fact that sensations, percepts, and sense data cannot provide epistemic support for beliefs: reasons have to be geared conceptually to what they are reasons for. The relation of epistemic support requires that both relata have propositional content, and entities like sensations and sense data have no propositional content. Much of modern philosophy has been devoted to trying to arbitrate between an imagined unconceptualized given and what is needed to support belief. We now see that this project has no chance of success. The truth is, nothing can supply a reason for belief except another (or many another) belief.” (Davidson, 1997, 136.)

⁴¹ A natural way of formulating this idea is to say that all reasons that are possessed or believed are *subjective*, whereas all reasons that count in favor of a belief (or action) from an omniscient third-person perspective are *objective*. For more on the distinction between subjective and objective reasons, see Sepielli (2018).

of this paper, I will not focus on issues having to do with the ontology of reasons. Instead, we can just note that all Davidson requires for his view to undermine mine is that something is a reason for belief only if it is *provided* by another belief.⁴²

Now, one way of avoiding the argument's conclusion is to challenge an implicit assumption Davidson relies on. Davidson thinks that experiences cannot confer justification because they cannot provide reasons for belief. So, in other words, having a reason for believing *p* is a necessary condition for having justification for believing *p*. However, there are those who won't follow Davidson in making this assumption (thereby denying premise 1). For example, proponents of simple process reliabilism, like the early Goldman (1979), might instead claim that all that is required for justification is reliable doxastic dispositions (and no undefeated defeaters). Thus, a process reliabilist can claim that experiences can confer justification since they are reliable indicators of how things really are, even though they don't provide any reasons for belief. That being the case, considering that I reject reliabilism and other externalist views that typically deny that there is a reasons condition on justification, I won't pursue this line of objection any further.

Another way of avoiding the conclusion and rejecting premise 1 is to claim that experiences can confer justification, but without having propositional content. For example, according to Laurence Bonjour (2001; Cf. Bonjour and Sosa, 2003), sensations without propositional content can justify empirical belief about the external world. But this kind of view is hard to reconcile with a core assumption that motivates premise 1. Formulated by James Pryor, the assumption is as follows:

Premise Principle: The only thing that can justify a belief that *p* are other states that assertively represent propositions, and those propositions have to be ones that *could be used as premises* in an argument for *p*. They have to stand in some kind of inferential relation to *p*: they have to imply it or inductively support it or something like that. (Pryor, 2005, 210.)

What the Premise Principle tells us is that the reason experiences must have propositional content in order to confer justification is that there must be a valid inference from the content of the experience to the content of the belief that is justified by it. Otherwise, it is very hard to see why the experience should have any justificatory relevance. And without a plausible story as to why there is a valid argument from sensations without propositional

⁴² For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Glüer (2012).

content to propositions one believes, or why such an argument isn't required, we have good reason accept premise 1.⁴³ I therefore think that Davidson's argument stands or falls with premise 2.

By rejecting premise 2, one is committed to the view that experiences—or at least perceptual experiences, which is what I'm interested in—have propositional content. In contrast to the other objections above, this is a very plausible view. Indeed, most philosophers nowadays think that perceptual experiences are propositional attitudes, which is to say that they have propositional content.⁴⁴ By representing the world as being a certain way, perceptual experiences require for their veridicality or truth that the world satisfies certain conditions. And this is sufficient for them to have propositional content. As one author has put it: “Perceptual experiences thus have, or determine, conditions of correctness, satisfaction, or truth, and that simply means that they have representational, or propositional, content.”⁴⁵ Although I'm not going to rehash the arguments that have been offered in favor of this view—I advise the interested reader to consult the authors mentioned in footnote 44—I will simply point out that it is a widely accepted fact about folk-psychology that people treat perceptual experiences as representing the world as being a certain way, and thereby also as determining conditions of correctness.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that this kind of view usually is developed in either of two ways. On the standard approach, perception is a *sui generis* propositional attitude whose representational or propositional content is closely connected to its phenomenal character. So, for example, the fact that my visual experience represents a chessboard on the table before me is intimately related to the fact that my visual experience is characterized by the way certain colors and shapes qualitatively appear to me.⁴⁶

⁴³ According to BonJour, we should not say that there is any evidential relation between sensation and belief. Rather, “even if we grant and indeed insist that the specific content of the experience is itself nonpropositional and nonconceptual, it, like various other kinds of nonconceptual phenomena, can of course still be conceptually described with various degrees of detail and precision. The relation between the nonconceptual content and such a conceptual description thereof may not be *logical*, as Davidson uses this term, but it is also obviously not merely causal. Rather it is a *descriptive* relation.” (BonJour, 2001, 30; Cf. BonJour and Sosa, 2003, ch. 4.) However, even if there is a descriptive relation, as BonJour calls it, between sensations without propositional content and propositions one believes, the mere presence of a descriptive relation is clearly not sufficient for there being a valid argument, and thus for there to be a justifying relation, between sensations and beliefs. Surely, something, *A*, may describe something else, *B*, but without being justified by it.

⁴⁴ See, e.g., Searle (1983); Burge (1986); Byrne (2009); Pautz (2009); and Schellenberg (2011).

⁴⁵ Glüer (2012, 199).

⁴⁶ Proponents of the standard approach include Searle (1990); Horgan & Tienson (2002); Chalmers (2004); and Smithies (2018-b), to mention just a few.

On the non-standard approach, perception is a subspecies of belief. For example, according to Kathrin Glüer's (2009) *doxastic theory of perception*, perceptual experiences are beliefs with a special kind of content and distinct phenomenal character. Thus, the non-standard approach, while consistent with Davidson's view that only beliefs can confer justification,⁴⁷ still rejects the argument's second premise. As its proponents see it, perceptual experiences have propositional content since they are beliefs, which do have such content.

However, in order to reject premise 2 one need not decide between these approaches. Although the proponent of the doxastic theory can endorse Davidson's view, both of them undermine his argument for it. Moreover, considering that the claim that perceptual experiences can confer justification is motivated by intuitions elicited by the Believing and Experiencing Twin scenario from the previous section, the philosopher's scales should be tipped against Davidson.

In conclusion, for the reasons given above, I therefore think that my answer to the relevance question remains the most plausible. Given that mentalism is true, justification does appear to have its basis in one's beliefs and perceptual experiences. Since both expansive views and contractive views face problems that the view endorsed in this paper avoids, while also failing to respect relevant intuitions that motivate my view, my answer to the relevance question does seem to point out the proper supervenience base of justification.

4. Answering the Explanatory Question

In the previous section I answered the relevance question: justification has its basis in one's beliefs and perceptual experiences. However, this does not tell us *why* these states have justificatory relevance. Why is it that all and only beliefs and perceptual experiences can confer justification, whereas imaginings, hopes, desires, or any other such state cannot? Presumably, there must be something that unifies and explains why this particular set of states plays the epistemic role it does in our mental lives. But what is it? This is what I call the explanatory question, and the goal of section 4 is to answer it.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ In fact, Glüer's (2009, 315ff.) argument for the doxastic theory of perception uses the Davidsonian claim that "the only propositional attitude that provides reason for first order belief is that of belief" as a premise.

⁴⁸ Goldman (1979) argues that simple process reliabilism provides a plausible and unifying answer to the explanatory question, whereas internalists cannot, or at the very least have not yet provided any similarly plausible answer.

From the discussion above, it is clear that a mental state has justificatory relevance only if it is a propositional attitude. In other words, having representational or propositional content is a necessary condition for a mental state to confer justification. However, beliefs and perceptual experiences are not the only mental states with propositional content. Imaginings, desires, hopes, wishes, and many other kinds of mental state have propositional content, but without being able to confer justification. Being a propositional attitude is therefore not sufficient for having justificatory relevance. Indeed, there must be something else that explains why only beliefs and perceptual experiences play the epistemic role they do.

The explanation I find most plausible points to the distinct *representational force* that beliefs and perceptual experiences have. The representational force of a propositional attitude refers to the *way* in which that attitude represents its content.⁴⁹ For example, a desire might be said to represent its content as *to be turned true*, whereas a pain might be said to represent its content as *to be turned false* (assuming pains actually have propositional content). Now, when it comes to beliefs, they represent their content with what Pryor (2005, 187f.) calls *assertive force*. This is to say that they represent their content simply *as true*, or, more specifically, that they represent *the world as being a certain way*. According to Glüer (2009, 307), “belief is [therefore] the paradigmatic case of a strongly representational state,” where a mental state is taken to be strongly representational just in case it has propositional content that it represents as true. On the other hand, a mental state with propositional content but without assertive force, like a desire, is only weakly representational.

Moreover, I also think it is plausible that perceptual experiences have assertive force, and that it is grounded in the distinct phenomenal character they have.^{50, 51} As Pryor puts it:

I think there’s a distinctive phenomenology: the feeling of *seeming to ascertain* that a given proposition is true. This is present when the way a mental episode represents its content makes it feel as though, *by enjoying that episode, you can thereby just tell* that that content obtains. . . . When you have a perceptual experience of your hands, that experience makes it feel as though you *can just see* that hands are present. It feels as

⁴⁹ See Heck (2000, 509)

⁵⁰ This is of course not to say that the assertive force of belief also is grounded in some special phenomenal character. In fact, I am agnostic about whether belief has such phenomenology associated with it.

⁵¹ According to Smithies, the fact that perceptual experiences have assertive force that is grounded in their distinct phenomenal character explains why they play a foundational role in justifying empirical belief. “My claim now is that it’s in virtue of this distinctive phenomenal character that perceptual experience plays its distinctive epistemic role. Perceptual experience is an unmoved epistemic mover: it justifies belief about the external world without standing in need of any further justification.” (Smithies, forthcoming, 72.)

though hands are being shown or revealed to you. . . (Pryor, 2004, 357; Cf. 2000, 547, footnote 37.)

I thus take it that beliefs and perceptual experiences are strongly representational states. However, I also claim that beliefs and perceptual experiences are the only strongly representational states. Consider, for example, imaginings. Although they clearly (often) have propositional content—like that one has won the lottery and treats oneself to a well-deserved vacation—they don't represent them as true. I can imagine all sorts of things, but my imaginings will not represent those things as actually being the case. Similarly, when it comes to other propositional attitudes—be they desires, hopes, wishes, or any other such state—they do not represent their content with assertive force. Therefore, it seems that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences just are one's strongly representational states: they are the states one has that represent the world as being a particular way.⁵²

Now a related, but even more difficult question concerns *how* strongly representational states confer justification upon the different doxastic attitudes. Strongly representational states provide justification for the different doxastic attitudes depending on the degree to which they support certain propositions. The following claims are generally accepted:

1. You have justification to believe p , if your evidence supports p to a sufficiently high degree.
2. You have justification do disbelieve p , if your evidence supports $\neg p$ to a sufficiently high degree.
3. You have justification to withhold judgment that p , if your evidence neither supports p nor $\neg p$ to a sufficiently high degree.

But this raises the question: how exactly do strongly representational states support certain propositions?

5. The How of Justificatory Support

From an internalist perspective, there are two main proposals as to how this works. According to internalists like Moser (1989), Vogel (1990), BonJour (2002, ch. 7), Conee and Feldman

⁵² It might be objected that intuition and introspection are strongly representational states which nevertheless don't justify empirical belief about the external world. Against this view I would point out that I am sympathetic to doxastic accounts of intuition and introspection which liken those kinds of state to belief.

(2008), and McCain (2016), evidential support is a matter of an inference to the best explanation. Consider the following passage from Conee and Feldman:

We believe that the fundamental epistemic principles are principles of best explanation. Perceptual experiences can contribute toward the justification of propositions about the world when the propositions are part of the best explanation of those experiences that is available to the person. Similarly, the truth of the contents of a memory experience may be part of the best explanation of the experience itself. Thus, the general idea is that a person has a set of experiences, including perceptual experiences, memorial experiences, and so on. What is justified for the person includes propositions that are part of the best explanation of those experiences available to the person. (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 97-98.)

However, a worry with this view is that there are justified beliefs that don't appear to provide a good—let alone the best—explanation for the evidence one has. Consider the following example:

Squirrel Watcher

Tom is very interested in squirrels. Hoping that he will see many different squirrels, he has decided to go for a hike in an area where it's known that there are a lot of different squirrels. Suddenly, Tom spots a squirrel in a tree about 10 feet from where he is standing. As a result, he comes to believe that there is a squirrel in a tree before him and that there is an animal in a tree before him.

Tom's beliefs are supported by his perceptual experiences and, as a consequence, clearly justified. Moreover, the proposition that there is a squirrel in a tree before him seems to provide a very good explanation for why he sees what appears to be a squirrel in a tree before him. However, the proposition that there is an animal in a tree before him doesn't seem to explain why he sees what appears to be a squirrel in a tree before him. Sure, the proposition is entailed by what is the best explanation for his visual experience (namely, that there is a squirrel in a tree before him), but it is not itself part of that explanation.^{53, 54}

⁵³ Similar objections are provided by Lehrer (1974, ch. 7) and Goldman (2011). McCain (2016) tries to accommodate the various intuitions by claiming that evidential support is a matter of an inference to the best explanation or the logical consequences of such an explanation. However, I'm doubtful that his suggestion is able to account for the intuitions elicited by all the relevant cases of justified belief. Moreover, according to McCain, a proposition can be available to one as the best explanation only if one has the concepts required to understand it and is disposed to have a seeming that the proposition indeed is the best explanation on the basis of

In contrast to explanationism, which can be considered the received internalist view about evidential support, others—like Keynes (1921), Williamson (2000), Fumerton (2004), Huemer (2007), and Smithies (forthcoming)—have recently argued that evidential support should be conceptualized in terms of evidential probability:⁵⁵ your evidence provides support to certain propositions by increasing their evidential probability. By way of illustration, let's say that you have a strongly representational state, like a perceptual experience, that *p*, and that *p* has a strong inferential connection to *q*. *p* might be a proposition like that *there is a squirrel in a tree before me* and *q* a proposition like that *there is an animal in a tree before me*. Now, according to the view at hand, the reason your perceptual experience that *p* gives you justification to believe both *p* and *q* is that these propositions are made sufficiently probable by that experience (which represents *p as true*). In general, your reasons or evidence (which is provided by your strongly representational states) justifies a body of propositions about yourself, the world, and your place in it by providing probabilistic support to them.

Moreover, the authors mentioned above claim that evidential probability cannot be defined in terms of either subjective probability (often called *credence*) or objective probability (often called *chance*). For example, Williamson points out that on an objectivist interpretation of evidential probability, we would be rationally committed to assign laws of nature an objective chance of 1, even though they might be rather implausible on one's evidence.⁵⁶ Indeed, examples like this suggest that questions about how evidence supports propositions cannot be answered in terms of objective frequency or chance. Similarly, he also points out that on a subjectivist interpretation, our beliefs/credences must always correspond

reflection alone. But it is very implausible that facts about evidential support depend upon one's dispositions in this manner. Moon and Robinson (forthcoming) have convincingly argued that by relying on dispositions in this manner, McCain's account of evidential support becomes too subjectivist and, as a result, is vulnerable to counterexamples, including the New Evil Demon Problem.

⁵⁴ Other objections to explanationism about evidential support have recently been offered by Fumerton (2018), who argues (i) that it is unable to account for introspectively justified beliefs and (ii) that it fails to describe an independent source of inferential justification, and Steup (2018), who argues that it fails to provide a reductive analysis of justification. McCain (2018) responds.

⁵⁵ Fumerton (2004) and Huemer (2007, 52) call it "epistemic probability".

⁵⁶ Proponents of objectivist interpretations of evidential probability include Russell (1948, ch. 1); Alston (1989, ch. 9); and Plantinga (1993, ch. 9). However, it is interesting to note that one of the most famous expressions of this view is offered by the (access) internalist BonJour, who remarks as follows: "If epistemic justification were not conducive to truth in this way, if finding epistemically justified belief did not substantially increase the likelihood of finding true ones, then epistemic justification would be irrelevant to our main cognitive goal and of dubious worth. It is only if we have some reason for thinking that epistemic justification constitutes a path to the truth that we as cognitive beings have any motive for preferring epistemically justified beliefs to epistemically unjustified ones." (BonJour, 1985, 8.) However, since BonJour is a strong accessibilist who thinks that a belief can be justified only if one has reflective access to both one's reasons/evidence and the fact that it supports it, this arguably leads to skepticism since we usually don't have reflective access to whether, and to what degree, our evidence increases the objective probability of certain propositions.

to the degree to which our evidence supports certain propositions.⁵⁷ However, it is possible that one's evidence doesn't support a proposition p , or that it only supports p to a low degree, but that one nevertheless is highly (and irrationally) confident that p . Hence, relations of evidential probability cannot be defined in terms of belief/credence.

Moreover, the aforementioned authors do not just agree that evidential probability doesn't reflect contingent relations having to do with objective frequencies or a subject's credences, but also that it does reflect necessary connections between evidence and propositionally encoded hypotheses.^{58, 59} In other words, according to the authors above, relations of evidential support are not a worldly matter, in the sense that they don't depend on contingent features of the actual world. Rather, according to Smithies (and some of the authors he follows) evidential probability should simply be defined as a *sui generis* kind of probability. However, a worry with this view is that evidential probability seems to become a rather mysterious thing. If it is neither credence nor chance, but rather some *sui generis* relation between one's evidence and the propositions it supports, then it is very hard to get any sort of intuitive understanding of it. Moreover, one might worry that by divorcing one's conception of probability from both the subjective and objective interpretations of it, one isn't really theorizing about probability any longer, but rather some other notion.

In response to the second worry, Smithies (forthcoming, ch. 5) argues that his conception of evidential support as a kind of *sui generis* probability is unproblematic since it is constrained by the axioms of the probability calculus and, moreover, that probability simply is whatever satisfies said axioms.^{60, 61} When it comes to the first worry, Smithies doesn't

⁵⁷ Schmitt (1993) attributes a similar (though not identical) view that he calls *epistemic perspectivism* to Bonjour, Foley, Pollock, and Lehrer. According to epistemic perspectivism: "thinking makes it so: a subject's belief is justified in virtue of being sanctioned by the subject's outlook or perspective on justification. . . . To say that the subject's belief is sanctioned by the perspective is not to say that it satisfies or conforms to some principle that is the content of a judgment of justification, but that it is *judged* to satisfy such a principle." (Schmitt, 1993, 3.) However, I do not think that either of the aforementioned philosophers actually holds this view. What they do believe is that it is a *necessary condition* for having justification to believe that p that one believes that p is supported by one's evidence. See, for example, Bonjour (1985, 31).

⁵⁸ Cf. Carnap (1950); Kyburg (1971); Moser (1988); Fumerton (1995); and Conee & Feldman (2008), who also argue that this is the case.

⁵⁹ For a useful discussion of this issue, see Smith (2016).

⁶⁰ The axioms are as follows:

1. *Non-Negativity*: $P(p) \geq 0$, for every proposition p .
2. *Normalization*: $P(T) = 1$, for every tautology T .
3. *Finite Additivity*: $P(p \vee q) = P(p) + P(q)$, for every proposition p and q such that p is inconsistent with q .

And the conditional probability of one proposition on another proposition can be defined by the following ratio formula:

Conditional Probability: if $P(q) > 0$, then $P(p | q) = P(p \& q)/P(q)$.

really say much in order to ease any misgivings one might have; instead, he seems to rely on the Keynesian and Williamsonian idea that “probability begins and ends with probability” (Keynes, 1921, 332; cf. Williamson, 2000, ch. 10), and that it can’t be defined in more fundamental terms. Our theories must rely on certain fundamental concepts which cannot be defined in more fundamental terms, and there does not in principle seem to be any reason why probability cannot be allowed to function as such a concept.⁶²

Although these proposals are the most prominent internalist views of the evidential support relation in the critical literature, there are others besides. For example, according Michael Huemer (2001; 2007), one’s evidence supports believing that p just in case one’s evidence on balance makes it *seem* that p is true. However, a problem with this view is that seemings don’t appear to be necessary for justification. One can, for example, have a belief (whether occurrent or dispositional) that justifies another belief (with another propositional content), but without having any seeming that the content of the second belief is true. Another view of evidential support has been offered by Roderick Chisholm (1989), who holds that there are certain epistemic principles, such that if certain psychological conditions obtain, then certain propositions will be justified. For example, if a person undergoes a particular perceptual or memorial experience, then the person has justification for believing certain propositions about the world. However, neither Chisholm, nor anyone else, has been able to derive these principles that he endorses from more general ones, which makes them appear arbitrary and unmotivated.

