Faith is weakly positive

Elizabeth Grace Jackson[1]

Abstract

The literature on faith has largely focused on the relationship between faith and belief, specifically the question: does faith entail belief? At the same time, it's also widely held that faith involves a desire or pro-attitude, but more attention has been paid to the specifics of faith's doxastic component than to faith's affective component. This paper focuses on the relationship between faith and desire. I'll argue that faith is *weakly positive*: while faith may not always involve a flat-out desire, faith necessarily involves a positive desire-like attitude.

1 Introduction

What is faith? This question has enjoyed a renewed interest among philosophers lately. When it comes to the nature of faith, much recent attention has been to the relationship between faith and belief: does faith entail belief? If not, does faith entail something belief-like? Or is faith totally different than belief? (See Buchak, 2017a.) Those writing on faith also widely acknowledge that faith involves a desire or pro-attitude. However, despite a widespread acknowledgment of this general connection, less attention has been paid to the exact relationship between faith and desire.

This paper focuses on the relationship between faith and desire. I'll outline three views of the relationship between faith and desire. Then, I'll argue that faith is *weakly positive*: while it doesn't require a flat-out, full-blown desire for its object, it does require a positive stance toward its object.

✉ Elizabeth Grace Jackson
  Lizjackson111@gmail.com

1   Department of Philosophy, Saint Louis University, Adorjan Hall 305, 3800 Lindell Blvd, Saint Louis, MO 63108, USA

🖄 Springer

This paper proceeds as follows. In Sect. 2, I present a brief overview of recent literature on the nature of faith, focusing on two widely held necessary conditions for faith. In Sect. 3, I lay out three views of faith's positivity: faith entails desire, faith is weakly positive, and faith without positivity. In the next two sections, I argue for my preferred view: faith as weakly positive. In Sect. 4, I explain that faith involves a kind of resilience that is often overlooked: *conative* resilience. Faith as weakly positive can better explain faith's conative resilience than the view that faith entails desire. In Sect. 5, I respond to some arguments for faith without positivity and argue that we ultimately don't have good reason to sever the connection between faith and positivity. I conclude in Sect. 6.

2 The nature of faith

There are many kinds of faith. Here, we'll focus on *propositional* faith—faith that a proposition is true, as opposed to faith in a person or an ideal. We'll also focus on faith as a mental state, as opposed to faith as an action. Finally, we'll consider faith in both the religious and secular domains.[1]

To shed light on the nature of faith, consider the difference between two kinds of mental states. *Cognitive* or epistemic states represent the world. They are normally aimed at truth, responsive to evidence, and evaluable from primarily an epistemic point of view. Cognitive states have a mind-to-world direction of fit (see Anscombe, 2000: 56). That is, a cognitive state is "satisfied" (made true or accurate) when it matches the way that the world is; the world is held fixed, and the attitude is supposed to match the world. For example, suppose I look outside and see that it is raining, and then form the belief that it is raining. My belief conforms to the world and is thus "satisfied" (true). Because beliefs (and other cognitive attitudes) conform to the world in this way, they have a mind-to-world direction of fit. Examples of cognitive mental states include beliefs, credences, and probability-beliefs.

Conative mental states, by contrast, reflect what an agent takes to be desirable or valuable. They needn't involve evidence or epistemic justification for their contents. I can desire that p, even knowing p is false—e.g. I desire that a catastrophe never occurred, but I know it did. Conative attitudes have a world-to-mind direction of fit (see Anscombe, 2000: 56). That is, a conative attitude is "satisfied" (fulfilled) when the world conforms to the mind; the attitude is held fixed, and the world is supposed to match the attitude. For example, suppose the lights are off but I desire them to be on. I flip the switch, and the desire is satisfied. (By contrast, if the case were instead about belief, the lights would remain off and I'd conform my belief to that fact; I believe the lights are off until someone turns them on.) Examples of conative mental states include desires, pro-attitudes, approvals, and beliefs about the good or the valu-

---

[1] For more on these distinctions between various kinds of faith, see Jackson (2023b). For summaries of recent literature on faith, see Buchak (2017a) and Rettler (2018).

able. (Of course, for the belief "p is good" to be justified, one needs evidence that p is good or desirable—but one doesn't need evidence that p is *true*.)[2]

With this distinction in mind, consider the following example of faith (adapted from Page, 2017: 227). Let's suppose that I have faith that you will make your time in your upcoming marathon. *Prima facie*, two things seem to follow. First, I take it to be a reasonable possibility that you will make your time—if I take it to be, say, impossible you'll make your time, then I probably can't (and definitely shouldn't) have faith you'll do it. This is the *cognitive* element of faith. Second, I want you to make your time—it doesn't make sense to say I have faith you'll make your time if I want you to fail. This is the *conative* element of faith.

These attitudes are also plausibly necessary for theistic faith. If I have faith that God exists, then I have a positive cognitive attitude toward theism—that might be belief, high confidence, or something similar; if I have faith, I don't think God's existence is extremely unlikely or impossible. Also, if I have theistic faith, I desire God to exist or view God's existence positively: this is the positive conative attitude. While the necessity of both attitudes for faith is controversial, they are nonetheless widely accepted and provide a useful starting point for understanding faith. So, on a widely accepted view, the following conditions are necessary for faith.

S has faith that p *only if*:

i.   S has a positive cognitive attitude toward p (e.g. p is likely, having a high credence that p, believing that p), and
ii. S has a positive conative attitude toward p (e.g. desiring p, having a pro-attitude toward p).

Many authors in the faith literature agree on these conditions (see Alston, 1996; Howard-Snyder, 2013; Audi, 2011; Buchak, 2014; Jackson, 2023a). While various authors tweak them (and non-doxastic views of faith will want to weaken if not deny (i)), these two conditions are widely accepted enough that they provide a useful starting point for understanding faith. Of course, there are likely other necessary conditions as well (e.g. many authors add a condition about faith's resilience or steadfastness in light of counterevidence, Howard-Snyder, 2013 adds an evaluative condition; Buchak, 2014 adds a condition regarding not looking for more evidence; Jackson, 2023a adds a commitment condition). And there's the further question of what conditions are jointly sufficient for faith.

One notable debate—that has concerned much of the literature on the philosophy of faith—concerns condition (i). On what's often known as *doxastic* views of faith, necessarily, if S has faith that p, S believes that p. (I'll follow the convention in the

---

[2] For more on direction of fit, see especially Anscombe (2000) who is credited with the initial insight that beliefs and desires have different directions of fit; see also Platts (1979), Schueler (1991), Smith (1994), Zangwill (1998), and Gregory (2012) for further discussion. This sharp distinction between the cognitive and the conative goes back to at least Hume and is controversial. For instance, there's little consensus on how precisely to spell out the direction of fit analogy (see Schroeder 2015: sec. 3.1 and Gregory 2012) and some have posited that certain mental states, such as "besires", can have both directions of fit (see Zangwill 2008). Here, I minimally assume that there's a distinction between cognitive and conative attitudes that can at least be loosely captured by differences in direction of fit.

literature and refer to this as the view that "faith entails belief"). Some philosophers argue that without belief, faith appears to be a problematic kind of "playing pretend" or more precisely, *fictionalism*. Fictionalists speak about and act on something for pragmatic reasons, but they don't believe the claims that they are acting on and speaking about (Malcolm & Scott, 2017).[3]

On the other hand, the idea that it's possible to have faith without flat-out belief may make better sense of faith's resilience: faith seems more resilient than belief and compatible with more doubt than belief (cf. Mugg, 2016). If, plausibly, faith helps us keep our commitments over time in the face of changing evidence, this is better explained by the idea that one can have faith without belief. Furthermore, other cognitive attitudes can play belief's role: for example, you could think p is likely, be confident in p, think p is more likely than not, etc. If you do not flat-out believe that God exists but are, say, confident enough that God exists, on *weakly doxastic* views of faith, you can still have faith that God exists (see e.g. Howard-Snyder, 2013). On a third and final view, known as *non-doxastic* views of faith, faith doesn't require belief or a belief-like attitude at all (these views are sometimes also called *pragmatic* views of faith; see e.g. Pojman, 1986; Swinburne, 1981; Kvanvig, 2013). These authors might deny that condition (i) is necessary for faith, or at least maintain that (i) can be extremely weak, e.g. a non-zero credence in p could suffice.[4] Nothing in this paper will hang on the exact details of faith's cognitive component, but this background will be useful later, to understand various views on the relationship between faith and desire.