Now, insofar as one thinks that none of the aforementioned internalist views of evidential support is obviously unproblematic, the internalist faces the following problem: *if* one accepts the internalist intuitions elicited by the New Evil Demon scenario, then one needs

The axioms are usually justified using Dutch Book Arguments purporting to show that anyone who violates them will be susceptible to accept a bet which guarantees that they will lose money, and that being so susceptible makes you less than ideally rational. For more on Dutch Book Arguments, see Hájek (2009).

⁶¹ He also uses this suggestion in order to argue that one always has privileged access to the facts about evidential support (Smithies, forthcoming, ch. 5 and 6).

⁶² Keynes (1921, 332) puts it as follows: “. . . there is no direct relation between the truth of a proposition and its probability. Probability begins and ends with probability. That a scientific investigation pursued on account of its probability will generally lead to truth, rather than falsehood, is at best only probable. The proposition that a course of action guided by the most probable considerations will generally lead to success, is not certainly true and has nothing to recommend it but probability.”

Consider also the following passage from Williamson (2000, 211): “What, then, *are* probabilities on evidence? We should resist demands for an operational definition; such demands are as damaging in the philosophy of science as they are in science itself. To require mathematicians to give a precise definition of ‘set’ would be to abolish set theory. Sometimes the best policy is to go ahead and theorize with a vague but powerful notion. One’s original intuitive understanding becomes refined as a result, although rarely to the point of a definition in precise pretheoretical terms. That policy will be pursued here.”

to provide an account of the evidential support relation such that the beliefs of the demon's victim will be justified. The issue, in other words, is that the internalist has to provide an account of evidential support that is compatible with internalist intuitions about skeptical scenarios and that is plausible in its own right.⁶³

However, that being said, I think that externalism faces the same kind of problem, insofar as the externalist too needs to provide a compelling account of evidential support—though externalists are of course not subject to the constraint that the account must be compatible with the intuitions which motivate internalism. The externalist can always try to explain how one's evidence provides justificatory support to certain propositions by claiming that it increases the objective probability of those propositions, as for example Alston (1989, ch. 9) and Plantinga (1993, ch. 9) do. However, this can only be done at the cost of denying the intuition that the beliefs of the victim in the New Evil Demon scenario are justified—not to mention the other problem hinted at above. After all, the victim's evidence clearly does not increase the objective chance that his beliefs are true.⁶⁴

The issue of *how* evidence provides support to propositions is a central one—one that both internalists and externalists must face. However, the issue is arguably more threatening to internalism, since it is only the internalist who must provide an account of evidential support that is compatible with the internalist intuitions on which he relies. Very much therefore seems to hinge on how one responds to the New Evil Demon scenario. If one is willing to bite the bullet and accept that the demon's victim is unjustified in holding their beliefs, then one can account for evidential support in terms of objective probability, or in some other way that allows the victim to have unjustified beliefs. However, if one thinks that the intuition has to be respected, as I have argued at length in paper 1, then one needs to rely on an alternative conception of evidential support. My own view on this matter is that the internalist should opt for the least problematic view—what might be called the lesser evil—and develop and defend it when pressed by the externalist. As I see it, I think that the Williamsonian view endorsed by Smithies and other internalists is the most plausible one. Indeed, I don't see any insurmountable issue with treating the notion of probability as fundamental, and therefore opt for a conception of evidential support as a sort of *sui generis*

⁶³ I think this is a somewhat underappreciated problem which deserves more discussion in the literature. Two exceptions are Fumerton (2004) and Littlejohn (2012). Littlejohn (2012, 26) formulates an argument according to which only externalism can account for the fact that the conditions that justify belief have to be truth-conducive.

⁶⁴ Another worry with this view, recently highlighted by Comesaña (2018, 316-317), is that it allows for lucky credence assignments to be justified, even though they intuitively aren't.

probability relation that necessarily holds between evidence and the propositionally specified hypotheses it supports.

6. Concluding Remarks

According to epistemic internalism, the justification facts supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. However, not all such states can confer justification. In this paper, I have answered what I call the relevance question by arguing that all and only one's beliefs and perceptual experiences have justificatory relevance. But this only tells us what the scope of justification-conferring mental states is; it does not tell why that set of states plays the epistemic role it does. In order to answer what I call the explanatory question, I have therefore argued that one's beliefs and perceptual experiences are one's strongly representational states, and that strongly representational states necessarily provide support to certain inferentially connected propositions. Doing this, the goal of this paper has been to make some headway toward developing a plausible internalist picture of justification and its basis in our mental lives.

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IV

Scientific Evidence and the Internalism-Externalism Distinction

1. Epistemic Internalism and Externalism

According to epistemic internalism, facts about justification are not brute facts; they are epistemic facts that depend upon more fundamental non-epistemic facts about one's *internal states*. A common way of unpacking the notion of internal states is by saying that one's internal states are one's *non-factive mental states*, where a mental state is non-factive just in case it *doesn't* necessarily have true propositional content.¹ And, moreover, a common way explaining the way in which facts about justification depend upon one's non-factive mental states is in terms of supervenience. Taken together this gives us the following definition of the internalist position:

Epistemic internalism: facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has justification (to a certain degree) to hold supervene upon one's non-factive mental states.²

Epistemic externalism, on the other hand, is naturally then defined as the denial of the internalist thesis above.

The internalism-externalism distinction is a deep intellectual divide around which the contemporary epistemological discourse has been circling ever since Edmund Gettier (1963) first exposed the inadequacies inherent in our traditional analysis of our most cherished

¹ This position is known as mentalism, and its proponents include Pollock & Cruz (1999); Conee & Feldman (2001); Wedgwood (2002); Smithies (2012); McCain (2016); and Egeland (forthcoming).

² Thus defined, epistemic internalism is a thesis about *propositional*, rather than *doxastic*, justification. In other words, it is a thesis about the justification someone has for believing/withholding/disbelieving certain propositions, rather than the justifiably held beliefs (or other doxastic attitudes) someone has. This is important since doxastic justification usually is taken to be propositional justification plus proper basing, and whether one satisfies the basing requirement is typically understood along externalist lines as a causal or counterfactual matter. However, for those who endorse an internalist conception of proper basing (e.g., some doxastic account of the relation), the thesis could just as well be defined in terms of doxastic justification. But since I don't want to commit myself to any position with respect to the nature of the basing relation, I will simply limit my focus to propositional justification.

epistemological concept—namely, knowledge.³ Internalists usually argue their case by reflecting on various scenarios in which the subject's rational standing appears to be a function of his or her own first-person perspective on the world. Externalists, on the other hand, often argue their case by reflecting on our concepts of evidence and reason, including the way in which we talk about what our justifying evidence or reasons for belief in various contexts are.⁴ In this paper, I will examine two such externalist arguments, both of which have as their conclusion the claim that internalism ultimately must be false insofar as it is unable to account for the way in which the concept of *evidence* is used in scientific discourse. The first of these arguments is offered by Timothy Williamson (2000) in support of his E = K thesis, whereas the second is offered by Thomas Kelly (2008; 2016) and focuses on the public or intersubjective character of scientific evidence. In response, I will argue that Williamson's view isn't supported by how we talk about scientific evidence, and that it is unable to account for facts about what has been regarded as scientific evidence and as justified scientific belief in the history of science. And in response to the second argument I will argue that internalist views are just as suited to account for the public character of scientific evidence as externalist views; indeed, they do better in that regard than the externalist view proposed by Kelly.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 begins from the assumption that facts about justification largely are determined by one's evidence, while clarifying some confusion about the concept of evidence. Section 3 presents Williamson's views on evidence and the argument for the E = K thesis. Section 4 responds to that argument. Section 5 presents the argument that scientific evidence has a public character which internalism cannot account for. Section 6 responds by explaining the way in which internalism can account for the publicity of scientific evidence. Section 7 concludes and discusses the role of scientific evidence in the internalism-externalism debate.

³ Indeed, after the publication of Gettier's seminal article, several epistemologists have shifted their focus from knowledge to justification. As one commentator puts it: "knowledge is not really the proper central concern of epistemologico-sceptical inquiry. There is not necessarily any lasting discomfort in the claim that, contrary to our preconceptions, we have no genuine knowledge in some broad area of thought—say in the area of theoretical science. We can live with the concession that we do not, strictly, *know* some of the things we believed ourselves to know, provided we can retain the thought that we are fully justified in accepting them." (Wright, 1991, 88.) Similarly, focusing primarily on science rather than philosophy, John Earman (1993, 37) says that "the main concern is rarely whether or not a scientist 'knows' that some theory is true but rather whether or not she is justified in believing it."

⁴ For an excellent introduction to many of the arguments that have made their mark on the internalism-externalism debate (although it fails to cover the kind of externalist argument which this paper focuses on), see Littlejohn (2012, introduction).

2. Evidence

Nowadays, it is common for epistemologists to think that one's evidence plays a big role in determining what one has justification to believe. Evidentialists think that facts about justification are a function of one's evidence, whereas others think that non-evidential factors can play a justification-conferring role as well. In this paper I will follow suit and assume that one's evidence is largely responsible for what one has justification to believe. This has some interesting implications for how we should understand the internalism-externalism divide. According to the internalist, all evidence is provided by one's internal states; and if they don't support evidentialism, they will have to say that the other, non-evidential, justification-conferring factors also are provided by one's internal states. According to the externalist, on the other hand, some evidence isn't provided by one's internal states, or there must be external factors besides one's evidence that can confer justification upon our beliefs. However, we need to say a little bit more about what evidence is. For all the sentences above tell us, evidence is whatever (usually) justifies belief (or other doxastic attitudes). Consider for example the conception of evidence suggested by Jaegwon Kim:

[T]he concept of evidence is inseparable from that of justification. When we talk of 'evidence' in an epistemological sense we are talking about justification: one thing is 'evidence' for another just in case the first tends to enhance the reasonableness or justification of the second. . . A strictly nonnormative concept of evidence is not our concept of evidence; it is something that we do not understand. (Kim, 1988, 390-391.)⁵

However, this conception of evidence is too liberal to be theoretically satisfying. Indeed, as Jack Lyons (2016, 1057) also has pointed out, Kim's conception of evidence faces a couple of serious problems. First, it renders evidentialism a wholly uninteresting thesis insofar as it becomes analytically true. If evidence simply is whatever justifies or rationalizes certain doxastic attitudes, then facts about justification will of course be determined by one's evidence. But we already knew that! Our beliefs are justified by whatever justifies our beliefs. There's nothing new under the sun.

Second, Kim's conception of evidence is counterintuitive insofar as it encourages us to conceptualize certain phenomena as evidence that clearly don't appear to be evidence. Consider for example some externalist views of justification, like reliabilism and proper

⁵ Cf. Kelly (2008, 941-942; 2016).

functionalism. According to such views, the reliability of one's doxastic dispositions or the proper functioning of one's cognitive faculties does (epistemically) contribute to the justification of our beliefs. Hence, according to Kim's conception, such phenomena constitute evidence (on those views). However, this clearly does not seem right. Reliable doxastic dispositions and properly functioning cognitive faculties should not count as evidence—regardless of whether or not theories that emphasize the justifying role played by such phenomena are correct.

How should we conceptualize one's evidence then? I want to suggest as an intuitive conception of evidence, with minimal theoretical commitments, that one's justifying evidence is the epistemic (as opposed to pragmatic) reasons for belief (or other doxastic attitudes) in one's possession.^{6,7} This, in other words, means that evidence is the kind of thing that speaks in favor of the truth of certain propositions and which subjects typically find it natural to rely on in the practice of *justifying* their beliefs—i.e., in demonstrating what their beliefs have going for them that serve as indicators of their being true. Moreover, it also means that justifying evidence—i.e., the kind of evidence that justifies belief—must somehow *belong* to a subject. In order for someone to have a piece of evidence, it cannot simply be the case that the evidence exists somewhere in the world. Instead, the evidence must somehow be in the subject's cognitive possession; otherwise, it wouldn't be evidence that one *has* or is in *possession* of.⁸

Continuing, I will rely on this intuitive conception of evidence in my discussion of the two externalist arguments purporting to show that there is a specific species of evidence—namely, scientific evidence—that only can be accommodated in an externalist framework. Let's begin by turning to Williamson's views on the matter and the argument for the E = K thesis.

3. Williamson on Scientific Evidence and the E = K Thesis

Williamson thinks that only true propositions (or facts) can be evidence. First, he thinks that all evidence is propositional since one's evidence can be evaluated for properties like

⁶ Although I do not have space to discuss his article, I think this suggestion avoids Brunero's (2018) counterexamples to the reasons-as-evidence view.

⁷ For a similar suggestion, see Brogaard (2018).

⁸ The present suggestion is neutral on the question of whether one's evidence/reasons are propositionally specified. For more comprehensive (and disagreeing) treatments of this issue, see Turri (2009) and Glüer & Wikforss (2018).

consistency and inconsistency, coherence, probabilification, entailment, explanatory fit, and the like. Such properties only hold among items that can be considered true or false, which means that they must be propositions. Indeed, he thinks that “propositionality is essential to the functional role of evidence” (Williamson, 2007b, 209, footnote 1).⁹ Second, Williamson thinks that only a proper subset of all propositions can be evidence—namely, the true ones—since propositions that are inconsistent with one's evidence must be false. If propositions inconsistent with one's evidence must be false, then it follows that the propositions that constitute one's evidence must be true.¹⁰ Thus, Williamson thinks that all evidence consists of true propositions that support certain (other) propositions either by deductively entailing them, by increasing their probability, or by abductively supporting them.

Moreover, Williamson also agrees that in order for evidence to play a justifying role it must somehow be in the subject's cognitive possession. More specifically, he thinks that the subject somehow must *grasp* the propositions that are included in his evidence:

One can use an hypothesis to explain why A only if one grasps the proposition that A. Thus only propositions which one grasps can function as evidence in one's inferences to the best explanation. By this standard, only propositions which one grasps count as part of one's evidence. (Williamson, 2000, 195.)

However, he doesn't think that it is sufficient for a subject to believe a true proposition p in order for p to be included in his evidence. Rather, what is required is that the subject *knows* p . Thus, *only* knowledge is evidence.¹¹ Moreover, he also thinks that *all* knowledge is evidence, which leads him to endorse the famous $E = K$ thesis:

$E = K$: “knowledge, and only knowledge, constitutes evidence” (Williamson, 2000, 185).

And later he endorses what we may call the $R = K$ thesis:

⁹ Williamson (2000, 194-196) appears to offer three different, but similar, arguments for the claim that all evidence is propositional. The first (194-195) argues from the fact that evidence typically is used in abductive reasoning; the second (195-196) argues from the role of evidence in probabilistic reasoning; and the third (196) argues from the fact that evidence sometimes can be used to rule out hypotheses.

¹⁰ Williamson (2007b, 209) puts the point as follows: “Why is it bad for an assertion to be inconsistent with the evidence? A natural answer is: because then it is false. That answer assumes that evidence consists only of *true* propositions. For if an untrue proposition p is evidence, the proposition that p is untrue is true but inconsistent with the evidence. Using 'fact' for 'true proposition,' we may say that evidence consists only of facts.”

¹¹ To support this claim, Williamson (2000, 200-201) offers the now well-known “balls in a bag” argument. For a critical discussion of the argument, see Lyons (2016, 1060-1061).

$R = K$: “ p is available to you as a reason if and only if you know p .” (Williamson, 2007a, 120.)

The $E = K$ thesis is clearly an externalist theory of justification and evidence (and the same also goes for the $R = K$ thesis, of course). This can easily be seen by comparing knowledge with internal states. Under the definition of internalism that we’re currently considering, internal states are non-factive mental states. By contrast, knowledge is a factive state since it necessarily has true propositional content.¹² It therefore fails to qualify as an internal state, and if knowledge cannot be considered an internal state, while at the same time providing evidence for our beliefs, then $E = K$ must be an externalist theory.

Williamson offers several considerations in favor of the $E = K$ thesis.¹³ Here I want to take a closer look at one of the less discussed reasons he offers.¹⁴ As he sees it, in the scientific discourse evidence is treated as true propositions that are commonly known (or perhaps just widely available) in the scientific community. This is how he puts it in his *Knowledge and Its Limits*:

If one's evidence were restricted to the contents of one's own mind, it could not play the role it actually does in science. The evidence for the proposition that the sun is larger than the earth is not just my present experiences or degrees of belief. If the evidence is widened to include other people's experiences or degrees of belief, or my past ones, then my identification of it becomes even more fallible. In any case, that does not seem to be the right widening; it is more plausible that the evidence for a scientific theory is the sort of thing which is made public in scientific journals. (Williamson, 2000, 193.)

And later in *The Philosophy of Philosophy*, he writes:

It is fanciful to regard evidence in the natural sciences as consisting of psychological facts rather than, for example, facts about the results of experiments and measurements. When scientists state their evidence in their publications, they state

¹² I say that knowledge is a factive state, rather than a factive *mental state*, because I don't want to commit myself to the view that it actually is a mental state. Williamson (2000) of course claims that it is, but there are strong arguments for the opposite view; see, e.g., McGlynn (2014, ch. 8).

¹³ See Williamson (2000, ch. 9).

¹⁴ The argument is really an objection to the internalist's conception of evidence, although it can be formulated without omitting any of his central points, as I do here, as an argument for the $E = K$ thesis. Indeed, since the passage quoted from Williamson (2000) occurs in the middle of his chapter on evidence, where he argues that the $E = K$ thesis is superior to more traditional internalist conceptions of evidence, I think an argument along the lines I present is hinted at in that chapter.

mainly non-psychological facts (unless they are psychologists); are they not best placed to know what their evidence is? (Williamson 2007b, 212.)

In these passages, Williamson claims that when scientists argue for theories or hypotheses—like that the sun is larger than the earth—they don't rely on premises about their internal states as evidence for them. Rather, they argue from premises about true propositions (or facts) that are common knowledge among the members of the scientific community,¹⁵ which is easily explained by his $E = K$ thesis. Indeed, according to the $E = K$ thesis, the reason we find it so natural to treat our knowledge as evidence in the scientific discourse (and other kinds discourse as well) is because it *is* our evidence.

Moreover, this is also thought to pose a big problem for the internalist. Indeed, Williamson's point can be presented as a *modus tollens* against internalism. To see why that is so, recall that internalism holds that facts about which doxastic attitudes one now has justification (to a certain degree) to hold supervene upon one's non-factive mental states. Thus defined, it follows from internalism that a pair of epistemic agents, one of whom is in a normal scenario where everything is as it seems and the other of whom is in a subjectively indistinguishable deceptive scenario (like those that typically involve envatment or Cartesian demons) have the same evidence and are equally justified in holding the same beliefs. However, if Williamson's point is correct, then agents in subjectively indistinguishable normal and deceptive scenarios need not have the same (scientific) evidence (since one of them can have knowledge that the other lacks) and can therefore fail to be equally justified in holding the same beliefs—in which case internalism must be false.¹⁶

4. Response to Williamson on Scientific Evidence

In response to the argument that our conception of scientific evidence strongly supports the $E = K$ thesis, and hence externalism in general, I will make three points as to why that isn't the case.

¹⁵ The notion of common knowledge that I believe Williamson here (implicitly) is operating with is an intuitive notion; not the notion that we find in epistemic logics. According to the latter notion, Φ is common knowledge among the agents in \mathbf{A} if and only if (i) Φ is true, (ii) everybody in \mathbf{A} knows that Φ is true, (iii) everybody in \mathbf{A} knows that everybody in \mathbf{A} knows that Φ is true, and (iv) everybody in \mathbf{A} knows that, . . . , everybody in \mathbf{A} knows that Φ is true, *ad infinitum*: $C_{\mathbf{A}}\Phi = \Phi \wedge K_{\mathbf{A}}\Phi \wedge K_{\mathbf{A}}K_{\mathbf{A}}\Phi \wedge K_{\mathbf{A}}K_{\mathbf{A}}K_{\mathbf{A}}\Phi \dots$

¹⁶ “That one has the same evidence in the good and bad cases is a severe constraint on the nature of evidence. It is inconsistent with the view that evidence consist of true propositions like those standardly offered as evidence for scientific theories.” (Williamson, 2000, 173.)