Component (ii) is faith's conative component. There's good reason to think that faith requires a desire-like state. First, this is a plausible way to explain what separates faith from mere belief. There are lots of things we merely believe that we don't desire to be true. But when we have faith that something is true, we have a desire for the object of faith, or a pro-attitude toward it, or a positive view of it—we are "for" it in some sense. Second, it enables us to sort cases correctly, making sense of why we don't have faith that there was a global pandemic or faith that our friend will never quit smoking. Condition (ii) explains why it is odd to have faith that something is true if you don't view it in a positive light. Recently, however, Malcolm and Scott (2021, 2023) argue that (ii) is not necessary for faith. We'll examine and respond to their arguments in what follows.

In sum, we've noted two necessary conditions for faith: cognitive and conative, and some controversies regarding these conditions. In what follows, I defend the necessity of condition (ii) for faith: arguing that, if you have faith that p, you must have some kind of positive conative attitude to p. If you have faith that world peace is achievable in your lifetime, you must think there's something good about world peace; if you have faith that God exists, you must view God's existence positively. Of

---

[3] Howard-Snyder (2019) defends the weakly doxastic view against the objection from fictionalism. Malcolm and Scott respond and reframe the objection in terms of bullshitting (Scott 2020) and sincerity (Malcolm and Scott 2023). Thanks to an anonymous referee.

[4] Some authors even argue that faith that p is compatible with disbelieving p; see Whitaker (2019) and Lebens (2023); perhaps some fideist views of faith would also affirm this. For more on the possibility of having faith (or hope) in necessary or impossible propositions, see Chignell (2013) and Malcolm (2023). Thanks to an anonymous referee.

course, you could have some kind of other commitment without thinking the object of commitment is good, but it wouldn't be a *faith* commitment. At the same time, we don't need to endorse the strong view that faith necessarily involves a full-blown desire for its object. Instead, we can weaken the conative component of faith, just as some have suggested weakening the cognitive component of faith, so (for among other reasons) we don't exclude those going through struggles or crises of faith.

3 The relationship between faith and desire

We've seen that it's widely held that faith has both a positive cognitive (or belief-like) component and a positive conative (or desire-like) component. We also noted the controversy concerning the question of whether faith entails belief: that is, whether everyone who has faith that p also believes that p, or whether other, weaker cognitive attitudes could play this cognitive role. However, there's a parallel debate, that has received less attention in the literature: if you have faith that p, does this entail that you *desire* that p?

   Many in the faith literature note that faith is linked to desire, motivate this with a few examples, and move on to other topics.[5] So the relationship between faith and desire has received less attention than the relationship between faith and belief, leaving some underexplored ground. I'll outline some of this ground in this section. First, I'll explain the notion of "flat-out" desire and how it contrasts with weaker pro-attitudes (3.1). Then, I'll present three views on the relationship between faith and positivity (3.2). Finally, I'll discuss the relationship between faith's conative component and faith's cognitive component in light of these three views (3.3).

3.1 "Flat-out" desire and weaker pro-attitudes

Central to the taxonomy I'll provide in the next section is the notion of a "flat-out" or "outright" desire. This subsection aims to clarify this notion and illuminate how flat-out desires contrast with other, weaker pro-attitudes.[6] Let's begin with an analogy with belief. Many epistemologists think there are flat-out beliefs, i.e., states that represent a proposition as true, full stop, e.g., I believe it will be sunny tomorrow. But, as we saw above, this isn't the only cognitive attitude I can take toward that proposition. I could be confident (or have a high credence) that it will be sunny tomorrow (even confident to a particular degree—I might be, say, 65% confident if there's a 65% chance of rain), I could believe it's likely to be sunny tomorrow (or have a probability-belief), and I could think it's more likely to be sunny that it is to rain tomorrow (or have an attitude of comparative confidence or a comparative probability-belief).[7]

---

[5] Those who argue that faith involves desire or positivity include Alston (1996: 12), Plantinga (2000: 292), Schellenberg (2005: 133), Audi (2011: 67, 79), Howard-Synder (2013: 362–3), Kvanvig (2013: 113), Buchak (2014: 53), Ballard (2017: 215–7), Page (2017), Jackson (2021a: 41, 2022a, 2022b), Tweedt (2023, 2024) among many others.

[6] Thanks to anonymous referees for encouraging me to expand on this.

[7] For a discussion of flat-out belief and its relationship to credence, see Jackson (2020b) and the references therein. For a discussion of comparative confidence, see Steffánson (2017) and Elliott (2020).

Desires are similar. We can desire p, flat-out and full-stop. A flat-out desire is a first-order, non-comparative, and non-contrastive want for some object (here I mean "object" in the broadest sense, to refer to any candidate object of a desire.) A flat-out desire contrasts with other states that fall under the general category of pro-attitudes but are weaker. These weaker pro-attitudes include a higher-order desire, a comparative preference or comparative value judgment, a general approval by which one says "yay, p!", and a belief about the goodness of p. I might want to want to finish my paper, prefer finishing my paper to cleaning my house, approve of finishing my paper, and believe it is good to finish my paper, but nonetheless lack a first-order, non-comparative desire to finish my paper. The latter state is stronger in that it will (i) clearly and distinctly present to me the goodness of finishing my paper and (ii) carry a rich and distinctive motivation to finish my paper, in the same way that a flat-out belief that p presents or represents p as true, full stop. If, by contrast, I have only a weaker pro-attitude toward finishing my paper, I will lack (i) and (ii)—even if I have similar phenomenology, it will be to a lesser degree. Note that this notion of flat-out desire isn't supposed to be unique or revisionary, but should largely map onto our everyday notion of "desiring" or "wanting" something.

This contrast between a flat-out desire and these weaker pro-attitudes is all that is needed for the taxonomy in the next subsection. However, for those who find the analogy with belief plausible, we can take this even further and expand our list of weaker pro-attitudes. Many have thought that what is distinctive about flat-out belief is that it does not come in degrees; either you believe p or you do not (Moon, 2017). Even if belief is a threshold concept—for example, you believe p if your confidence or credence in p is at or above some threshold—beliefs do not come in degrees, since meeting a threshold doesn't come in degrees (compare: being a millionaire is a threshold concept, but being a millionaire doesn't come in degrees; see Kaplan, 1996: 91).

Perhaps similarly, flat-out desires do not come in degrees; either you desire p or you do not. But it also seems like desires can be stronger or weaker, so it's plausible to think there's a desire-like state that *does* come in degrees, analogous to a level of confidence or credence (perhaps we could call this a preference, although people tend to see preferences as more like comparative confidences). So, in the same way that many epistemologists think we have both flat-out beliefs and credences, plausibly, we have both flat-out desire and degreed desire.

Then, you could both desire p and desire p to a particular degree (in the same way I can believe it will be sunny tomorrow and have a particular level of confidence it will be sunny tomorrow). But also, you could weakly desire p *without* flat-out desiring p, in the same way I can have some confidence that p without flat-out believing that p (e.g. I might be 55% confident that it will rain tomorrow without believing it will rain tomorrow). A related possibility arises for exhaustive comparative desires (and beliefs): I could prefer p to not-p without flat-out desiring p (in the same way I can think p is more likely than not-p without believing p).

Then, we have:

Flat-out desire: a first-order, non-comparative, and non-contrastive desire for p, which (perhaps) doesn't come in degrees.

Which contrasts with the following weaker pro-attitudes:

Higher-order desires: a desire to desire p.
Comparative desires: a preference of p to q.
Exhaustive comparative desires: a preference of p to not-p.
Approval or pro-attitude: a general approval of p, or "yay, p!"
Value-beliefs: a belief that p is good or valuable.

And perhaps:

Weak desire: a degreed, slight (non-comparative) desire for p, that isn't strong enough to amount to a flat-out desire for p.

These latter states are weaker in the sense that it's possible to have them to p without having a flat-out desire for p.