First, talk about evidence, both in scientific and everyday contexts, doesn't support the E = K thesis. Instead, it supports only a more moderate version of externalism according to which both internal states and external factors count as evidence.¹⁷ To see why that is so, notice that we often talk about evidence without referring to our knowledge. For example, if someone asks you what your evidence for believing that the Berlin wall fell on June 13th 1990 is, it is completely natural to answer by pointing to an encyclopedia article in front of you, saying that “my evidence is right there, just take look yourself”—which refers to a physical object (i.e., the encyclopedia article), rather than a proposition you know, as your evidence. Or you can answer simply by saying that “I *experienced* the event myself”—which refers to an internal state as evidence. Either way, our ordinary and everyday talk about evidence doesn't support the E = K thesis.

Similarly, when we talk about scientific evidence we also often talk as if internal states and external factors besides propositions we know are evidence. For example, if someone asks you what your evidence for a certain hypothesis *h* is, a natural reply is that “my evidence for *h* was gathered during last year's excavation”—which again refers to physical objects (i.e., those that were gathered at the excavation), rather than known propositions, as scientific evidence. Or, another natural way of answering the question is to say that “the evidence for the hypothesis *h* is *observations* o_1, \dots, o_n ”—which refers to internal states as scientific evidence.¹⁸ So even though we sometimes do refer to our knowledge as (scientific) evidence (either explicitly or implicitly), talk about evidence, both in scientific and everyday contexts, only seems to support a somewhat moderate externalism, according to which both internal states and external factors can provide (scientific) evidence.^{19, 20}

Second, the E = K thesis isn't supported by our intuitive conception of scientific evidence since it is possible that there are false propositions included in our scientific

¹⁷ A similar point is also made by Turri (2009); and Kelly (2008).

¹⁸ Now, one might think that what is being referenced here are external states that have been observed. However, to me, that doesn't really seem all that plausible. I think that what is being referenced are *observations* of external states, rather than the external states themselves.

¹⁹ Moreover, it should be noted that this “moderate externalism” actually is compatible with internalism insofar its proponents can argue that although both internal and external factors can count as (scientific) evidence, only internal factors can count as *justifying* evidence.

²⁰ In fact, to the extent that the the notion of “public evidence” can be analyzed in internalist terms (which I argue that it can in section 6), it doesn't even support that much. If there indeed is such an analysis available, then this fact about language use supports internalism.

evidence.²¹ For example, we can imagine scientific propositions that are false but treated as evidence since they enjoy great predictive success and are strongly corroborated by other things we know. Indeed, not only can we imagine such scenarios, but we also seem to find them in the actual history of science.²²

Consider the curious case of Bohr and Sommerfeld who, by relying on a flawed model of the atom in which electrons literally orbit the nucleus in a circular or elliptical fashion, successfully predicted the spectral lines of various elements.²³ At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, a problematic and up to that point unexplained phenomenon was the characteristic spectra of different elements; every element emits and absorbs light only at certain specific frequencies. Before Bohr, most explanations of the phenomenon were no more than far-fetched speculations.²⁴ However, in 1913 Bohr explained the spectral lines of any element in terms of the possible orbits of the electrons in the element's atoms. His theory had tremendous success in explaining the spectral lines of ionized helium. The physicist and science historian Abraham Pais writes as follows about the event:

Up to that time no one had ever produced anything like it in the realm of spectroscopy, agreement between theory and experiment up to five significant figures. (Pais, 1991, 149.)

Indeed, his theory was so successful that many of his contemporaries were absolutely convinced that it had to be correct. Einstein, for example, said that “this is a tremendous result. The theory of Bohr must then be right.”²⁵

Nevertheless, as it turns out, Bohr's theory wasn't able to explain the spectral lines of hydrogen. So in 1916 Sommerfeld further developed Bohr's initial theory and was able to offer accurate predictions. The expanded theory of Sommerfeld was indeed so successful that

²¹ Some epistemologists will of course just stipulate that evidence must be true. However, even if one were to make such a stipulation, the point I make in the following paragraphs would still hold true of justifying reasons for belief, which aren't necessarily true.

²² There are also many counterexamples to the claim that false propositions cannot be included in one's evidence in everyday situations. See, e.g., Warfield (2005); Klein (2008); Fitelson (2010); Arnold (2011); Rizzeri (2011); and Egeland (forthcoming). Littlejohn (2012, 106-109), however, critically argues against some these examples, and McCain (2016, 25-27) responds to his argument.

²³ For an interesting discussion of the case, which relates it to the realism/anti-realism debate, see Vickers (2012).

²⁴ According to Pais (1986, 197): “So it was when Bohr came along. In his words, in those early days spectra were as interesting and incomprehensible as the colors of a butterfly's wing.”

²⁵ Cited in Pais (1991, 154).

by 1920 there was almost universal agreement among the physicists of the time that the theory not only had to be correct, but that it was the only viable model for atomic and quantum research.²⁶ In fact, the formula Sommerfield derived from his theory in order to explain the frequency at which hydrogen emits and absorbs light is the exact same as the one that we nowadays use for the same purpose. However, as it turns out, we now know that the Bohr-Sommerfield theory is wrong, and it has been replaced with a new theoretical model (which includes the Schrödinger equation). Yet, it remains a fantastic coincidence that Sommerfield was able to derive the correct formula from a wholly inadequate theory.²⁷ In his discussion of the development, acceptance, and eventual rejection of the Bohr-Sommerfield theory, Helge Kragh offers the following remark:

By some sort of historical magic, Sommerfield managed in 1916 to get the correct formula from what turned out to be an utterly inadequate model. . . [This] illustrates the well-known fact that incorrect physical theories may well lead to correct formulae and predictions. (Kragh, 1985, 84.)

Now, for the present purposes, the question we need to ask is whether the false Bohr-Sommerfield theory (or the false propositions comprising it) did, or at least could, count as evidence for other scientific hypotheses once it became clear that it was able to successfully explain the observational data about spectral lines? I think we should answer in the affirmative. The false Bohr-Sommerfield theory clearly played an important theoretical role in the epistemologico-scientific project at the time; indeed, so much so that when Sommerfield derived the true formula that successfully explained the relevant data from his theory, that the theory itself became justified to such a degree that it could be used as scientific evidence for other hypotheses or derivations.²⁸ If, for example, the theory could be shown to support a certain interesting and not yet empirically tested hypothesis, then it does seem that we would have good reason to believe in that hypothesis. More specifically, Sommerfield's theory, which itself was justified by its explanatory power and predictive success, would provide evidence in favor of said hypothesis by conferring (some of) its justification upon it. Moreover, not only does this seem intuitive, it appears to be more or less what actually

²⁶ See Kragh (2012, ch. 4).

²⁷ Kronig (cited in Kragh, 1985, 84), for example, says that it is “perhaps the most remarkable numerical coincidence in the history of physics.”

²⁸ If someone were to object that we shouldn't think of scientific theories or propositions as scientific evidence, which is more akin to observational data, then I would be happy to concede that such theories/propositions are evidentially significant, but aren't *scientific* evidence. And that, moreover, is sufficient to counter the E = K thesis. All that is required is that false theories/propositions can function as evidence, scientific or other.

happened. Before its eventual downfall, when the Bohr-Sommerfield theory enjoyed almost universal support among contemporary physicists, the theory, with all its success, was, as noted above, thought to provide the only viable model for further research in the field. Indeed, not only does the theory appear to have been accorded evidential significance, it also appears to have created something like a scientific paradigm,²⁹ the basis of which could be used in order to epistemically evaluate and justify further research—at least for a time.

A possible—perhaps even obvious—objection to my argument is that the Bohr-Sommerfield theory eventually was overturned and recognized as false, and that it therefore didn't really provide *bona fide* scientific evidence to begin with. Although it is completely understandable why physicists in the early twentieth century might have *believed* that the theory was true and should be included in their evidence set, the fact that it is false shows their belief to have been mistaken. In response, I want to point out the extreme skeptical consequences that seem to follow from this line of thought. For if one bites the bullet and says, contrary to intuition, that false (but strongly corroborated) scientific propositions cannot function as evidence, then beliefs based on those propositions cannot be justified (at least not by the propositions themselves). And if this truly is the case, then the history of science doesn't only appear to be filled with scientifically informed and ever more sophisticated *false* beliefs that (hopefully at least) gradually approximate the truth, but it is also filled with scientifically informed ever more sophisticated *unjustified* beliefs. But I don't think that this is the sort of skepticism we want to live with. If it were true, then the history of science would present us with a wonderful and gradually changing picture of the universe, albeit one that for the most part is unjustified. Moreover, by pessimistic meta-induction we might not only be compelled to conclude that our present picture of the universe most likely is false (for the most part), but also that it isn't even justified. However, since we clearly do seem to be justified in holding our scientific world-view and our scientifically informed beliefs (at least most of them), I therefore think that the objection ultimately fails.

Another problem with the objection is that something similar to the Bohr-Sommerfield case appears to be going on today, especially when it comes to our reliance on scientific theories or models that strictly speaking are false or inaccurate, and which we may know to be false/inaccurate, but which nevertheless are accorded evidential significance. Good examples

²⁹ Although not necessarily in the sense that Kuhn (1996) uses the concept.

are provided by models involving idealizations, smoothing of data sets,³⁰ or *ceteris paribus* clauses. Although such models often will be false or inaccurate, they can be very useful in calculating or predicting the outcome of experiments or real world events. They are, as Catherine Elgin (2017) recently put it, “felicitous falsehoods”—i.e., falsehoods which are “true enough” insofar as they are essential to our scientific practice, justify our acceptance of various theories and hypotheses, and contribute to our understanding of certain scientific topics and domains.^{31, 32} Elgin provides an illuminating study of many such models. For example, astronomers often rely on models which don't take into account important features of planets, or which simply treat them as point masses without spatial extension when they want to calculate their motion (see Elgin, 2017, 27). Yet, despite systematically misrepresenting their objects of study in important ways, such models are evidentially significant insofar they contribute (epistemically) to the justification of various theories, hypotheses, or beliefs—or so I suggest. Although she is less appreciative of traditional epistemological notions—such as “belief, assertion, and knowledge”³³—Elgin similarly stresses the *epistemic importance* that felicitously false models have, claiming that their falsity or inaccuracy “does not undermine [their] epistemic function[s]” (Elgin, 2017, 3).³⁴

As I already have discussed in greater detail in paper 1, the third problem with Williamson's view on scientific evidence is that there are many deception scenarios that seem to provide strong support for internalism, and hence against the E = K thesis. The kind of

³⁰ To smooth a data set is to create an approximating function that captures the most important patterns in the data, while leaving out noise or statistically unlikely occurrences.

³¹ One might think that knowing or believing that a theory is false prevents it from functioning as evidence. However, I don't think that is the case. Since, when using such a theory, one presumably has some background belief to the effect that it (e.g.) provides accurate predictions, I take it that the theory—even if false—can have evidential significance.

³² Following a recent trend in epistemology and philosophy of science (see, e.g., Grimm, Baumberger & Ammon (2017)), Elgin claims that the purpose of science (or at least one of its purposes) is to facilitate understanding rather than (propositional) knowledge. Understanding, moreover, involves competent use of the information one has in the furthering of one's epistemic goals: “To understand a topic involves knowing how to wield one's commitments to further one's epistemic ends. It involves being able to draw inferences, raise questions, frame potentially fruitful inquiries, and so forth. Since some of the commitments are likely to be felicitous falsehoods and others to be methodological or normative commitments that are not truth apt, understanding is not factive. It is not a type of knowledge; it does not consist exclusively or primarily in believing or accepting truths.” (Elgin, 2017, 3.)

³³ Elgin (2017, 9).

³⁴ The proponent of the E = K thesis might respond that although such “felicitous falsehoods” indeed are known falsehoods, they might still be evidentially significant insofar as we know which elements of the models are difference-makers and which aren't (see Strevens (forthcoming) for such an account of how idealizations provide understanding). Although I have to confess that I'm not entirely sure how the resulting view, which combines the E = K thesis with Strevens' account of idealizations, will look, it seems to me that a model involving idealization can provide evidence for a certain hypothesis without the subject having to *know* exactly which elements of the model are difference-makers. Instead, might not the model provide evidence as long as the subject justifiably believes, and perhaps even falsely so, which elements of the model are difference-makers?

argument that I have in mind has played an important role in the epistemological literature on the internalism-externalism debate, but has had much less influence on discussions about scientific evidence in particular.³⁵ Consider, for example, your favorite deception scenario. In it, everything *seems* to be just as if it *isn't* a deception scenario, even though it is. Indeed, it is subjectively indistinguishable from the corresponding good or normal scenario. As a result, despite their falsity and unreliability, our scientific theories and beliefs seem to be just as justified as they would have been in the corresponding good scenario. And this strongly supports the claim that our scientific evidence doesn't depend on typical external factors like knowledge, truth, or reliability. Instead, it only depends on factors that the normal and deceptive scenario have in common—the best candidate of which is our internal states. So reflection on deception scenarios and the epistemic status of our scientific theories and beliefs in those scenarios provides strong intuitive support for internalism. And, moreover, since internalism is incompatible with the E = K thesis, it also counts against Williamson's position.³⁶

Taken together, these three points show that, on balance, we have a conception of scientific evidence that Williamson's E = K thesis cannot account for. Philosophical reflection on scientific evidence shouldn't be seen as providing an argument for epistemic externalism via the E = K thesis. However, whether it supports internalism or a more moderate version of externalism remains to be seen. Much of the disagreement between the positions appears to depend on different intuitions (or different beliefs about their epistemic significance) about how we should evaluate epistemic agents (and theories/beliefs) in deception scenarios. Recently, I have defended the view that our philosophical intuitions about such cases provide strong support for internalism against various counterarguments.³⁷ However, I will not revisit this issue here. Instead, in the next section, I will discuss a feature of scientific evidence that often is thought to provide a very strong argument—indeed, perhaps even a knockdown argument—against internalism; namely, its public character.

³⁵ The *locus classicus* of the argument is provided by Lehrer & Cohen (1983).

³⁶ Williamson (2007a) has responded to this kind of argument by drawing a distinction between justification and blamelessness, while claiming that victims of deceptions scenarios are blamelessly unjustified in holding their beliefs. However, a problem with Williamson's response, first pointed out by Pryor (2001), is that it commits him to having to give highly counterintuitive verdicts about other scenarios. Other, more recent worries are raised by Greco (forthcoming).

³⁷ See Egeland (forthcoming).

5. The Public Character of Scientific Evidence

Scientific evidence is often believed to have a public character insofar as it can be appreciated and shared by different people. For example, according to Carl Hempel:

[A]ll statements of empirical science are capable of test by reference to evidence which is public, i.e., evidence which can be secured by different observers and does not depend essentially on the observer. (Hempel, 1952, 22.)

Similarly, Karl Popper writes:

The *objectivity* of scientific statements lies in the fact that they can be *intersubjectively tested*. (Popper, 1959, 44.)

The publicity of scientific evidence has for several decades been thought to create problems for internalism, since the internalist conception of evidence seems to require that it have a much more private character. Peter Railton remarks:

[O]bjective inquiry uses procedures that are intersubjective and independent of particular individuals and circumstances—e.g., its experiments are reproducible, its methods are determinate, its criteria are effective, and it makes no essential use of introspective or subjectively privileged evidence in theory assessment.^{38,39} (Railton, 1984, 815.)

As recently has been made much more clear by Kelly, the problem for the internalist is that they cannot easily explain how scientific evidence comes to be *shared* by multiple individuals in the objective pursuit of scientific knowledge. As Kelly sees it, the internalist conception of evidence—which he occasionally, following Williamson (2000), calls the *phenomenal*

³⁸ Cf. Hempel (1952) and Feigl (1953), the latter of whom says: “The quest for scientific knowledge is . . . regulated by certain standards of criteria. . . The most important of these regulative ideas are:

1. *Intersubjective Testability*. This is only a more adequate formulation of what is generally meant by the “objectivity” of science. What is here involved is . . . the requirement that the knowledge claims of science be in principle capable of test . . . on the part of any person properly equipped with intelligence and the technical devices of observation or experimentation. The term *intersubjective* stresses the social nature of the scientific enterprise. If there be any ‘truths’ that are accessible only to privileged individuals, such as mystics or visionaries—that is, knowledge-claims which by their very nature cannot independently be checked by anyone else—then such ‘truths’ are not of the kind that we seek in the sciences. The criterion of intersubjective testability thus delimits the scientific from the nonscientific activities of man.” (Feigl, 1953, 11.)

³⁹ Railton’s statement is very strong. As a result, it fails to account for the fact that introspective reports by subjects provide key data in contemporary cognitive science and psychophysics—especially in the study of consciousness. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, see Goldman (1997).

conception of evidence⁴⁰—cannot account for the actual scientific practice wherein evidence is shared among different individuals in order to further the scientific project. This is how he puts it:

[T]he phenomenal conception of evidence would seem to fit poorly with the way in which the concept is employed in scientific and legal contexts. Notably, in such contexts, a large value is placed on the *publicity* of evidence, i.e., on the fact that paradigmatic evidence is something that can be shared by multiple individuals. Indeed, it is this public character of evidence which is often taken to underwrite the possibility of an inquiry that is genuinely objective. If evidence is taken to include (e.g.) facts about the external world, then, inasmuch as multiple individuals can be aware of the same facts, one and the same piece of evidence can literally be shared by those individuals. In contrast, a view according to which my evidence is limited to my own non-factive mental states does not seem to allow for this, inasmuch as I do not literally share my own token mental states with anyone else. At best, the sense in which evidence can be shared by multiple individuals on such a picture is a matter of their being in distinct but similar mental states (perhaps: token experiential states of the same type). It is far from obvious that such a surrogate would provide the kind of objectivity which literally shared public evidence is often taken to afford. (Kelly, 2008, 949-950.)

Here, Kelly not only tells us that internalism will have a difficult time accounting for the public character of scientific evidence, he also provides an (externalist) example of what such evidence may consist of that does account for its publicity. He says that our scientific evidence may (at least for the most part) be comprised of facts about the external world. Moreover, as will become clear (in the quoted paragraphs below), facts about the external world should most naturally be understood as physical objects or states of affairs in which such objects figure, rather than true propositions. On this picture, it is mind-independent objects and the relations among them—like, for example, rock formations, cells in a Petri dish, or bone fragments found at burial sites—that constitute the evidence for our scientific

⁴⁰ This is actually a misnomer since even though some internalists do have a phenomenal conception of evidence, not all do.

theories and hypotheses, and which make relevant propositions about those objects and states of affairs true.⁴¹

This kind of evidence has aptly been called “scientific evidence” (Conee & Feldman, 2008) and “factual evidence” (Lyons, 2016) in the literature, and Kelly’s view appears to receive support from the way in which we often find ourselves talking about scientific evidence. For example, we often talk about *gathering* evidence—whether it be fingerprints, rocks, or any other such object—which seems to assume that physical objects can function as evidence. Moreover, it isn’t hard to see why Kelly, with his claim that scientific evidence is comprised of facts (understood in the manner above), easily will be able to explain the public character of scientific evidence. Since such facts typically are accessible to different observers or experimenters—the bone fragments found at ancient burial sites are in principle available for study by different scientists—the evidence they provide can literally be shared by different people. These are exactly the points Kelly (2016) makes in his *Stanford Encyclopedia* article on evidence:

This [internalist] picture of evidence stands in no small measure of tension with the idea that a central function of evidence is to serve as a neutral arbiter among competing views. For it is natural to think that the ability of evidence to play this latter role depends crucially on its having an essentially *public* character, i.e., that it is the sort of thing which can be grasped and appreciated by multiple individuals. Here, the most natural contenders would seem to be physical objects and the states of affairs and events in which they participate, since it is such entities that are characteristically accessible to multiple observers. (I ask what evidence there is for your diagnosis that the patient suffers from measles; in response, you might simply *point to* or *demonstrate* the lesions on her skin.)

Here, Kelly points out that the internalist will have a hard time accounting for the public character of scientific evidence, before arguing that the view which most naturally explains the publicity of evidence is one according to which one’s evidence consist of physical objects and the states of affairs and events in which they figure. Moreover, he continues to

⁴¹ Thus, the view clearly differs from that of Williamson, who thinks that it is the propositions we know that constitute our evidence.

press the point that internalism, in contrast to his own view, is incompatible with the public character of scientific evidence and that it therefore cannot account for scientific objectivity:

On the other hand, to the extent that one's evidence consists of essentially private states there would seem to be no possibility of sharing one's evidence with others. But it is precisely the possibility of sharing relevant evidence which is naturally thought to secure the objectivity of science. Indeed, it has often been held that inasmuch as the objectivity of science is underwritten by the fact that science is evidence driven, it is the public character of scientific evidence which is crucial. On this view, it is a central methodological norm of science to eschew as inadmissible (e.g.) any alleged episodes of incommunicable insight in considering whether to accept or reject a claim.

According to Kelly, internalism is therefore unable, or at the very least hard pressed, to account for the public character of scientific evidence. As he sees it, a much more plausible (externalist) view holds that our scientific evidence consist of facts about the external world, understood in terms of mind-independent physical objects and the states of affairs in which they figure. Contrary to internalism, such a view is clearly able to account for the publicity of scientific evidence insofar as facts (in principle) can be gathered, observed, shared, and studied by multiple individuals.

6. Response: Scientific Evidence, Its Publicity, and Its Justifying Role

Before I explain why I think that the internalist can account for the publicity of scientific evidence, I'm going argue that Kelly's view on the matter is problematic insofar as the picture of scientific evidence that it presents isn't epistemologically interesting. I take it that any epistemologically interesting theory of evidence must present it as something that makes an *epistemic difference* by rationalizing or justifying belief in certain inferentially supported propositions. However, this is precisely what Kelly's view fails to do. The problem, more specifically, is that if facts, understood as physical objects and the relations between them, are scientific evidence, then it is possible to have scientific evidence that doesn't make an epistemic difference since the evidence (contrary to what was established in section 2) needn't be in our *cognitive possession*. For example, there may some object—e.g., cells in a Petri dish, bone fragments, pieces of old parchment, etc.—on a table next to me, but that is not in itself sufficient to justify me (or anyone else) in believing any propositions. There may thus be a sense in which the object counts as “evidence” (or something approximating evidence)—

after all, a colleague may tell you to “look at the evidence gathered on the table next to you”—but it isn't evidence in any epistemologically interesting sense. A similar point is also made by Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, who write as follows about the view that facts are evidence:

Suppose that some factor, *S*, is scientific evidence, for some condition, *C*. . . [O]ne can [then] have scientific evidence without having any reason at all to believe what that scientific evidence supports. . . More generally, something can be scientific evidence for a proposition without being justifying evidence for that proposition. Justifying evidence is by itself a reason for belief, something one could in principle cite as a justifying basis for belief. (Conee & Feldman, 2008, 84-85.)⁴²

So if we allow facts (in Kelly's sense) to function as scientific evidence, then it becomes possible to have evidence that doesn't have any rational or justificatory force.⁴³

This, however, is a problem that neither the internalist nor the externalist need be burdened with. Both kinds of view can account for the fact that we somehow need to be in cognitive possession of our evidence. Consider, for example, Williamson's *E=K* thesis again. According to it, only a proper subset of the true propositions is evidence. What is required in order for a true proposition to function as evidence is that it is grasped in the right sort of way, or, in other words, that it is known. And knowing a proposition to be true is clearly sufficient in order to possess that proposition as justifying evidence. Similarly, the internalist can also satisfy the possession requirement by, for example, claiming that only propositions that are the contents of some of our attitudes (e.g., our beliefs or experiences) can function as justifying evidence. The propositions, according to the internalist, will not necessarily all be true, but, as we saw above, this shouldn't stop them from having justificatory force. Our evidence, scientific and other, can include false propositions.

Now, having argued that Kelly's view fails to be epistemologically interesting insofar as it counts as scientific evidence factors that need not make an epistemic difference when it comes to which propositions we have justification to believe,⁴⁴ and that this is a problem

⁴² Cf. Lyons (2016, 1058): “In order for *e* to serve as evidence for *S* that *p*, the evidence must be taken in by *S*, and done so in a way that allows *S* to in some sense appreciate its evidential significance vis-à-vis *p*. . . Even if there is some sense in which beliefs are indirectly based on—and justified in virtue of being based on—extramental facts, this is only ever true in virtue of their being more proximately based on some mental state.”

⁴³ A similar counterargument against the view that one's evidence is comprised of objects or states of affairs is offered by Neta (2008, 98-99).

⁴⁴ Or the degree to which we have justification to believe them.

which neither internalists nor externalists must face, I will now explain why standard internalist and externalist views can account for the public character of scientific evidence. If it thus turns out that Kelly's view faces problems that other internalist and externalist views don't face, while the latter views also can account for the publicity of scientific evidence, then we will have good reason to reject Kelly's view in favor of the less problematic internalist/externalist views. Let me begin by pointing out two different ways in which scientific evidence appears to be public. On the one hand, scientific evidence appears to be the kind of thing that typically is shared between multiple individuals in scientific books and journals, and at conferences and symposia. On the other hand, scientific evidence also appears to be sharable, perhaps in a more direct sense, by multiple individuals making the same observations or that are involved in the same experiments. It seems to me that Kelly's view is able to account for the latter kind of publicity, but not the former, whereas there are internalist and externalist alternatives that are able to account for both kinds. Let me explain more precisely why I think that is so.

If scientific evidence consists of physical objects and the states of affairs in which they figure, as Kelly would have it, then there is a straightforward sense in which scientists and researchers making observations (or that are involved in experiments) share the same evidence. It is after all the same objects or states of affairs that are responsible for their observations and experimental results. The scientists literally share the same scientific evidence since they make observations on the basis of the same facts (as Kelly understands the term). However, when we consider the way in which scientific evidence typically is shared in scientific books and journals, or at conferences and symposia, Kelly's view appears to be in trouble. For how can it be that physical objects or states of affairs literally are shared in journals or at conferences? There doesn't appear to be any straightforward sense in which this is possible. Indeed, it seems that the evidence that is provided in such fora is characteristically *unlike* the physical objects and states of affairs that are being researched.⁴⁵

In contrast to Kelly's position, however, internalist and externalist views according to which our evidence consists of propositions that are the contents of (some of) our attitudes can easily account for the way in which scientific evidence typically is shared in journals and

⁴⁵ As Peter Pagin and Staffan Carlshamre have pointed out to me, Kelly might respond by claiming that his view can account for the kind of evidence-sharing that goes on in scientific journals since scientists communicate propositions that represent the evidence, when the same propositions are entertained by different scientists. However, I don't think that this is an available line of response since Kelly seems to want to say that it is the evidence itself which literally must be sharable—not that propositional representations of the evidence must be sharable.

at conferences.⁴⁶ Such fora allow for intersubjective dissemination and appreciation of scientific evidence through testimony that usually is offered in the form of written or spoken words, or figures, graphs, models, or illustrations. Thus, testimonially transferred propositions become a source of scientific justification and knowledge of (other) inferentially supported propositions by functioning as evidence for them.⁴⁷ But what about the other way in which scientific evidence typically is shared—by different individuals making the same observations? According to the internalist and externalist views under consideration, the observations in question will have propositional content that can be shared by different scientists and researchers making the (qualitatively) same (but numerically different) observations. On these views, it is such evidentially significant propositions that naturally are shared and which eventually, if all goes well, make their way into journals or books, and that are presented at conferences or symposia.

It thus seems that there are internalist and externalist alternatives that fare better than Kelly's view, both when it comes to accounting for the publicity of scientific evidence and the justifying role it plays. But what about the internalism-externalism distinction itself? Does, for example, Williamson's $E = K$ thesis provide a better explanation of our conception of scientific evidence than internalism? I think not. The reason: not only do we refer to internal states (or their propositional content) as scientific evidence, but (at times) we also rely on theories and models that, strictly speaking, are false, but which nevertheless function as evidence for various hypotheses and scientifically informed beliefs.⁴⁸ I therefore think that a more plausible (and moderate) externalist view says that *some*, but not all, scientific evidence is provided by our knowledge. This kind of externalist view will not only be able to account for our use of false models and the way in which we talk about scientific evidence, but to account for its publicity and justifying role as well.

But this, however, still doesn't help us much when it comes to the internalism-externalism distinction itself. Isn't it still the case that our conception of scientific evidence supports externalism rather than internalism, you may ask. If the arguments above are sound, then that would be a premature conclusion. Indeed, the goal of this paper has been to show that, contrary to what many epistemologists and philosophers of science assume,

⁴⁶ Cf. the quoted passage by Williamson (2000, 193) above.

⁴⁷ Strictly speaking, figures, graphs, models, and illustrations are not necessarily propositional. But neither are strings of words. Moreover, just as strings of words often do facilitate transmission of (evidentially significant) propositions, so do figures, graphs, models, and illustrations.

⁴⁸ Cf. Section 4.

considerations of scientific evidence do not clearly support either position. More specifically, the way in which we talk about scientific evidence seems to support a moderate version of externalism, according to which both internal states and external factors (like known propositions) can provide scientific evidence. However, by reflecting on deception scenarios it seems intuitive that *only* internal states can provide such evidence. I therefore suspect that the internalism-externalism debate won't be resolved until the parties agree (at least to a larger extent than what currently is the case) on more fundamental methodological issues about the epistemic significance of our philosophical intuitions and of our talk about epistemic concepts, like evidence and reason.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have presented and responded to two arguments from the literature to the effect that internalism cannot account for our conception of scientific evidence. The first argument is offered (or hinted at) by Williamson, and it claims that the E = K thesis (in contrast to internalism) provides the best explanation for the fact that scientists appear to argue from premises about true propositions (or facts) that are common knowledge among the members of the scientific community. In response, I showed that the E = K thesis isn't supported by the way in which we talk about scientific evidence, and that it is unable to account for facts about what has been regarded as scientific evidence and as justified scientific belief in the history of science. The second argument is offered by Kelly (for example), and it claims that only externalism is suited to account for the public character of scientific evidence. In response, I argued that there are internalist views that can account for the publicity of scientific evidence, and that those views indeed do better in that regard than the (externalist) view proposed by Kelly.

The internalism-externalism debate has been raging for almost half a century, and there have been many arguments hoping to sway the opposing party to their own side. Some of the arguments that often are thought to provide a very strong case for externalism focus on our conception of scientific evidence. In this paper, I have argued that those arguments fail to provide the dialectical upper hand to externalism. Instead, it appears that the dialectical force which the various arguments in debate have—including those that focus on scientific evidence—are hostage to disagreement about deeper methodological issues. Arguably, the most important lesson we can learn from the decades of debate is that fundamental

philosophical disputes—like the internalism-externalism dispute—will not be resolved until (a larger amount of) agreement is reached between the parties about the epistemic significance of intuition, the way in which we usually talk about various concepts, and our common sense conceptions themselves. Although considerations of scientific evidence are unlikely to settle the internalism-externalism debate in the near future, it may do so given that the proper amount of attention and study is devoted to the deeper methodological issues that separate its disputants.

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V

Epistemic Internalism and Testimonial Justification

1. Internalism and Externalism about Testimonial Justification

Epistemic internalists claim that facts about justification depend upon one's *internal reasons*. The traditional way of unpacking the notion of internal reasons is to say that one's internal reasons are one's *a priori* accessible reasons—where *a priori* is used in the *narrow* or *traditional* sense that a condition is *a priori* just in case it doesn't depend on any of the sense modalities.¹ Thus, the modes of *a priori* accessibility include not only reflection and reasoning, but also introspection and other cognitive mechanisms with an experiential aspect. And, in this way, internalists emphasize the epistemic importance of one's subjective point of view on the world. Epistemic externalists, on the other hand, deny this. More specifically, they deny that only internal or *a priori* accessible reasons can have justificatory relevance. Instead, they think that facts about reliability, factive mental states, or other conditions that are external to one's subjective point of view can make a justificatory difference.

The internalism–externalism debate has recently made its mark on the epistemology of testimony. Consider, for example, someone telling you that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is the author of Sherlock Holmes, or that the New York Public Library has more than 50 million items. A significant number of the beliefs we hold come from assertions like these.² Assertions present propositions that the speaker represents as being true, and that a hearer under the right conditions can get knowledge or justified beliefs from. The epistemology of testimony is about how we should evaluate such beliefs under different conditions. According to the internalist about testimonial justification, the following thesis is true:

¹ For a discussion of the distinction between narrow and broad notions of the *a priori*, see Casullo (2003, Ch. 2).

² I will only focus what Coady (1992) calls *natural testimony*. Natural testimony, unlike *formal testimony* which can be found in, for example, the courtroom, "is to be encountered in such everyday circumstances as exhibit the 'social operations of mind': giving someone directions to the post office, reporting what happened in an accident, saying that, yes, you have seen a child answering to that description, telling someone the result of the last race of the last cricket score" (Coady, 1992, 38).

TJ Internalism: A hearer's testimonial justification for believing that p supervenes upon his internal reasons for thinking that the speaker's testimony that p is true.³

TJ internalists thus think that testimonial justification has its primary source in the hearer, rather than the speaker. Moreover, as formulated above, TJ internalism entails the following thesis about the justificatory status of internal duplicates:

Duplicates: If any two hearers are the same with respect to their internal reasons for thinking that a speaker's testimony that p is true, then they are the same with respect to testimonial justification for believing that p .

Externalists about testimonial justification, however, reject TJ internalism, instead claiming that conditions that are external to the hearer's subjective point of view can make a difference with respect to his testimonial justification.⁴

In this paper, I will argue for TJ internalism and defend it against recent objections. First, I will present an argument providing intuitive support for the view that only internal reasons can make a difference with respect to testimonial justification. Having thus motivated TJ internalism, I will defend it against three objections recently offered by Stephen Wright.⁵ The upshot of my discussion will be that externalist conditions do make an epistemic difference when it comes to our testimonial beliefs, but that they cannot make any difference with respect to their justificatory status—i.e., they are justificatorially irrelevant.

This is how the paper is structured. Section 2 presents an argument in favor of TJ internalism. Sections 3, 4, and 5 respond to three objections recently offered by Wright. Section 6 comments on Wright's criticism of Jennifer Lackey, arguing that he either must accept TJ internalism or an externalist position similar to Lackey's. Section 7 concludes.

³ Proponents of TJ internalism include Fricker (1994; 2006); Fumerton (2006); Lehrer (2006); and Madison (2016). Moreover, there are different views about what having internal reasons for considering the speaker's testimony true amounts to. Some, like Lyons (1997), Adler (2002), and Shogenji (2006), believe that the reasons must support the general trustworthiness of the testifier, while others, like Fricker (1994; 1995), Malmgren (2006), and Lipton (2007), believe that the reasons must support the testifier's trustworthiness in the particular case in question.

⁴ Proponents of TJ externalism include Lackey (2008); Sosa (2010); Faulkner (2011); and Wright (2016a; 2016b).

⁵ Wright (2016a; 2016b) actually offers arguments for externalism about testimonial justification, but for the present purpose his arguments can be formulated as objections to the argument of this text without omitting any of his central points.

2. The Argument

I will begin by presenting a scenario that will serve as the basis for an argument for TJ internalism. The scenario considers a pair of epistemic agents that are duplicates with respect to their internal reasons, but that differ with respect to external conditions, such as reliability and truth. And by evaluating the epistemic positions of both agents, the scenario provides the intuitive basis for an inference to the best explanation saying that the character of justification is epistemically internal. The argument's general structure is familiar from the internalism-externalism debate,⁶ but has had less impact on the epistemology of testimony.⁷ The scenario I will consider is as follows.

Trustworthy and Untrustworthy College

Consider two ten-year-old epistemic agents, Barry and Larry, who are duplicates with respect to their internal reasons. Barry and Larry go to different, but subjectively indistinguishable, boarding schools. Barry goes to Trustworthy College and Larry to Untrustworthy College. Both Trustworthy College and Untrustworthy College are devoted to teaching its students how things really are with respect to traditional core subjects, like history and geography. The professors at the schools try their best to be honest and trustworthy, and they never intend to deceive their students. Moreover, both schools teach its students the same things; which is to say that the propositional content of the professors' testimonies at the two schools are the same. However, the schools are situated in different environments. In the environment in which Trustworthy College is situated, the propositional content of the professors' testimonies almost always turn out to be true. But in the environment in which Untrustworthy College is situated, the propositional content of the professors' testimonies usually turn out to be false. As a consequence, most of Barry's testimonial beliefs are true, whereas most of Larry's testimonial beliefs are false. However, despite the difference in their track records, the professors at the two schools seem to be, from the students' subjective point of view, equally trustworthy; they are all regarded as knowledgeable and well-informed with respect to their respective areas of expertise.

Now, let's evaluate Barry and Larry's epistemic positions. First, it is clear that there is a difference between them. Whereas Barry's testimonial beliefs are highly reliable and almost all true, Larry's testimonial beliefs are generally unreliable. When Barry forms beliefs based

⁶ The *locus classicus* being Lehrer and Cohen's (1983) New Evil Demon Problem for reliabilism.

⁷ A notable exception is Gerken (2013).

on the testimonies of his professors, his beliefs represent his environment in a truth-conducive manner. But when Larry does the same, his beliefs usually *misrepresent* his environment. Following a recent trend in epistemology, we can define epistemic *entitlement* as a condition that (primarily) turns on the reliability or truth-conduciveness of one's doxastic dispositions in one's normal environment.⁸ A natural way of conceptualizing the difference between Barry and Larry's epistemic positions is then to say that Barry's beliefs are entitled, whereas Larry's beliefs either are entitled to a much lower degree or, even worse, not entitled at all.

A second difference between Barry and Larry is that Barry appears to get a lot of knowledge by relying on the testimonies of his professors. The professors at Trustworthy College undoubtedly know a lot about their respective areas of expertise. And the internal reasons Barry has for trusting his professors appear to facilitate transmission of much of this knowledge, via their testimonies, to him. Larry, on the other hand, appears to get very little knowledge by relying on the testimonies of his professors—even when what they say actually turns out to be true. The professors at Untrustworthy College are simply too unreliable and insensitive with respect to the facts about their (so-called) areas of expertise. Following Alvin Plantinga (1993), we can define epistemic *warrant* as the condition(s) that turns true belief into knowledge.⁹ Another natural way of conceptualizing the difference between Barry and Larry's epistemic positions is then to say that Barry's beliefs (often) are warranted, whereas Larry's beliefs usually aren't.

However, despite the differences in their epistemic positions, there also seems to be something they have in common that speaks in favor of them. Both Barry and Larry's testimonial beliefs are supported by their internal reasons, and, as a consequence, they appear to be equally justified. After all, as far as the students are concerned, the schools are indistinguishable in all the relevant ways. More specifically, from the students' perspective, the professors at Untrustworthy College are no less trustworthy than the professors at Trustworthy College. And since the apparent trustworthiness of the professors at Trustworthy College seems to justify their students' testimonial beliefs, so does the apparent trustworthiness of the professors at Untrustworthy College seem to justify their students' testimonial beliefs. Indeed, despite the differences in entitlement and warrant, it seems that the justificatory status of Barry and Larry's testimonial beliefs are the same as long as we

⁸ See, e.g., Burge (2003); Graham (2010); and Gerken (2013).

⁹ Other epistemologists often use warrant as more or less synonymous with justification. However, for the present purpose, it will be useful to keep the notions separate.

hold fixed their internal reasons. And the best explanation for why this should be so is that the facts about which propositions one has testimonial justification to believe, and also the degree to which one has testimonial justification to believe them, supervene upon one's internal reasons.¹⁰ By abductive reasoning we can therefore conclude that TJ internalism is true.

To further support this argument, consider a similar scenario, but where Barry is transported from Trustworthy College to Untrustworthy College in the middle of the night while he is fast asleep. Unbeknown to himself, when Barry wakes up he finds himself at Untrustworthy College. Moreover, since the two schools are, from the students' point of view, indistinguishable, Barry continues to believe that he is at Trustworthy College; as far as he can tell, there is nothing indicating that he isn't or that his judgment is compromised. However, after a certain amount of time, Untrustworthy College becomes Barry's new normal environment.¹¹ As a result, the new (testimonial) beliefs he forms by relying on the testimonies of his professors are no longer reliable or truth-conducive. Although his new testimonial beliefs appear to be just as true as his earlier ones, most of them are in fact false.

Now, it is quite clear that Barry's new testimonial beliefs, in contrast to his earlier ones, neither are warranted nor entitled (to the same degree); his doxastic dispositions are simply not reliable or sensitive enough with respect to the facts about his new environment. However, his new testimonial beliefs appear to be just as justified as his earlier ones. After all, for all that he, or anyone else in his epistemic position, knows, Barry still finds himself at Trustworthy College where the professors are trustworthy. So, once again, it appears that the justificatory status of his testimonial beliefs turns on his internal reasons for believing that what the professors say is true.