3.2 Three views on faith's positivity

The contrast between flat-out desire and these weaker pro-attitudes helps us distinguish three main views regarding faith and desire. Howard-Snyder (2013: 362–3) says: "unless you want p to be the case, you cannot have faith that p" and "propositional faith has desire built into it." Pojman (1986: 126) argues that faith is a kind of hope, which "entails desire for the state of affairs in question to obtain or the proposition to be true." This suggests:

Faith entails desire: necessarily, if S has faith that p, S has a flat-out desire for p to be true.

This view is the analog of the view that faith entails belief. It nicely explains the examples considered in Sect. 2 that connect faith and positivity (e.g. why I wouldn't have faith that my friend has cancer or will never quit smoking).[8]
We can, however, explain these examples equally well with a weaker view:

Faith as weakly positive: necessarily, if S has faith that p, S has a pro-attitude or a positive conative attitude toward p.

[8]Authors such as Pojman (1986: 126), Golding (1990: 488), Audi (2011: 67), Howard-Snyder (2013: 362–3; 2017: 48), Dunnington (2018: 531–2), Sliwa (2018: 250), Jackson (2021a: 41), Gaultier (forthcoming: sec. 2) suggest they might be favorable to faith entails desire (and some explicitly endorse it); see also Rettler (2018: 4) and Jackson (2023b: 2c) for overviews of the recent literature that connects faith and desire. (Howard-Snyder's recent work is more pluralistic regarding faith's conative states.) It's also worth noting that hope—which is widely considered to be a closely related, if not "weaker" state than faith—is normally construed as involving or entailing a desire; see Downie (1963: 248), Day (1969: 89), and Born (2018: 107). That said, many authors in the faith literature aren't always carefully distinguishing faith-entails-desire from faith-as-weakly-positive.

In the same way that some argue that states weaker than flat-out belief can play faith's cognitive role, states weaker than flat-out desire can play faith's conative role; this is the conative analog of weakly doxastic views of faith.

This is where the examples from the previous subsection come in. On this view, faith that p needn't involve an outright desire, but may instead involve thinking that p is the best out of the alternatives you are considering (a comparative desire), a belief that p is good or valuable (a value-belief), a desire to desire p (a second-order desire), the attitude of yay, p! (an approval of p), or a slight desire for p (a weak desire). Or, you may also have conflicting desires, but ultimately find your desire for p slightly stronger than your desire for not p—the affective parallel judging p to be slightly more likely than not-p (an exhaustive comparative desire).[9]

This second view also explains the cases: e.g. why we don't have faith that there was a global pandemic or faith that our friend will never quit smoking; we don't have any of these positive conative attitudes towards these, thus, we cannot have faith that they are true.

A final view is:

> *Faith without positivity*: there's no necessary connection between faith and positivity; faith doesn't require desire or a desire-like attitude.

This view is defended, most notably, by Malcolm and Scott (2021: 14ff; 2023: 140–145). Note that Malcolm and Scott think that faith is *often* positive, but there's no essential or necessary connection. They nonetheless agree that *many* examples of faith involve desire or positivity (2021: 14–15).

In the next two sections, I'll motivate that faith is weakly positive. I'll argue, contra the faith entails desire view, that my view can better explain faith's conative resilience. Then, I'll respond to Malcolm and Scott's challenges. But first, I'll address another noteworthy issue raised by this framework.

3.3 Faith and belief/desire symmetry

Considering the relationship between faith, belief, and desire raises another question: to what extent should one expect a belief-desire symmetry when it comes to faith? As noted earlier, borrowing from Buchak's (2017a) helpful taxonomy, each of these three positivity views has a doxastic parallel with defenders from the faith literature: faith entails belief (or faith as doxastic) parallels faith entails desire, faith as weakly doxastic parallels faith as weakly positive, and faith as non-doxastic parallels faith without positivity.