In order to see this more clearly, it is enough to point out that Barry in the second scenario has gone from the same position that he was in in the first scenario to the position that Larry was in. Moreover, according to Duplicates, which follows from TJ internalism, all internal duplicates are justificatory duplicates. And since Barry and Larry are internal duplicates, the testimonial beliefs Barry acquires at Untrustworthy College are no less justified than those he acquired at Trustworthy College. TJ Internalism thus appears to

¹⁰ Internalists take it to be the best explanation because it is the explanation that is most virtuous. For example, it is very *simple*, and it provides a *unified* explanation that doesn't only account for the Trustworthy and Untrustworthy College scenario, but also has the *power* to generalize to other scenarios as well.

¹¹ For more on the notion of one's *normal environment*, see Gerken (2013, 543-544).

provide a simple and natural—indeed, I claim, the best—explanation for the intuitions elicited by the scenarios above.

However, scenarios like these and the arguments they support are not without its critics. In a couple of recent papers, Wright has presented three objections with the purpose of undermining TJ internalism. In the next three sections, I will defend the argument above against them.¹²

3. The Objection from Lack of Warrant

The first two objections have also been responded to by Brent Madison (2016). For that reason, I will not spend too much time defending my argument against them. However, since I suspect that many externalists about testimonial justification share some of the concerns that Wright's first two objections raise when it comes to TJ internalism, it will be useful to demonstrate why they fail to undermine it.

Plausibly, there exists some sort of necessary connection between justification and knowledge.¹³ According to Wright (2016b, 75), "justification is that which puts someone in a position to know things." Without providing us with any more detail, this presumably means that justification is warrant—i.e., it is whatever condition(s) that is required in order to turn true belief into knowledge.¹⁴ Now, with this claim in place, Wright considers a couple of scenarios similar to Trustworthy and Untrustworthy College—one of which is inspired by Frederick Schmitt (1999), and the other being Alvin Goldman's (1976) Fake Barns scenario—and argues, as I also did above, that Barry and Larry's epistemic positions differ insofar as it is only Barry's testimonial beliefs that are warranted; that is, it is only he who is in a position to know that the contents of his professors' testimonies are true. And since warrant and justification is the same epistemic property, it therefore follows that only Barry has

¹² Externalists have offered many different responses to the traditional internalist argument that relies on intuitions elicited by Lehrer and Cohen's New Evil Demon Scenario. Although these responses cannot be ignored, they will not be the focus of this paper. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, they have been responded to in detailed manners before (see, e.g., Littlejohn (2012, introduction; and Egeland (forthcoming)); and secondly, I think the more novel externalists responses, like those of Wright, deserve their own hearing.

¹³ However, no philosophical position is immune from dissent. For example, Alston (1989) and Foley (1993) deny that justification is necessary for knowledge.

¹⁴ Indeed, this is what Wright appears to have in mind. He makes the statement above just after discussing Goldman's (1976) Fake Barns scenario, in which Henry (the person driving in fake barns country) fails to know that the barn he's seeing is real. And, as Wright makes clear, it is "in the same way" that Henry's true belief that the particular barn he's looking at is real fails to constitute knowledge that it also fails to be justified. See Wright (2016b, 75-76). It is for this reason that I think Wright's position plausibly can be reconstructed as saying that justification is Plantinga-warrant.

testimonial justification for his beliefs—despite the fact that Barry and Larry are stipulated to be duplicates with respect to their internal reasons. Hence, since Duplicates, which follows from TJ internalism, is false, so is TJ internalism.

There is, however, a problem with this particular objection. Without providing any motivation for his claim that justification is warrant, the idea that Barry's testimonial beliefs are justified whereas Larry's aren't because only Barry's testimonial beliefs are warranted *begs the question* against the proponent of TJ internalism. The reason is simply that Wright assumes, without argument, that justification is an externalist notion (i.e., that it is the same as warrant).¹⁵ But the internalist can of course adopt a different theory of justification, one that doesn't presuppose the necessity of any externalist conditions. Indeed, not only is the internalist free to adopt an alternative view of justification, but there are also strong reasons for why he shouldn't adopt Wright's view. For example, by claiming that justification is warrant, Wright is committed to the view that justified true belief is *sufficient* for knowledge. However, as Madison (2016, 747) rightfully points out, in the aftermath of Edmund Gettier's (1963) counterexamples, it is clear that the tripartite analysis of knowledge intuitively fails.¹⁶ We therefore have good reason to reject Wright's claim that justification is warrant, and with it the claim that Barry and Larry differ in terms of testimonial justification too.

4. The Objection from Lack of Epistemic Value

However, according to Wright, responding to the objection from lack of warrant in the manner above by denying that justification is warrant reveals another problem with TJ internalism. In the same paper, he tells us that maintaining that Barry and Larry's testimonial beliefs are equally justified despite their difference in warrant "amounts to a serious concession from the internalist, however, since it devalues justification, as internalists conceive of it, detaching it from knowledge." (Wright, 2016b, 73, footnote 10.) In other words, Wright thinks that if we deny that justification is warrant, thereby also denying that justification, together with true belief, is sufficient for knowledge, justification appears to lose

¹⁵ If my reconstruction of Wright position somehow misses its mark, I still think his objection ends up begging the question insofar as it begins from the assumption that "justification is that which puts someone in a position to know", which clearly is an externalist condition.

¹⁶ An obvious reply Wright could make is of course that by stipulating that justification is warrant, the traditional justified true belief analysis of knowledge becomes true since warranted true belief by definition is sufficient for knowledge. However, a worry with this reply is that it doesn't really get at what we want to say that the notion of justification involves. The view under consideration can thus avoid Gettier cases, but only by trading in our traditional concept of justification for a rather uninteresting one.

the epistemic value that we (intuitively) want to accord it. After all, why should we care more about having justified true beliefs than mere true beliefs if the former isn't sufficient for knowledge?

As far as I can see, there is only one reason why one might think that denying Wright's view of justification automatically devalues it, and it is as follows. If you are a monist about epistemic value, thinking that only knowledge is of *intrinsic* epistemic importance, then justification might appear to become trivial unless it is sufficient for turning true belief into knowledge. Then, and only then, does justification have *instrumental* epistemic value as a means to knowledge—the only epistemic property that is valuable in and of itself—or so it might be argued.¹⁷

However, there are a couple of problems with this kind of objection. First, the internalist isn't committed to the view that the value of epistemic justification is exhausted by the fact that it is a means to knowledge. Alternatively, the internalist can argue that justification either has instrumental value insofar as it is means to satisfying some other (epistemic) property besides knowledge, or that it has value in and of itself. And, moreover, both these views can be found in the literature. Let me give a couple of examples. On the one hand, Declan Smithies (2015) supports the first kind of view and argues that justification has instrumental value insofar as it is means to having beliefs that are stable under rational reflection, and that being able to have beliefs that are stable under rational reflection is the *sine qua non* of being a *person*, which is of intrinsic value. On the other hand, Madison (2017) supports the second kind of view and argues, using Keith Lehrer and Stewart Cohen's (1983) New Evil Demon scenario, that we have good reason to believe that justification is valuable in and of itself, for its own sake. So, in other words, there is no reason—at least not any that Wright provides us with—why the internalist should endorse the view that justification only has instrumental value and that this value is exhausted as a means to knowledge.

Second, another problem with the objection from lack of epistemic value is that it assumes that the internalist, by denying that justification is warrant, somehow “detaches” justification from knowledge (in a way that devalues it). But this, however, need not be the

¹⁷ Questions about the value of being in certain epistemic positions are increasingly being discussed by epistemologists. Here, I simply want to point out the kind of view about the value of justification that Wright's objection appears to presuppose. In my response to this objection, I don't commit myself to any specific position on the issue, but rather point to a couple of views held by others. For more detailed discussions of epistemic value, see Haddock et al., (2009).

case. The proponent of TJ internalism can affirm that justification *is* connected with knowledge because it is a *necessary* condition of it (Cf. Madison, 2016, 747-748). Indeed, not only is this the standard internalist view,¹⁸ it also doesn't devalue justification. As we saw in the previous paragraph, one can maintain that justification is necessary for knowledge and also claim that it either is of instrumental value as a means to satisfying some other (epistemic) property besides knowledge, or that it is of intrinsic epistemic value. For these two reasons, Wright's second objection therefore fails to undermine TJ internalism as it relies on implausible or unmotivated assumptions.¹⁹

5. The Objection from Circular Testimony

The third objection Wright offers does, at least to my mind, pose a much bigger threat to TJ internalism. In a different paper, Wright (2016a) argues that there are scenarios involving circular testimony where the internalist is committed to saying that circular testimony, contrary to intuition, generates justification. And since the intuitions elicited by cases of circular testimony (sometimes) speak against TJ internalism, the argument from section 2 fails to provide sufficient support for it.

Testimonial chains can be circular. This happens whenever you have an epistemic agent *a*, who tells something to another agent *b*, who then tells that same (or a relevantly similar) thing to *c*, who then tells that same (or a relevantly similar) thing to . . . *n*, who then tells that same (or a relevantly similar) thing to *a*. Let's call this an instance of *circular testimony* or, more specifically, an *n-sized circular testimonial chain*. Now, Wright thinks there are cases of circular testimony that threaten TJ internalism. Consider the following scenario:

CIRCLE

¹⁸ Some, like Poston (IEP article) and McEvoy (2005), claim that internalists are committed to the view that justification, as they understand it, is necessary for knowledge. Although I cannot think of any internalists who would say that you can have knowledge without justification, it doesn't seem like something they're committed to. For example, an internalist can claim that facts about justification supervene upon one's internal reasons, but that whether or not one's beliefs are justified doesn't have any bearing on whether or not they constitute knowledge.

¹⁹ Again, if my reconstruction of Wright's second objection is inaccurate insofar as he doesn't really think that justification is Plantinga-warrant (but rather some other externalist condition), I still think that my response goes through. The internalist can still claim that justification isn't detached from knowledge since it is a necessary condition of it, and that justification either is of instrumental value insofar as it is means to satisfying some other (epistemic) property besides knowledge, or that it has value in and of itself.

Agatha looks across the street from her house and comes to believe that the building opposite, which she recognizes as Jesus College, is on fire. She telephones her friend Francesca to tell her the news. Francesca unhesitatingly believes Agatha and then tells this to her friend Anna, though since Anna does not know the college, Francesca describes the building and its location to Anna who in turn unhesitatingly texts this information to Stacy. Stacy is friends with Anna and unhesitatingly believes her. She is also friends with Agatha and realizes that the building in question is Jesus College. Stacy telephones Agatha and tells her that Jesus College is on fire. (Wright, 2016a, 2033.)

CIRCLE presents us with an instance of circular testimony—or a 4-sized circular testimonial chain—where Agatha hears from Stacy that Jesus College is on fire. However, according to Wright, since Agatha is responsible for both initiating and terminating the circle, intuitively, she does not receive any testimonial justification for her belief that the college is on fire. Although her belief presumably already is justified by her visual experience, the fact that Stacy tells her that the college is on fire does not further add to the justification of Agatha's belief.

Yet, Wright does not think that all cases of circular testimony fail to generate justification. There must, he thinks, be some other condition that together with the fact that Agatha both initiates and terminates the circle is sufficient for inhibiting the generation of testimonial justification. To indicate what this further condition is, he has us consider the following variation on the first scenario:

*CIRCLE**

Agatha looks across the street from her house and comes to believe that the building opposite, which she recognizes as Jesus College, is on fire. She telephones her friend Francesca to tell her the news. Francesca reflects carefully on the likelihood of Agatha being insincere or mistaken and having done so, come to believe what Agatha says and then tells this to her friend Anna, though since Anna does not know the college, Francesca describes the building and its location to Anna who in turn considers carefully the possibility of Francesca's testimony being false before texting this information to Stacy. Stacy is friends with Anna and carefully considers the plausibility of Anna's claim before deciding to believe her. She is also friends with

Agatha and realizes that the house in question is Jesus College. Stacy telephones Agatha and tells her that Jesus College is on fire. (Wright, 2016a, 2034.)

Intuitively, Wright thinks that Agatha does receive justification from Stacy's testimony in CIRCLE*—or at the very least he is open to the possibility. What differentiates the two scenarios and makes it the case that only the former kind of circular testimony fails to generate justification is that the listeners in CIRCLE *unhesitatingly* believe what they're told. In CIRCLE*, however, the listeners critically reflect on the plausibility of what they hear, which opens for the possibility that their testimonies can add to the justification of Agatha's belief. This is how Wright puts it:

The important difference between the CIRCLE case and the CIRCLE* case is that, in the former, each of the listeners believes what she is told unhesitatingly, whereas in the latter case, each listener reflects carefully on the plausibility of what the speaker says before coming to believe it. In the latter case, it might well be plausible to think that the internalist claim that Agatha's overall justification can be enhanced at the end of the case might well be the correct one. The idea is that, since the statement that Jesus College is on fire seems plausible to multiple individuals who are independently using their critical faculties, this might make them sensitive to more error possibilities and this might make it intuitive that there's additional justification at the end of the chain. Indeed, this may be the case if just *one* listener responds by using her critical faculties. (Wright, 2016a, 2034.)

According to Wright, all cases of circular testimony where the listeners unhesitatingly believe what they are told therefore fail to generate justification. Thus, CIRCLE, but not CIRCLE*, is analogous to the following case where a piece of information uncritically is passed along to an agent:

INSTRUMENTS

Charlie is attempting to monitor the temperature of some liquid in a glass. He is using two instruments to do this. One gives a reading on a screen and the other gives a reading on a gauge. Both instruments indicate that the temperature of the liquid is 19 °C. Unbeknownst to Charlie, however, the instruments have been set up in such a way that the screen isn't in connected directly to the liquid in any way, but just corresponds to what the gauge says. (Wright, 2016a, 2036.)

In both cases a source of information (Stacy's testimony in Circle and the screen in INSTRUMENTS) is dependent on another source (Agatha's perception in CIRCLE and the gauge in INSTRUMENTS), and uncritically passes the information to an epistemic agent. However, since any case of circular testimony where the listeners (or receivers of information) unhesitatingly (or uncritically) respond to what they are told (or informed about) fails to generate justification, neither Stacy's testimony nor the screen does anything for Agatha or Charlie's belief.

Now, the reason Wright thinks this is problematic for internalism is that if TJ internalism is true, then Agatha's belief in CIRCLE does receive justification from Stacy's testimony. Since Stacy's testimony adds to Agatha's internal reasons for thinking that Jesus College is on fire, it should provide testimonial justification to her belief in that proposition. However, intuitively, it does not. Since the listeners in CIRCLE unhesitatingly believe what they're told, Agatha cannot receive justification from Stacy's testimony.^{20, 21}

I will respond by denying that the CIRCLE scenario makes it intuitively plausible that Agatha doesn't receive testimonial justification, instead of failing to receive (or increase) some other epistemic property. To see how exactly this response goes, consider the CIRCLE scenario again. If we evaluate Agatha's epistemic position at the end of the scenario, it is clear that there are several ways in which it is the same or worse than it was at the beginning of the scenario. For example, on the one hand, her belief that Jesus College is on fire is no more warranted *after* listening to Stacy's testimony. If Agatha's visual experience somehow fails to put her in a position to know that the school is on fire, then listening to Stacy's testimony doesn't all of a sudden put her in a position to know that it is. Moreover, on the other hand, her belief that Jesus College is on fire is no more entitled after listening to Stacy's testimony. Quite to the contrary, it might actually make it *less* entitled; the reason being that beliefs

²⁰ Formulated in this manner, Wright's objection isn't, strictly speaking, sound. The reason is that even though Stacy's testimony adds to Agatha's internal reasons or states, it doesn't follow, according to internalism, that it provides testimonial justification to her belief in the proposition that Jesus College is on fire. For all that internalism tells us, one's internal reasons provide the supervenience base of justification; it does not tell us anything about *which* internal reasons or states are justification-conferring. So it is open for the internalist to adopt the position that Stacy's testimony doesn't provide Agatha with the *right kind* of internal reason/state that would be required if her belief was to become more justified. However, since I do think that Stacy's testimony provides Agatha with an internal justification-conferring reason, I won't pursue this line of response any further.

²¹ Wright's worry can also be raised as an objection to Duplicates. Agatha, as he sees it, doesn't receive any justification from Stacy's testimony. However, the Agatha in CIRCLE*—let's call her Agatha*—does (or at the very least might) receive justification from Stacy's testimony even though they are duplicates with respect to their internal reasons. As Wright points out, this is because the hearers in CIRCLE* critically reflect on the plausibility of what they hear, whereas the hearers in CIRCLE uncritically accept what they hear. Agatha and Agatha* are therefore alike with respect to internal reasons, but not alike with respect to testimonial justification. Hence, since Duplicates, which follows from TJ internalism, is false, so is TJ internalism.

formed on the basis of visual experiences might actually be more reliable than beliefs formed on the basis of visual experiences *and* circular testimony where the listeners unhesitatingly believe what they hear.²² Indeed, there appears to be several ways in which Agatha's epistemic position either stays the same or worsens in CIRCLE.

However, there is also a way in which her epistemic position appears to improve. After all, Stacy's testimony (despite its circular character) does provide Agatha with an (additional) internal reason for believing that Jesus College is on fire. And since there is nothing in the CIRCLE scenario that tells us otherwise, we can account for the presence of this reason by claiming that it adds to Agatha's justification. The proponent of TJ internalism is therefore free to say that the circular testimony in CIRCLE does provide Agatha's belief with testimonial justification, but that it fails to confer any warrant or entitlement upon it. Moreover, the same reply is also available in the INSTRUMENTS scenario. Clearly, the presence of the screen doesn't confer any warrant or entitlement upon Charlie's belief, even though it does contribute to its justification.

Wright, however, recognizes this response, but thinks that it fails because the intuitions that CIRCLE elicits primarily are about Agatha's epistemic position in general, and not just about justification. This is what he says:

The trouble with this response is that the intuitive support for (1) [that there is no increase in Agatha's overall justification] is stronger than the internalist response allows. It might be correct that there's no specific intuition *about justification* that supports the claim that Agatha's overall justificatory status isn't enhanced and the end of the CIRCLE case. But the lack of such a specific intuition is of no help to internalist theories. When we are more precise about the intuition that CIRCLE brings about, we see that it is the following:

(1*) Intuitively, there's no overall improvement in Agatha's epistemic standing in the CIRCLE case. . .

²² In order for this to be the case the frequency with which beliefs based on visual experiences and circular testimony where the listeners unhesitatingly believe what they're told turn out to be true must be *lower* than the frequency with which beliefs based on visual experiences turn out to be true. We can easily provide an example where this is the case by imagining a world in which cases of circular testimony where the listeners unhesitatingly believe what they're told usually result in false beliefs (regardless of whether or not those beliefs also are based on visual experiences), whereas beliefs (only) based on visual experiences usually result in true beliefs.

The idea is that the intuition in (1*) creates trouble for internalist theories because it implies the truth of (1). The idea is that (1*) is a more general thesis than (1). (Wright, 2016a, 2039.)

Of course, Wright is correct when he claims that we do have certain intuitions about Agatha's epistemic position. But (1*) is not one of them. Let me elaborate.

First of all, most philosophers agree that Agatha's epistemic position changes when Stacy tells her that Jesus College is on fire; her testimony gives Agatha another internal reason for holding her belief. Wright can of course claim that Stacy's testimony doesn't change Agatha's epistemic position at all. However, Agatha plausibly comes to believe that a friend whom she considers trustworthy thinks that Jesus College is on fire when Stacy tells her that it is. Moreover, denying that this somehow changes Agatha's epistemic position would seem to involve a commitment to the view that Agatha's new belief cannot, in any sense, provide her with another reason to believe that the school is on fire. But this clearly seems to be false. Even though it might not provide her with an external or objective reason to hold that belief, it does provide her with an internal or subjective reason.²³ So the question is whether or not this internal reason somehow improves her epistemic position. According to Wright, it doesn't. Moreover, this is just an intuition with which everyone should agree, or so he claims. The problem, however, is that, uncontroversially, there are certain internalist conditions that supervene upon one's internal reasons and that do improve one's epistemic position. For example, internalists and externalists generally agree that epistemic *blamelessness* (or *excusability*) is an internalist epistemic property.^{24, 25} If, say, you are in a skeptical scenario where most or all of your beliefs about the external world are false, it can still be the case that those beliefs are blameless. If your internal reasons indicate that the world is different from how it really is, then you have an *excuse* which guarantees that beliefs properly based on those reasons are blameless—even though they might be radically unreliable. What's more, all else being equal, having blameless beliefs does constitute an

²³ For more on the distinction between objective and subjective reasons for belief, see Sepielli (forthcoming).

²⁴ But every rule has its exceptions—at least in the philosophical dialectic. For example, Greco (2005) and Srinivasan (2015) claim that there are no interesting internalist properties or norms. However, they face several serious (and, I suspect, insurmountable) objections, the most obvious of which is that it clearly seems, intuitively speaking, that victims of paradigmatic skeptical scenarios do have something epistemically positive going for them. Other, more complex objections have also been developed. See, e.g., Schoenfield (2015).

²⁵ Some internalists think that no sharp distinction can be drawn between justification and blamelessness. See, e.g., Ginet (1975); Chisholm (1989); and Bonjour (1985).

epistemic improvement over having blameworthy beliefs.²⁶ Indeed, a common strategy used by epistemic externalists to argue that intuitions about Lehrer and Cohen's (1983) New Evil Demon Scenario fail to support internalism is to explain our dispositions to positively evaluate the victim's beliefs by saying that they are blameless but unjustified.²⁷ So, in other words, there are internalist epistemic properties that do improve one's epistemic position, blamelessness being a case in point. And given that Stacy's testimony provides Agatha with another internal reason for believing that the school is on fire, Agatha's belief does become blameless to an even greater degree, thereby improving her epistemic position. Hence, (1*) is false and the motivation for (1) undermined.

In sum, my response to the objection from circular testimony is that cases like CIRCLE and INSTRUMENTS don't reveal anything special about testimonial justification, rather than some other epistemic property. The internalist, in other words, is free to characterize Agatha as receiving testimonial justification, while failing to receive any entitlement or warrant. Moreover, as we've seen, Wright's counterargument that

1. Agatha's epistemic position doesn't improve in the CIRCLE scenario.
2. If Agatha's epistemic position doesn't improve in the CIRCLE scenario, then she doesn't receive any testimonial justification.
3. Therefore, Agatha's doesn't receive any testimonial justification.

fails since the first premise is false. Intuitively, there are internalist epistemic conditions, like blamelessness, that do improve Agatha's epistemic position. And given that Wright's third objection against the argument from section 2 doesn't succeed, TJ internalism remains well-motivated.

²⁶ Once again, this claim can of course be contested, but only by failing to recognize or somehow contesting the epistemic force of internal or subjective reasons for belief.

²⁷ See, e.g., Williamson (2007); Littlejohn (2009); and Pritchard (2012). A problem with this objection, however, is that it fails to recognize the way in which our intuitions about justification are sensitive to a distinction between beliefs that are false due to perceptual failings and beliefs that are false due to cognitive failings. For example, the victim of the New Evil Demon scenario has beliefs that are false due to perceptual failings (in the sense that his beliefs fail to adequately represent the environment he is situated in), but they still seem justified. On the other hand, if we imagine a similar victim but who also is subject to cognitive failings, like brainwashing or some reason-distorting drug he's been given, that makes him unable to form his beliefs by properly basing them on his perceptual evidence, then they don't seem justified. However, the beliefs of the second victim are clearly just as blameless as those of the first; both of them (let's stipulate) try their best to respect their evidence. Indeed, the difference between their epistemic positions seems to be a difference of justification. But this is not something the proponent of the objection above can acknowledge. As he would have it, both victims have beliefs that are blamelessly unjustified. For more on this problem, see Pryor (2001); Egeland (forthcoming); and Smithies (forthcoming).

6. Wright's "Halfway Externalism"

Having offered his objection from circular testimony against TJ internalism, Wright ends his (2016a) paper by trying to differentiate his views from the wholesale externalism of Jennifer Lackey. Lackey (2008) argues against TJ internalism²⁸ by presenting a scenario purporting to elicit intuitions to the effect that reliable or truth-conducive testimony is a necessary condition for testimonial justification.²⁹ Now, if her argument is sound, then it follows that a listener's internal reasons alone never are sufficient for justifying belief in a speaker's testimony; there is, as she points out, an additional "speaker-condition" on testimonial justification (Lackey, 2008, 150).³⁰ This, however, is highly problematic according to Wright. If Lackey is correct, then the internalist story is simply false: having internal reasons are never sufficient for having testimonial justification. But this, he thinks, amounts to radical *skepticism* when it comes to the epistemic importance of internal reasons. Instead, Wright claims that TJ internalism tells a true story about testimonial justification when it comes to certain cases, but that it isn't the *full* story:

²⁸ More specifically, she argues against *reductionism* in the epistemology of testimony. However, since it is somewhat controversial how we should draw the reductionism/anti-reductionism distinction, and since internalism clearly also is one of the reductionist views her objection targets, I'll simply, for the purpose of convenience, frame it as an objection against TJ internalism.

²⁹ The scenario she presents, entitled NESTED SPEAKER, is as follows:

Fred has known Helen for five years and, during this time, he has acquired excellent epistemic reasons for believing her to be a highly reliable source of information on a wide range of topics. For instance, each time she has made a personal or professional recommendation to Fred, her assessment has proven to be accurate; each time she has reported an incident to Fred, her version of the story has been independently confirmed; each time she has recounted historical information, all of the major historical texts and figures have fully supported her account, and so on. Yesterday, Helen told Fred that Pauline, a close friend of hers, is a highly trustworthy person, especially when it comes to information regarding wild birds. Because of this, Fred unhesitatingly believed Pauline earlier today when she told him that albatrosses, not condors (as is wildly believed), have the largest wingspan among wild birds. It turns out that while Helen is an epistemically excellent source of information, she was incorrect on this particular occasion: Pauline is, in fact, a highly incompetent and insincere speaker, especially on the topic of wild birds. Moreover, though Pauline is correct in her report about albatrosses, she came to hold this belief merely on the basis of wishful thinking (in order to make her reading of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* more compelling). (Lackey, 2008, 149.)

Moreover, as she makes clear, the fact that Pauline's testimony is unreliable prevents Fred from receiving any justification from it: "For, even though Helen's testimony provides Fred with excellent positive reasons for accepting the report in question, Pauline is not only a generally unreliable speaker, but she is also reporting a belief which, though true, fails to be reliably produced or appropriately truth-conducive. Because of this, the testimony that Pauline offers to Fred also fails to be reliably produced or appropriately truth-conducive, thereby preventing it from leading to justified or warranted belief for Fred." (Lackey, 2008, 149-150.)

³⁰ "What NESTED SPEAKER reveals is that the possession of good positive reasons by a hearer is not sufficient for accepting a speaker's testimony with justification or warrant. Why? Because the possession of positive reasons on behalf of a speaker's report, even when objectively excellent ones, *does not necessarily put one in contact with testimony that is reliable*. There is, then, a further necessary condition for testimonial justification or warrant, one that requires that a speaker's testimony be reliable or otherwise truth-conducive." (Lackey, 2008, 150.) Note how, when it comes to testimonial justification, this shifts the focus away from the hearer and over to the speaker.

It [Lackey's externalism] seems to amount to an endorsement of a wholesale scepticism about a listener's reasons in the epistemology of testimony. In the same way that it's one thing to think that inductive evidence in epistemology generally might *sometimes* fail to justify one's belief, but another thing to think that they *never* justify one's belief, in the epistemology of testimony it is one thing to think that a listener's reasons might *sometimes* fail to justify her belief, or that there must be more to the supervenience base of justification from testimony than these reasons, but quite another thing to think that they *never* justify a listener's belief.

Lackey's argument . . . yields the conclusion that internalist evidence never justifies beliefs based on testimony. The argument based on CIRCLE doesn't yield this conclusion. . . This is why the argument here is an argument against the idea that the supervenience claim . . . gives a *complete* account of justification from testimony. (Wright, 2016a, 2045.)

So, in other words, Wright thinks (i) that Lackey's wholesale externalism commits her to scepticism about the epistemic importance of internal reasons, and (ii) that we therefore should adopt some sort of "halfway externalism", according to which a hearer's internal reasons *sometimes*, but not always, are sufficient for testimonial justification.

However, there are a couple of reasons why these views are problematic. First, Lackey's claim that internal reasons aren't sufficient for testimonial justification doesn't commit her to scepticism about the epistemic importance of such reasons since it can still be the case that they are necessary for testimonial justification or some other epistemic property. For example, she can argue that internal reasons are a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for having testimonially justified beliefs. In that case, internal reasons play a key role in *avoiding* scepticism. In addition, just because one thinks that a certain set of states (like one's internal reasons) is insufficient for producing certain effects (like a change in one's testimonial justification), it doesn't follow that that set of states is insufficient for producing any relevant effect (like a change in blamelessness). Thus, Wright's criticism of Lackey and her externalist views undermines nothing other than a *strawman*.

Second, claiming that TJ internalism is correct insofar as internal reasons *sometimes* are sufficient for testimonial justification doesn't only undermine Lackey's view, but also appears to undermine Wright's own "halfway externalism." To see why this is so, consider the following passage from the end of his paper:

Unless we claim, however, that [a hearer's internal] reasons cannot justify beliefs *tout court*, it is hard to see how we can maintain Lackey's claim that they do not justify the listener's belief in the NESTED SPEAKER case, or in any other testimony case. . . No such sceptical consequences follow from the argument that I have given here. (Wright, 2016a, 2045.)

What Wright here says is that unless we claim that wholesale externalism (which really just is regular externalism) is true, then it is hard to see why the listener's belief in Lackey's scenario, or *any other (relevantly similar) scenario*, should fail to receive testimonial justification from his internal reasons.³¹ Or, in other words, if we either adopt TJ internalism or Wright's own "halfway externalism", then none of the scenarios we can come up with will appear to undermine the view that the listener's internal reasons in *that* scenario are sufficient for testimonial justification. However, if there are no such cases—i.e., no counterexamples—then not only does that undermine Wright's own objections against the internalist, it also seems to constitute an argument *in favor* of TJ internalism. Let me be more precise.

First, if there are no counterexamples to TJ internalism, then neither his scenario in the (2016b) paper nor the CIRCLE scenario can provide the intuitive basis for an argument against it. And, as we've seen above, neither of those scenarios appears to provide such a basis (or so I have argued). Second, if TJ internalism tells a true story about the determinants of testimonial justification, and there aren't any counterexamples, then we have good reason to believe that it also is the *whole* story. The different (internalist or externalist) theories of justification on the market all rely, for their support, on intuitions elicited by various scenarios. Moreover, if only one of these theories—namely, TJ internalism—plausibly is able to account for all of these intuitions, then, unless there are other theoretical considerations that weigh heavier than the intuitions and that count against it, that theory remains well-motivated.

³¹ When it comes to the NESTED SPEAKER scenario, the internalist might, as usual, stress the fact that from Fred's perspective there is much that speaks in favor of the trustworthiness of Pauline's testimony and virtually nothing that speaks against it. Even if we were to imagine Fred as an ideally rational agent that always responds in the most epistemically reasonable manner to the reasons he has, we are still disposed to say that Fred should believe what Pauline says. Lackey, moreover, appears to offer two responses—one quite modest and the other rather bold. According to the modest objection, the internalist is right to claim that Fred's belief is testimonially justified, but that it fails to satisfy other (externalist) epistemic properties like warrant and knowledge (Lackey, 150, footnote 11). This objection simply concedes that the internalist is victorious. The bold objection, on the other hand, says that both internalists and externalists are committed to the view that justification is reliable or truth-conducive, and that Fred's belief therefore will be unjustified on both kinds of view (Lackey, 151-152). This objection, however, clearly misrepresents the internalist position (which need not impose a reliability condition on justification), and thus ultimately fails to engage with the internalist response to NESTED SPEAKER.

For these reasons, I conclude that Wright's "halfway externalism" doesn't constitute a theoretically viable position, but rather must collapse into wholesale externalism or internalism about testimonial justification.

7. Conclusion

Internalists about the epistemology of testimony claim that a hearer's testimonial justification supervenes upon his internal reasons for believing that what the speaker says is true. This claim, which I've called TJ internalism, is not without its critics. In this paper, I have argued in favor of TJ internalism and responded to three recent objections raised by Wright. The upshot of my discussion is that TJ internalism remains as plausible as ever: testimonial justification does appear to supervene upon one's internal reasons. However, the externalist is right to claim that not all epistemic properties are internal. As we have seen, epistemic agents who are duplicates with respect to their internal reasons often do differ with respect to properties like warrant or entitlement. Yet, although this difference often is of great epistemic importance, it does not undermine internalism in the epistemology of testimony.

Moreover, I've also suggested that one shouldn't try to balance between internalism and externalism about testimonial justification: the ground in-between the positions is simply too narrow (or perhaps not there at all). For simplicity's sake, we should expect the set of internal reasons to either be a sufficient supervenience base for testimonial justification or not, rather than believing its character to be multiform and changing on a case by case basis.

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Against Overconfidence: Arguing for the Accessibility of Memorial Justification

1. Memorial Justification

Many, if not most, of our beliefs are justified by memory. Consider your belief (whether occurrent or dispositional) that Mercury is the smallest planet in our solar system, that Fermat's Last Theorem has been proved to be true, or that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo. Such beliefs appear to be justified, but not by your perceptual experience. Rather, they are justified by your memories.¹ So instead of saying that they are perceptually justified, we should say that they are memorially justified, or that we have memorial justification for them.

Memory is a source of valuable epistemic properties, like justification. But what conditions must be satisfied in order for your memory to confer justification upon your doxastic attitudes? In this paper, I am going to develop a novel argument, inspired by Laurence Bonjour's (1980; 1985) clairvoyance scenario, for the claim that there is an internalist accessibility condition on memorial justification. This I will do by presenting a scenario involving an epistemic agent who exhibits a special sort of *overconfidence* with respect to the memory beliefs he has. Despite the agent's memory beliefs being reliably produced by a properly functioning cognitive faculty (as the scenario stipulates), they nevertheless appear to be unjustified. And, I argue, the best explanation for why that is so is that there is an internalist accessibility condition on memorial justification which the agent fails to satisfy. Moreover, after having presented the argument, I will consider and respond to the threat which preservationism—i.e., the position that memory preserves the (positive) justificatory status of the beliefs that enter it—poses to my view.

¹ More specifically, they are justified by your memories of receiving testimony which supports them. Moreover, a memory is a non-factive mental state, whereas *remembering that* something is the case is a factive state. This means that, in contrast to states of remembering, memories include things like belief that fails to qualify as knowledge and so-called memory seemings.

The paper is structured as follows. In section 2, I present Bonjour's clairvoyance scenario and discuss the way in which it provides the resources for formulating an argument for access internalism. In section 3, I present the overconfidence scenario and argue that there is an indistinguishability problem for anyone who denies the veracity of the intuition it elicits. In section 4, I argue, based on the aforementioned intuition, that there is an internalist accessibility condition on memorial justification and spell out some of the details about how that condition should be understood. In section 5, I argue that access internalism should replace preservationism as the standard view in the epistemology of memory. In section 6, I conclude and discuss the relevance of the paper and its argument for the larger literature on the epistemology of memory and the internalism-externalism distinction.

2. Bonjour on Clairvoyance and Justification

According to simple process reliabilism, most famously endorsed by Alvin Goldman (1979), a belief is justified just in case it is formed on the basis of a reliable doxastic disposition (and there are no undefeated defeaters). However, the view is vulnerable to a number of counterexamples, most of which either target the claim that reliability is necessary for justification or the claim that reliability is sufficient for justification.² One of the most influential counterexamples to the sufficiency claim is offered by Bonjour, and it goes as follows:

Clairvoyance

Norman, under certain conditions which usually obtain, is a completely reliable clairvoyant with respect to certain kinds of subject matter. He possesses no evidence or reasons of any kind for or against the general possibility of such a cognitive power or for or against the thesis that he possesses it. One day Norman comes to believe that the President is in New York City, though he has no evidence either for or against this belief. In fact the belief is true and results from his clairvoyant power under circumstances in which it is completely reliable. (Bonjour, 1985, 41; Cf. 1980.)

Now, as simple process reliabilism would have it, Norman's belief that the President is in New York City is justified because it is produced by a reliable belief-forming process (and there are no undefeated defeaters). However, the reliabilist verdict clearly seems to be wrong.

² The most influential counterexample to the necessity claim is provided by Lehrer & Cohen (1983).

Intuitively, Norman's belief is no more justified than a random guess or hunch. Hence, provided that the intuition is correct, simple process reliabilism must be false since reliability isn't sufficient for justification.

But where exactly does simple process reliabilism go wrong? Bonjour helps us to a diagnosis of the issue. Moreover, his diagnosis also provides us with resources for formulating an argument for access internalism based on our intuitive judgments about the Clairvoyance scenario. In *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*, Bonjour has the following to say about the reliabilist response to the Clairvoyance scenario:

One reason why externalism may seem initially plausible is that if the external relation in question genuinely obtains [i.e., the reliable relation between one's belief and the truth], then Norman will in fact not go wrong in accepting the belief, and it is, *in a sense*, not an accident that this is so: it would not be an accident from the standpoint of our hypothetical observer who knows all the relevant facts and laws. But how is this supposed to justify Norman's belief? From his subjective perspective it is an accident that the belief is true. And the suggestion here is that the rationality or justifiability of Norman's belief should be judged from Norman's own perspective rather than from one which is unavailable to him. (Bonjour, 1985, 43-44.)

Similarly, in his co-authored book with Ernest Sosa, *Epistemic Justification*, he writes:

[Norman is] being epistemically irrational and irresponsible in accepting beliefs whose provenance can only be a total mystery to [him], whose status is as far as [he] can tell no different from that of a stray hunch or arbitrary conviction. Here again, externalism seems to sunder the concept of epistemic justification entirely from the concept of epistemic rationality or responsibility, leaving the former concept with no clear intuitive content. (Bonjour & Sosa, 2003, 32.)

Here, Bonjour tells us that simple process reliabilism and similar externalist positions are forced to give the wrong verdict about the clairvoyance scenario because they fail to recognize that a subject cannot have a justified belief B without B being rational or reasonable from the subject's *first person perspective*. Even though Norman's belief about the President's whereabouts is both true and reliably produced, he doesn't have any supporting evidence or reason that is accessible from his first person perspective; as far as he is in a position to tell, there is no reason to think that his belief in any way accurately represents where the President

happens to be located. Moreover, BonJour's diagnosis doesn't only provide a plausible explanation of where the reliabilist goes wrong, but also explains why the access internalist appears to be correct. His original diagnosis relies on the thesis that if you don't have privileged access to the justificatory status of a belief B, then B cannot be justified. And by contraposition we get the (equivalent) thesis that if the belief B is justified, then you must have privileged access to the justificatory status of B; which simply is what access internalism states. Thus, BonJour's diagnosis provides the resources for formulating an abductive argument for access internalism. As he sees it, access internalism offers the best explanation for our intuitive judgments about the clairvoyance scenario.^{3,4}

BonJour's diagnosis and argument have met with a lot of criticism from externalists. Recently, I have responded to several of the externalist's objections.⁵ In this paper, however, I will simply offer a reconstruction of the argument and present my own, structurally analogous, argument about memorial justification.

3. Overconfidence and the Indistinguishability Problem

Allow me to follow BonJour by introducing the overconfidence scenario as a counterexample to Goldman's (1979) simple process reliabilism, before I present the argument for access internalism about memorial justification in the next section. Applied to memorial justification in particular, rather than justification in general, simple process reliabilism tells us that a belief B is memorially justified just in case B is the result of a reliable memory-based doxastic

³ Lehrer (1990, 163-164) presents a similar counterexample to reliabilism's sufficiency claim and, just like BonJour, argues that access internalism provides the best explanation for our intuitive judgments about the example.

⁴ Following Goldman (1999, 288ff.), the externalist might offer an alternative explanation saying that one needs to have access to the justificatory status of one's beliefs, but that it need not be *privileged* since the relevant facts about justification can be knowable by other means than introspection or reflection. However, if the facts about justification always are accessible, but we don't need privileged/internal access to them, then it must either be the case that we always have this more "externalist-friendly" access to them, or that we only sometimes have external access to them but without also having privileged access to them (on pain of redundancy). But, on the one hand, the first of these claims is clearly false. Facts about justification are grounded in facts about one's evidence and evidential support, and assuming that one always is in an externalist position to know these facts is assuming too much: taken together, the sense modalities simply do not put us in a position to know them in all cases. On the other hand, the second claim seems like an implausible and overly complex picture of our access to the facts about justification. What reason do we have to believe that we often have privileged access to the relevant facts about one's evidence and evidential support, but that there are times when don't have it and that it just so happens at these times that we are lucky enough to have externalist access to them? I see no convincing reason to hold such a view.

⁵ Elsewhere, I defend BonJour and Lehrer's arguments and clarify what commitments the access internalist should make. Doing so, I also point out prominent but implausible versions of the view in the literature and where they fall short.

disposition (and there are no undefeated defeaters). Thus, the view is committed to both a necessity claim—according to which having a reliable memory-based doxastic disposition is necessary for memorial justification—and a sufficiency claim—according to which having a reliable (undefeated) memory-based doxastic disposition is sufficient for memorial justification. However, as we will see, the sufficiency claim is particularly vulnerable. Consider the following scenario:

Overconfidence

Robert is, for the most part, a normal epistemic agent. His ability to reason is more or less like that of other people, his perceptual faculties function normally, and he usually acquires knowledge and justified beliefs by relying on his perception and reasoning. However, Robert's memory functions in somewhat unusual ways. Whereas his memory is exceptionally reliable—his memory-based doxastic dispositions almost always produce true beliefs with the same or relevantly similar content to the beliefs that entered his memory—he never has any reason to think that his memory beliefs indeed are products of his memory, rather than some other process or source.⁶ Moreover, Robert doesn't have any reason or evidence for or against the reliability of his memory.⁷ Nevertheless, he always trusts himself with respect to whatever his memory “suggests” to be the case.

One day, Robert is asked by his friend which year Goethe died. Although his interest in literature is miniscule and he doesn't in any way seem⁸ to remember anything about

⁶ This naturally suggests that Robert's memory processing doesn't have any associated phenomenology and the beliefs it produces don't have any distinct phenomenology that is indicative of their source. Moreover, this kind of phenomenology which Robert clearly lacks resembles what sometimes is discussed in the literature under the name “memory markers”; i.e., intrinsic features of memory experiences which indicate that they provide veridical information about the past. For a critique of the idea that memory experiences necessarily have memory markers, see Bernecker (2008, ch. 6).

Although I am undecided when it comes to whether the phenomenal or experiential properties that tend to be occasioned by memory are intrinsic to it, even if that turns out to be true and that the scenario I present therefore is metaphysically impossible, I still think that it can teach us important things about (e.g.) memorial justification. Just because a certain scenario is metaphysically impossible, it doesn't follow that we cannot learn anything from it. For example, even though Putnam's (1975) Twin Earth thought experiment most likely is metaphysically impossible—how can Twin Oscar be both identical to Oscar, whose molecules are partly constituted by water (H₂O), and be on a planet where there is no water (H₂O)?—it can still teach us important things about (e.g.) the content of our beliefs.

⁷ This means that Robert, in the scenario under consideration, doesn't learn from experience that his memory actually is reliable. To see how that can be so, we can for example imagine that Robert only has memory beliefs about things that he isn't in a position to empirically confirm/disconfirm, or that he simply never bothers checking whether his memory beliefs turn out to be true.

⁸ Here, I understand seemings as propositional attitudes which involve an experiential or phenomenal aspect that in normal circumstances dispose the subject to believe that their content is true, and not simply *as* dispositions to

when Goethe (or any other author for that matter) might have died, his memory prompts him to answer that “Goethe died on the 22nd of March 1832”, and he believes it. Intrigued by Robert's quick and confident answer, the friend asks him how he can be so sure. Robert thinks for a while, but, since he can't come up with any reason for thinking that his answer is true, he simply tells his friend that he doesn't know why he is so confident in his answer, he just is. Puzzled by the response, the friend asks him whether he is trying to pull a trick on him. Robert, taken aback by the accusation, thinks for himself a bit more, before he reassuredly says that he isn't trying to pull a trick but that he is absolutely confident that his answer is true. “Indeed, *too* confident”, the friend thinks to himself.

Just like with the clairvoyance scenario, according to simple process reliabilism, Robert's belief that Goethe died on the 22nd of March 1832 is memorially justified because it is the result of a reliable memory-based doxastic disposition (and there are no undefeated defeaters). However, yet again, the reliabilist verdict seems to be wrong. Intuitively, Robert is, as the friend's concluding thought suggests, *overconfident*, and his belief isn't justified. Indeed, his belief appears to be no more justified than a random guess or hunch. Hence, provided that the intuition is correct, simple process reliabilism about memorial justification must be false since having a reliable (undefeated) memory-based doxastic disposition isn't sufficient for memorial justification.

In order to support this intuition (i.e., that overconfident subjects, like Robert, don't have memorially justified beliefs), I'm going to point out a problem which is yet to be discussed in the literature, and which those who deny its veracity invariably must face. I call it the *indistinguishability problem*, and it is a deductive argument against anyone who denies the veracity of the aforementioned intuition. The argument can be summarized as follows:

1. Overconfident subjects are not in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they are products of memory, rather than some non-reliable process or source.
2. If a subject isn't in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they are products of memory, rather than some non-reliable process or source, then the subject should not believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source.

believe. The latter view is endorsed by Armstrong (1961, 84-87), Picher (1971, 91-93), Swinburne (2001, 141-142), and Conee (2004, 15), but it is criticized by Huemer (2007a, 31).

3. If a subject should not believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source, then their memory beliefs cannot be memorially justified.
4. Hence, overconfident subjects cannot have memorially justified memory beliefs.⁹

Since the argument's conclusion entails that the intuition elicited by the overconfidence scenario is true, those who want to deny the veracity of said intuition must reject at least one of the argument's premises. Now, let's examine how one might go about doing so.

Rejecting premise 1 amounts to the claim that overconfident subjects *are* in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they are products memory, rather than some non-reliable process or source. Before we evaluate this claim, I need to say a little bit more about what I take the notion of *being in a position to know* to mean. Following Declan Smithies (2012b, 268), I will define the somewhat abstruse notion of being in a position to know as meaning that one satisfies all the *epistemic conditions* of knowledge—like having unGettiered (propositional) justification to believe a true proposition. Knowing a proposition, by contrast, also requires that one satisfies the *psychological conditions* of knowledge—like believing a true proposition on the basis of one's unGettiered justification to believe it. Being in a position to know is therefore a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for knowing.¹⁰

Now, with this definition in mind, rejecting premise 1 is to claim that overconfident subjects have unGettiered justification to believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of memory. But this clearly seems false. If we consider Robert, for example, he doesn't have any reason or evidence which can justify him in believing that his belief about Goethe's date of death indeed is a memory belief. Moreover, not only doesn't he have any reason or evidence to justify such a second-order belief, it wouldn't be reliable in the circumstances under consideration. If, say, Robert actually were to form the (second-order) belief that his (first-order) belief about Goethe is a memory belief, then, given whatever

⁹ The way the argument is formulated, it presupposes a deontological conception of justification. However, it is only committed to a minimalist or modest version of deontologism, according to which ideals of justification or rationality specify what one ought to believe in order to live up to those ideals; it is not committed to the claim that we can or ought to be held responsible for failing to believe in accordance with the evidence.

¹⁰ The notion of being in a position to know was first introduced by Sosa (1974), and later taken up again by Williamson, who defines it as follows: "To be in a position to know *p*, it is neither necessary to know *p* nor sufficient to be physically and psychologically capable of knowing *p*. No obstacle must block one's path to knowing *p*. If one is in a position to know *p*, and one has done what one is in a position to do to decide whether *p* is true, then one does know *p*. The fact is open to one's view, unhidden, even if one does not yet see it." (Williamson, 2000, 95.) I think Smithies plausibly unpacks Williamson's definition.

(plausible) rule for belief-formation that he *tries* to follow, his best attempt to follow that rule wouldn't stop him from also believing that other (first-order) beliefs of his which actually amount to nothing more than mere guesswork, but without himself being in a position to know so, also are products of his memory—and this of course undermines the idea that Robert's (second-order) belief that his (first-order) belief about Goethe is a product of memory is reliable.¹¹ So premise 1 therefore appears to be on solid ground; overconfident subjects are not in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they are products or memory, rather than some non-reliable process or source.

Rejecting premise 2 amounts to the claim that subjects who aren't in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they indeed are products of memory, rather than some non-reliable process or source, are rationally permitted to believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source. But this naturally raises the question: *why* are such subjects permitted to believe of their memory beliefs that they are the result of some reliable process or source? Those who want to reject premise 2 thus face a difficult explanatory challenge; namely, they have to explain how subjects who aren't in position to distinguish their memory beliefs from random guesses or hunches nevertheless somehow still have grounds for believing of their memory beliefs that they aren't such guesses or hunches, or indeed products of some other unreliable process.

Given that subjects who aren't in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they are products of memory don't have any reason or evidence supporting second-order beliefs to the effect that their first-order memory beliefs actually come from the source that they do, I don't see any reason why we should think that it would be rationally permitted or reasonable for them to hold second-order beliefs to the effect that their first order memory beliefs are reliably produced. However, one might perhaps try to answer the challenge by following Crispin Wright (2004) and arguing that there are certain basic beliefs which we are entitled to hold by default,¹² and that second-order beliefs about the reliability of one's first-order memory beliefs somehow belong to that category. Although this might be a consistent line of response, it would require a lot of work to argue that second-order beliefs about the reliability

¹¹ Say, for example, that Robert tries to follow the *truth rule/norm*, according to which you should believe all and only true propositions (see, e.g., David, 2001). If, by attempting to follow that rule, he forms the (second-order) belief that his (first-order) belief about Goethe is a memory belief, then, since that (second-order) belief is, from his first person perspective, indistinguishable from mere guesswork, he will be equally disposed to believe that other beliefs of his that actually are mere guesswork also are products of his memory.

¹² In contrast to concepts like "justification", "rationality", and "reasonableness", Wright (2004; 2014) uses the concept of "entitlement" to refer to a species of warrant that isn't evidential or indicative of the truth.

of one's first-order memory beliefs somehow belong to the category of beliefs that are entitled by default (assuming that such a category exists). In his work on entitlement, Wright focuses for the most part on *presuppositions* (2004) and *authenticity-conditions* (2014), which function more or less like Wittgensteinian hinge propositions that we are entitled to believe without evidence or argument,¹³ rather than such second-order beliefs about the reliability of one's first-order memory beliefs. Moreover, this line of response is also problematic insofar as it seems to license as warranted or entitled some sort of *bootstrapping* argumentation, since forming a first-order memory belief (but without being in a position to know its source) is sufficient for generating entitlement to believe in the reliability of that first-order memory belief.¹⁴

That being said, it seems that premise 2 should be accepted and that subjects who aren't in a position to know of their memory beliefs that they indeed are products of memory shouldn't believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source.

Rejecting premise 3 amounts to the claim that the memory beliefs of subjects who shouldn't believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source nevertheless *can* be memorially justified. But this would be an odd claim to argue for. To see why that so, consider *which* doxastic attitude such a subject *should* have toward the proposition that their memory beliefs are products of some reliable process or source. Presumably, for any proposition that you have the concepts to understand, you should either believe it, withhold judgment about it, or disbelieve it, and you should never have more than one of these attitudes toward it at the same time.¹⁵ So if the subject shouldn't believe in the proposition under consideration, then he should withhold judgment about it or disbelieve it (but not both). But then he would end up being in an absurd quasi-*akratic* position where he withholds/disbelieves of his memory beliefs that they are reliably produced even though they (supposedly) are memorially justified.¹⁶ If, on the one hand, he disbelieves of his memory beliefs that they are reliably produced, then (equivalently) he believes of his memory beliefs that they are unreliably produced. But if he believes of his memory beliefs that they are unreliably produced, then that defeats any memorial justification he might have for his

¹³ See, e.g., Wittgenstein (1969, §341-343). For more about Wittgensteinian hinge propositions and their epistemological consequences, see Pritchard (forthcoming).

¹⁴ For more about such circular reasoning, see Alston (1986).

¹⁵ This is known as the Uniqueness Thesis, and it is defended by Feldman (2007).

¹⁶ Smithies (2019) similarly argues from the irrationality of akrasia for accessibilism about justification in general.

memory beliefs—in which case they cannot be memorially justified. If, on the other hand, he withholds judgment about the proposition that his memory beliefs are reliably produced, then he is committed to being agnostic or neutral with respect to its truth-value. But if he is committed to being neutral with respect to the reliability of his memory beliefs, then it doesn't seem that they can be memorially justified. After all, if the subject is equally confident that his memory beliefs are reliably/unreliably produced, why should he hold them?

Following Smithies (2012a), in order to further pump the intuition that a subject cannot justifiably withhold/disbelieve of his memory beliefs that they are reliably produced at the same time that they are memorially justified, let me just briefly point out how such a subject would find himself in a position where it would be completely natural for him to assert Moorean conjunctions. Consider the following conjunctions:

- (1) p and I do not know that p .
- (2) p and it is an open question whether I know that p .

Some philosophers think that asserting either (1) or (2) above is absurd.¹⁷ Why? Plausibly because one cannot rationally believe both conjuncts of such Moorean conjunctions at the same time.¹⁸ If one rationally believes the conjunct (i) that p , then one cannot rationally believe the conjunct (ii) that one doesn't know that p , or the conjunct (iii) that it is an open question whether one knows that p . In other words, according to some philosophers, one cannot rationally hold a certain belief and at the same time fail to take that belief as amounting to knowledge.¹⁹

Similarly, consider the following conjunctions about justification:

- (3) p and I do not have justification to believe that p .
- (4) p and it is an open question whether I have justification to believe that p .

¹⁷ Asserting conjunctions like (1) and (2) seems self-defeating, or, as one author has put it, “Mooronic” (Koethe, 1978). However, in contrast to contradictions, which also are self-defeating, Moorean conjunctions can be true. So how can it be that there are Moorean conjunctions which may or may not be true, but that cannot be asserted without absurdity? This is known as *Moore's paradox*.

¹⁸ Indeed, according to one influential approach, the paradoxicality of Moorean conjunctions doesn't have anything to do with the fact that they are linguistically expressed when asserted. Rather, a better strategy is to account for the paradoxicality by explaining why they cannot rationally be believed and *therefore* cannot coherently be asserted. For more about how and why Moore's paradox really is a paradox about the norms governing (rational) belief, see Hintikka (1962) and Shoemaker (1995).

¹⁹ As Huemer (2007b, 145) puts it: “If one believes that p , one is thereby *rationally committed* to taking one's belief to be knowledge.”

Just like with conjunctions (1) and (2) above, asserting either (3) or (4) is absurd because one cannot rationally believe both of their conjuncts at the same time. If one rationally believes the conjunct (i) that p , then one cannot rationally believe the conjunct (ii) that one doesn't have justification to believe that p , or the conjunct (iii) that it is an open question whether one has justification to believe that p .

However, despite the absurdity of asserting either (3) or (4), a subject who justifiably withholds/disbelieves of his memory beliefs that they are reliably produced at the same time that they are memorially justified will be in a position where asserting those conjunctions is entirely natural. For example, he might testify to some proposition p that he has a (justified) memory belief in, while simultaneously (justifiably) disbelieving/withholding judgment that his belief that p has been reliably produced and thereby also asserting that he doesn't, or might not have, justification to believe that p . So having this sort of lower-level belief, while at the same time failing to also have some higher-level belief to the effect that the lower-level belief is reliably produced, simply seems absurd.

One can of course always try to avoid this dilemma by denying that one always has justification for adopting either of the doxastic attitudes toward any proposition that one has the concepts to understand. Although I remain doubtful about that kind of position, even if it turns out to be true, I don't think that the kind of proposition that we're currently considering will be one of those that we shouldn't always hold either of the doxastic attitudes toward. For example, whereas your evidence might not determine that you should hold any particular doxastic attitude toward the proposition that the Pope currently is lying in his bed, it does seem that it always will determine such an attitude when it comes to the reliability of your memory beliefs. If your evidence on balance neither tells in favor of the truth nor the falsity of such a proposition, then you should withhold judgment in it. And if it does tell in favor of the truth/falsity of the proposition, then you should believe/disbelieve it. Evaluating which doxastic attitude your evidence on balance supports when it comes to the proposition that your memory beliefs aren't unreliably produced may of course be very difficult, but that doesn't mean that it is impossible or that your evidence on balance doesn't tell in favor of either attitude.

I therefore think that premise 3 should be accepted and that the memory beliefs of subjects who shouldn't believe of their memory beliefs that they are products of some reliable process or source cannot be memorially justified. The indistinguishability problem thus

presents a deductive argument against anyone who denies the intuition elicited by the overconfidence scenario. And it does so by highlighting the fact that overconfident subjects aren't in a position to distinguish *bona fide* memory beliefs from mere guesswork, and that failing to be in such a position is incompatible with having memorially justified beliefs.

In this section, I have presented a scenario that is analogous to those offered by Bonjour and others, but which focuses on memorial justification in particular, rather than justification in general. Moreover, in order to move beyond the discussions by earlier internalists, I have presented a novel argument which supports the intuition elicited by the overconfidence scenario, and which thus bolsters the case for access internalism about memorial justification. With that said, I now turn to the issues of why and how memorial justification is internally accessible.

4. The Accessibility of Memorial Justification

Why exactly does Robert's belief fail to be justified? I think the best explanation for this intuitive datum is that there is an internalist accessibility condition on memorial justification that he fails to satisfy. A belief can be memorially justified only if the subject has privileged access to the justificatory status of that belief. If the subject cannot even in principle tell what a certain belief B rationally has going for it, then B cannot be memorially justified—even if it is produced by the subject's reliable, properly functioning faculty of memory. Indeed, if the belief B is wholly indistinguishable from, say, mere guesswork, then B cannot be memorially justified.

The access internalist about memorial justification thus thinks that a belief can be memorially justified only if the subject has privileged access to the justificatory status of that belief. But this naturally raises the question: what *kind* of memorial justification does the internalist condition attach to? It is common to distinguish between two different kinds of justification, which we may call *propositional* justification and *doxastic* justification, following Roderick Firth (1978). On the one hand, you can have justification to believe a certain proposition, regardless of whether you actually believe it. For example, you can have justification to believe that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo, but without having to believe it. This is what we call propositional justification. On the other hand, you can also have justifiably held beliefs. For example, if you believe the proposition above—that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo—in a way that is properly based on that which gives you

(propositional) justification to believe it, then your belief is justifiably held. This is what we call doxastic justification. So which of these two kinds of memorial justification does the internalist condition attach to?

I claim that we should be access internalists about memorial justification in the propositional sense, but not the doxastic sense. Why? Because doxastic justification, as presented above, simply is propositional justification plus proper basing, which means that both those conditions must be internally accessible if facts about doxastic justification are to be internally accessible. So access internalism about doxastic justification is indeed a stronger position, and, as a result, it is more implausible. To see why that is so, consider how the facts about whether the beliefs you have are properly based on their justificatory basis are *psychological* (and not epistemic) in nature; that is, they have to do with the psychological processes and mechanisms that have led you to form and maintain your beliefs. But such psychological processes don't seem to be internally accessible. Not only did many of them occur in the past, thus making our access to them dependent on our fallible memorial capacities, but many of them also occur entirely below the level of conscious experience, thus making them completely inaccessible to our faculties of reflection and introspection.

So, I claim, we should be access internalists about memorial justification in the propositional sense.²⁰ But another question we also need to ask is *how* facts about memorial justification are internally accessible. Here I want to make two suggestions. One, they are internally accessible insofar as we are in an *a priori* position to know them; two, we are in an *a priori* position to know them insofar as the memorial justifiers and the justifying relations are similarly accessible. Let me begin by elaborating on the first point.

Drawing on Smithies' definition from the previous section, we always have unGettiered *a priori* justification to believe the facts about what we have memorial justification to believe.²¹ Moreover, it should be noted that I'm using *a priori* in the traditional sense that a condition is *a priori* just in case it doesn't depend on any of the sense modalities. This means that what we have *a priori* justification to believe shouldn't only be taken to include what we have reflective or reasoning-based justification to believe, but also, for example, what we have introspective justification to believe—even though introspection

²⁰ Henceforth, I'll just write "memorial justification" as short for "memorial justification in the propositional sense".

²¹ This *a priori* justification is immune to Gettier-cases, since in any close case in which one has *a priori* justification to believe that one has memorial justification to believe that *p*, one actually does have memorial justification to believe that *p*.

clearly involves an experiential aspect.²² Thus, according to the position I advocate, anyone who takes advantage of their epistemic position by also satisfying the psychological conditions of knowledge will know in an *a priori* manner what they have memorial justification to believe.

When it comes to the second point, we are in an *a priori* position to know the facts about what we have memorial justification to believe *by* being in an *a priori* position to know the memorial justifiers we have and how they justify the beliefs they do.²³ And we are in a position to have the latter knowledge (i) by having unGettiered *introspective* justification to believe what our memorial justifiers or reasons for belief are, and (ii) by having unGettiered *reflective* justification to believe that those reasons justify the beliefs they do (and to the degree that they do).^{24, 25}

So in a case where you have some memorial justification ^{MJ} for the belief that *p* (written ^{MJ} : *p*), you will also, in virtue of your faculties of introspection and reflection, have:

1. *A priori* justification ^{APJ} to believe that you have memorial justification ^{MJ} for believing that *p*: ^{MJ} : *p* → ^{APJ} : (^{MJ} : *p*).

(where the *a priori* justification isn't vulnerable to Gettier cases.)

And by having this *a priori* justification, it will be sufficient for:

²² For more on the distinction between narrow and broad notions of the *a priori*, see Casullo (2003, ch. 2).

²³ Some epistemologists, like Bergmann (2006, 9) for example, have formulated the access internalist position in such a way that it only places an accessibility condition on your justifiers/reasons. However, this fails to qualify as an internalist position since it opens up for the possibility that subjects can be justified in holding certain beliefs which they aren't in a position to tell what have going for them.

²⁴ This is arguably the most controversial aspect of the internalist theory I advocate. Insofar as you have reflective justification to believe that your reasons justify the beliefs they do (and to the degree that they do), justification cannot be truth-conducive. This is because truth-conduciveness is a contingent empirical relation, and therefore not something that can be known through reflection alone. Moreover, many externalists take it as obvious or extremely plausible that justification is truth-conducive (see, e.g., Alston (1989); and Glüer & Wikforss (2018)). However, in response, internalists will often point out that our intuitions about Lehrer and Cohen's (1983) New Evil Demon scenario indicate that forming justified beliefs need not be conducive to forming true beliefs.

²⁵ An alternative suggestion when it comes to how access internalists should spell out the idea that one always has justification to believe the facts about justificatory support (i.e., the facts about how one's justifiers support the beliefs they do) has recently been offered by Brogaard (2018). According to Brogaard, facts about justificatory support, which she conceptualizes as facts about evidential probability, are internally accessible in the sense that one has memory-seemings to the effect that they are true. Consider the following example which she offers: "To be justified in believing that it will rain on the basis of a belief about dark clouds, one must be (1) justified in believing that there are dark clouds, and (2) justified in believing that dark clouds makes rain likely. According to phenomenal dogmatism of the sort defended here, the belief about current dark clouds is, as we can imagine, justified by the visual seeming of dark clouds outside. The belief that dark clouds make rain probable, by contrast, is [immediately and fully] justified by the memory seeming that there is a constant conjunction between dark clouds and rain." (Brogaard, 2018, 65.)

2. Being in an *a priori* position to know ${}^{AP}K$ that you have memorial justification MJ for believing that p : ${}^{AP}J : ({}^{MJ} : p) \rightarrow {}^{AP}K : ({}^{MJ} : p)$.

And this gives us the following internalist accessibility condition on memorial justification:

3. Access internalism about memorial justification: ${}^{MJ} : p \rightarrow {}^{AP}K : ({}^{MJ} : p)$.²⁶

Although I don't have the space to go into more detail here, this will do as an initial characterization of the internalist accessibility condition that attaches to memorial justification. According to access internalism about memorial justification, if you have memorial justification to believe that p , then you are in an *a priori* position to know that you have memorial justification to believe that p .²⁷

5. Preservationism Dethroned

Access internalism about memorial justification is, however, incompatible with what recently has been called “a received view” about memorial justification; namely, preservationism (Frise, 2017, 487). This is what the thesis says:

Preservationism: if a belief B is justified at t_1 , and B is retained in memory until t_2 , then B is (*prima facie*) memorially justified at t_2 .²⁸

So according to preservationism, any memory belief, whether occurrent or dispositional, that was justified at an earlier point in time is presently (*prima facie*) memorially justified.²⁹ Preservationism is in conflict with access internalism since a subject can satisfy the antecedent of the conditional, and thereby have a memorially justified belief at t_2 , but without satisfying the internal accessibility condition argued for in the previous section at t_2 . In other

²⁶ Since the notion of being in a position to know is factive, the claim could also be formulated using the equivalence operator without a change in meaning.

²⁷ A similar suggestion when it comes to justification in general is defended and developed in much greater detail by Smithies (2019). My position is very much inspired by the arguments in that book.

²⁸ Proponents of preservationism include Annis (1980); Pappas (1980); Harman (1986); Burge (1997); Huemer (1999); Owens (1999); McGrath (2007); Bernecker (2008); Goldman (2009); Senor (2010); and Naylor (2012).

²⁹ A similar view that sometimes is confused with preservationism (see. e.g., Lackey (2007); Michaelian (2011); and Senor (2019, ch. 6)) is *anti-generativism* about memorial justification, which says that memory cannot generate justification for belief. However, anti-generativism differs from preservationism insofar as either of the views can be true without the other having to be true as well. For more about anti-generativism and how it differs from preservationism, see Frise (IEP article on *Epistemology of Memory*.)

words, on the preservationist picture, you can have a memorially justified belief, but without being in a position to know what that belief rationally has going for it.³⁰

Moreover, preservationism is motivated by its ability to solve a couple of notorious problems in the epistemology of memory. The first is the *problem of stored belief*, which challenges us to explain how the stored beliefs we have that intuitively seem to be justified indeed are justified.³¹ Preservationism solves the problem by claiming that a belief (whether stored or consciously entertained) will retain its justification as long as it is preserved in memory. And since stored beliefs by definition are preserved in memory, they do retain their justification. The second problem is the *problem of forgotten evidence*, which challenges us to explain how our justified (memory) beliefs whose original supporting evidence we have forgotten indeed are justified.³² You might, for example, have a justified belief that your best friend's phone number used to be such-and-such, but without remembering what the evidence was that you first formed your belief on the basis of. Preservationism again solves the problem by claiming that a belief will retain its justification (whether forgotten or not) as long as it is preserved in memory.

Given that preservationism thus is motivated by its ability to avoid the problems above, and that it is in conflict with access internalism, does this provide the dialectical upper hand to preservationism? I am going to argue that it doesn't. My strategy for doing so will be two-pronged: first, I will argue that access internalism about memorial justification has the resources to provide plausible solutions to the problem of stored belief and the problem of forgotten evidence; second, I will argue that preservationism faces a couple of problems which access internalism avoids, and therefore that internalism actually has the dialectical upper hand. Let me begin with the first point.

Access internalism about memorial justification can provide plausible answers to the explanatory challenges which the problem of stored belief and the problem of forgotten evidence pose. Consider first the problem of stored belief, which challenges us to explain how the stored beliefs we have that intuitively seem to be justified indeed are justified. According

³⁰ Although there is a natural conflict between preservationism and access internalism, the positions aren't inconsistent. However, if one were to endorse both positions, one would have to claim for all beliefs that are justified when they first enter one's memory, that insofar as they are retained until a later moment in time, the subject will have internally accessible grounds which support them, and that this is the case regardless of how long it has been since the beliefs in question first entered one's memory—and that, I think, is very implausible.

³¹ Pappas (1980) introduced the problem, whereas Senor (1993), Goldman (1999), and Williamson (2007) present it as a problem for internalism about memorial justification.

³² Pappas (1980) and Harman (1986) introduced the problem, whereas Goldman (1999) and Bernecker (2008) present it as a problem for internalism about memorial justification.

to access internalism, stored beliefs are typically justified *because* we are in an *a priori* position to know that we have certain justifying reasons and that those reasons support them. Earl Conee and Richard Feldman (2001; cf. Feldman, 2004) and Kevin McCain (2016) have suggested that what justifies such stored beliefs are “stored justifications”, which, just like the beliefs they justify, also are memorial in nature. Moreover, this suggestion can be plausibly expanded along the lines suggested in the previous section by claiming that what justifies stored beliefs usually are other stored beliefs which we have introspective justification to believe that we have and reflective justification to believe support the stored beliefs that they indeed do justify. So, for example, my stored belief that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo is plausibly justified by another stored belief to the effect that a trustworthy source—e.g., my middle school teacher—told me so some time ago.

However, an anonymous referee raised the following objection: there will probably be cases where one isn't able, from one's subjective point of view, to distinguish genuine memory beliefs from confabulated beliefs, and this raises the worry that one cannot rationally rely on one's genuine memory beliefs. Consider, for example, the belief that Napoleon lost the battle of Waterloo. Although I might have another stored belief to the effect that a trustworthy source told me so some time ago, it might nevertheless be the case that I am not able to tell whether or not the second belief is a genuine memory belief.³³ In response, I think we can appreciate the seriousness of this objection, while at the same time demonstrating that it does not undermine access internalism about memorial justification. More specifically, I think we can do so by acknowledging that what the objection says is true, but that it fails to contradict access internalism about memorial justification. According to the access internalist position laid out in the previous section, if one has memorial justification to believe *p*, then one is in an *a priori* position to know that this is the case. However, this version of access internalism does not claim that one must be *able* to take advantage of one's epistemic position and know that one has memorial justification to believe *p*. Neither does it claim that one must be able to take advantage of one's propositional justification by forming doxastically justified beliefs on their proper justificatory basis. So what this means is that even though the subjective indistinguishability of genuine and confabulated memory beliefs might prevent one from taking advantage of the memorial justification one has, it is still true that one is in an *a priori* position to know about one's memorial justification. To put the point in more general terms, the access internalist position endorsed in this paper only makes a claim about what one is in

³³ Thanks to the referee who helpfully pressed me on this point.

an epistemic position to do, in the sense that it might be done by an ideally rational agent, while remaining neutral about people's actual psychological capacity for reasoning and rationality.

Consider next the problem of forgotten evidence, which challenges us to explain how our justified (memory) beliefs whose original supporting evidence we have forgotten indeed are justified. According to access internalism, justified memory beliefs whose original supporting evidence we have forgotten are justified by *other* internally accessible evidence or reasons that we haven't forgotten. In the literature on the epistemology of memory, we find two different kinds of explanation that have been suggested along these lines.³⁴ First, Brent Madison (2014) has argued that just like the perceptual seemings we have justify certain corresponding beliefs, we also have memory-seemings which justify certain corresponding beliefs.³⁵ So whenever you have a justified memory belief whose original evidence you have forgotten, you will typically have some memory-seeming (which differs from the belief) supporting it. Second, Robert Schroer (2008), following Robert Audi (1995), has argued that memory beliefs *themselves* have certain distinctive phenomenal properties (indicative of their source) and that those properties provide defeasible reasons for belief. According to the view, simply having a memory belief that *p* necessarily involves a certain *feel* or phenomenal aspect that justifies believing that *p* (if I understand the view correctly).³⁶

I think the best way for the access internalist to answer the explanatory challenges posed by the problem of stored belief and the problem of forgotten evidence is to combine the idea that memory beliefs can function as "stored justifications" with Madison's idea that we typically have memory-seemings that confer justification upon certain beliefs. By combining these ideas, the result is a sophisticated internalist view of memorial justification that has the power to deal with the challenges raised above. Our memorially justified beliefs are supported

³⁴ Another internalist response is offered by McCain (2015), who argues that we haven't been provided with any case which intuitively involves a justified belief whose evidence is forgotten.

³⁵ "The basic proposal is a simple one: just as *seeming to see* that P justifies the belief that P (in the absence of defeaters), an internalist might hold that *seeming to remember* that P justifies the belief that P (in the absence of defeaters). . . One's state of seeming to remember something . . . or a memory-seeming, as I shall call the state, is a kind of experience one can undergo, one with content and a distinctive phenomenology, but one without any associated phenomenology." (Madison, 2014, 42-43.) Cf. Pollock (1986), who endorses a somewhat similar view where it is our beliefs about our memory-seemings, rather than the memory-seemings themselves, that ultimately do the justifying.

³⁶ "When I speak of 'seeming to remember that P', you should assume that I am referring to an apparent memory belief and not an apparent memory image or combination or belief and image. . .

The kind of memory foundationalism that I am interested in treats the feel of apparent memory beliefs as being *prima facie* justification for believing a proposition. Hence, in asserting that: seeming to remember that P is *prima facie* justification for believing that P, what I am really asserting is that a certain kind of feel—the feel of seeming to remember that P—is a defeasible reason for believing that P." (Schroer, 2008, 75.)

by other such beliefs or by memory-seemings. In the case of justified stored beliefs, they are justified by other stored beliefs, as is illustrated by the example about Napoleon above. And in the case of beliefs whose original supporting evidence we have forgotten, they will either be supported by memory-seemings or other stored beliefs (or both, of course), insofar as they are justified.

Now, it should be mentioned that whether or not we actually have enough stored beliefs and memory-seemings to justify all the beliefs that we intuitively think of as memorially justified is an empirical question. This means the internalist, insofar as he relies on the view that I here endorse, runs the risk of committing himself to some form of skepticism, if the empirical evidence were to show that we don't have a sufficient stock of such memory beliefs and memory-seemings. Moreover, I should note that this is a bullet that I am willing to bite; although I strongly suspect, on the basis of my own introspection, that we do have enough memory-seemings and beliefs in order to justify all the beliefs that intuitively seem to be memorially justified (cf. footnote 39).

Access internalism about memorial justification is thus just as suited to answer the explanatory challenges posed by the problem of stored belief and the problem of forgotten evidence as preservationism. Next, I want to argue that the philosopher's scales should be tipped in favor of access internalism, since preservationism is vulnerable to a couple of objections which access internalism avoids.

The first objection is that there are counterexamples to the preservationist analysis of memorial justification. For example, Matthew Frise (2017) has recently provided several such examples formulated as dilemmas for the preservationist. In this paper, however, I will focus on the overconfidence scenario from section 3. The scenario presented a subject named Robert who satisfies the antecedent of the preservationist conditional. By relying on his reasoning and perception, Robert acquires justified beliefs which his faculty of memory reliably retains. According to preservationism, Robert's memory beliefs should therefore be memorially justified when he consciously entertains them at a later time. However, intuitively, they clearly fail to be justified. Since he doesn't have any reason or evidence supporting them, Robert's memory beliefs aren't memorially justified. Indeed, even though his memory belief that Goethe died on the 22nd of March 1832 is true, reliably produced by a properly functioning cognitive faculty, and may have been justified in the past, it doesn't seem to be (memorially) justified at the present. Moreover, as we have seen, access

internalism offers the correct verdict about the scenario and it appears to receive the most support from the evidence which our intuitions provide. According to access internalism, the reason Robert's memory belief isn't memorially justified is that he isn't in a position to know what that belief rationally has going for it. So whereas preservationism gives the wrong verdict about the scenario, access internalism plausibly accounts for our intuitive judgments about it.

The second objection suggests that preservationism, in light of recent work in cognitive psychology, is vulnerable to skepticism about memorial justification. The reason is simply that preservationism assumes that something like the traditional "storehouse view" of memory is true, when in fact it probably isn't. According to this traditional view, memory is like a storehouse insofar as the items we retrieve (be they beliefs or episodic events³⁷) are the same ones that we deposited at an earlier time. The idea is simply that memory preserves (propositionally encoded) information and our doxastic attitude toward it. However, as Kourken Michaelian (2011) in his discussion and interpretation of recent work in cognitive psychology has demonstrated, the standard scientific view is that memory processing is generative or constructive, *not* preservative. The information that enters memory drastically changes at various stages of its processing; indeed, so much so that the information we retrieve most plausibly should be considered a construction of our memory processing, rather than simply a preserved informational unit—like a bottle of wine retrieved from a wine cellar.³⁸ According to Michaelian (2016, 82), "the basic lesson of constructive memory research is that remembering *does* in fact routinely involve modifications that introduce information not even implicitly contained in the earlier representation."

So how does the fact that memory processing is constructive rather than preservative threaten preservationism about memorial justification? The problem is as follows. Given that recent work in cognitive psychology indicates that memory is generally constructive, why, on the preservationist view, should our memory beliefs be (memorially) justified? If our (justified) beliefs tend to change content while they're processed in memory, why should we think that the beliefs we retrieve from memory are justified? After all, the belief we retrieve might very well be different from the one that entered memory in the first place, in which case the preservationist doesn't provide us with any reason to think that that belief actually is

³⁷ Using the taxonomy first developed by Squire (2009), *episodic memory* differs from *propositional memory* insofar as the former has experiences or events as its content, whereas the latter has propositions as its content.

³⁸ By drawing on the same literature, Frise (2018) argues that the problem of stored belief is a pseudo-problem since there aren't any stored beliefs.

justified. And without any such reason, skepticism follows. Preservationism, at least in its current form, is therefore unable to explain why our memory beliefs whose content differs from those that originally were encoded in our memory are justified.

The access internalist, on the other hand, avoids the problem. Since memory beliefs usually will be produced by a process with some associated phenomenology, or have some phenomenal property of themselves which is indicative of their source, the subject will usually be in a position to know what their memory beliefs rationally have going for them—which plausibly explains why they are (memorially) justified.³⁹ And if, for whatever reason, a subject has memory beliefs but without any of the relevant phenomenology, access internalism again plausibly explains why those beliefs intuitively won't be memorially justified (assuming that the subject doesn't have any other internally accessible ground for the beliefs). So access internalism isn't only just as suited as preservationism when it comes to answering the explanatory challenges posed by the problem of stored belief and the problem of forgotten evidence, it also avoids important problems which preservationism is vulnerable to. For these reasons, I therefore claim that access internalism should replace preservationism as the standard view in the epistemology of memory.

6. Conclusion

Let me conclude by taking stock. In section 2, I presented BonJour's clairvoyance scenario and his argument for access internalism. In section 3, I presented the overconfidence scenario and argued that anyone who denies that the memory belief of the subject in that scenario fails to be memorially justified is vulnerable to an indistinguishability problem. In section 4, I used the intuition elicited by the overconfidence scenario as the basis for an abductive argument for access internalism about memorial justification. In section 5, I argued that access internalism should replace preservationism as the standard view in the epistemology of memory, since (i) it is just as able to answer the explanatory challenges posed by the problem of stored belief

³⁹ It has long been argued that episodic memory is characterized by one or more special phenomenological properties (see, e.g., Hume (1739/2011); Russell (1921); Tulving (2002); Dokic (2014); and Michaelian (2019)). Moreover, based on my own experience of personal introspection, I find it reasonable to infer that the same holds true of semantic/propositional memory. That being said, there clearly seems to be a difference in the phenomenal properties that are associated with the different kinds of memory. Whereas episodic memory often is characterized by what Tulving (1985) calls *autonoetic consciousness*—i.e., the feeling of mentally travelling through time and experiencing an event anew—propositional memory seems to be characterized by a distinct feeling of accessing and retrieving old information. Indeed, that is plausibly why the "storehouse view" of memory is so compelling when one only considers it from an intuitive point of view.

and the problem of forgotten evidence, and (ii) it avoids a couple of problems which preservationism is vulnerable to.

Access internalism is an intuitively compelling thesis about the nature of memorial justification. By reflecting on the justificatory status of overconfident subjects who aren't (even in principle) in a position to tell what their memory beliefs rationally have going for them, we can infer that there is an internal accessibility condition on memorial justification. However, this kind of view is naturally threatened by preservationism, which has become the dominant position in the epistemology of memory. Preservationists argue that memory preserves the justificatory status of the beliefs that enter it, and that this explains why most of our stored beliefs and the beliefs whose original evidence we have forgotten are justified. The purpose of this paper has been to challenge the orthodoxy by presenting a new scenario which provides the intuitive basis for argumentation which, on the one hand, supports access internalism, and, on the other hand, undermines preservationism. Moreover, the paper has also argued that preservationism, in contrast to access internalism, is vulnerable to skepticism about memorial justification, insofar as it relies on an outdated folk-theoretic conception of memory processing. The upshot of the paper is thus that a reorientation of the epistemology of memory is in order: the discipline should readjust itself by building its theoretical framework in coherence with the scientific work done on memory processing—and, as I have argued, access internalism provides a plausible framework for doing so.

7. References

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