At first blush, one might expect that those who argue faith entails belief will be sympathetic to the idea that faith entails desire (and vice versa), that those who are willing to weaken the cognitive component of faith should also be willing to weaken

---

[9]Schellenberg (2005: 133) is one of the only authors (that I'm aware of) who *explicitly* endorses the weakly positive view of faith; he suggests that faith may not always involve desire, but always involves a "favorable evaluation" of the object of faith. Also, Howard-Snyder's more recent work is more pluralistic regarding faith's conative component, so he now may be sympathetic to the weakly positive view as well; however, his earlier work explicitly endorses that faith entails desire.

the conative component of faith (and vice versa), and that those who argue that faith is non-doxastic will be inclined to accept faith without positivity (and vice versa).

However, interestingly, the literature does not reflect this symmetry, Malcolm and Scott, for example, argue that faith entails belief (2017, 2023) but also for faith without positivity (2021, 2023). Furthermore, other authors spill lots of ink arguing that faith doesn't entail belief, but pay less attention to the relationship between faith and desire (besides perhaps positing some kind of general relationship). Many authors who endorse non-doxastic views of faith nonetheless accept either faith entails desire or at least that faith is weakly positive (e.g. Kvanvig, 2013; Pojman, 1986; Schellenberg, 2005).

One possible motivation for this asymmetry is as follows. Philosophers are trying to define faith to explain certain features of faith, such as faith's resilience or how faith underlies key, life-shaping commitments. To the extent that faith is made up of cognitive and conative attitudes, if one attitude is permitted to be quite weak, then you might "make up" for this by strengthening the other attitude. Put differently, perhaps the cognitive and conative elements of faith balance against each other. Those who think that faith essentially involves a belief need not lean so heavily on the desire element of faith to explain how faith can be robust and resilient. Similarly, those who endorse non-doxastic views of faith might want to "beef up" the conative component of faith to explain how faith plays the significant roles that it does. Of course, both components of faith might be robust, but on very weak symmetrical views (i.e. neither conative nor conative elements are required for faith), we are left wondering what faith consists of and what explains its resilience and importance.[10]

While I nonetheless, to some extent, find the neat and tidy belief-desire parallels of symmetrical views appealing, those who endorse symmetrical views will want to be careful not to make the elements of faith so weak that we cannot explain how faith is resilient and underlies our central life commitments and projects—in particular, this may be a reason to reject non-doxastic views of faith that also reject faith's positivity. In general, philosophers writing on faith should pay more attention to whether (and why) faith's elements may (or may not) be symmetrical.

4 Against faith entails desire: faith's conative resilience

It's widely thought that faith is *resilient*. Faith helps us keep our commitments in light of various obstacles (Jackson, 2021a). However, the literature's focus has mostly been on faith's *epistemic* rationality and thus *epistemic* resilience. Accordingly, the primary obstacle to faith that has been considered in the literature is counterevidence. How can rational faith persist in light of counterevidence? At what point does counterevidence rationally require you to give up your faith?[11]

---

[10] Thanks to an anonymous referee for this point.

[11] For discussions that focus on faith's epistemic rationality and epistemic resilience, see Boespflug (2016), Ballard (2017), Buchak (2014, 2017a, 2017b), McAlister (2018), McKaughan (2018), Matheson (2018), Paul & Morton (2019), Jackson (2019, 2020a, 2021b, 2022a, 2022b, forthcoming), Ichikawa (2020), among others.

However, faith's *conative* resilience is also worth considering.[12] There are two general ways that the affective component of faith may be weakened or undermined. First, desires may fade naturally—in many of our commitments, we begin them with a strong desire or drive (consider the honeymoon phase of marriage, the excitement of those first beginning graduate school, the passion of the new convert), but these fade over time. While we don't necessarily have new evidence that the commitment is bad, over time, commitments become less novel, less exciting, and more mundane. Second, desires might fade in response to reasons: genuine evidence or indicators that we shouldn't desire the thing we've committed to (for example, evil in the world might make you question God's goodness, rather than God's existence). These reasons can vary in strength, as evidence does.

In either case, faith's conative resilience can help us keep the commitment. Plausibly, faith that p persists both in light of truth-related challenges (e.g. counterevidence or non-decisive indicators p is false) and these value-related challenges (e.g. non-decisive indicators that p is a bad thing or p is not valuable or positive). Especially given faith's conative component, it would be odd if faith persists in light of loss of belief or evidence that p is false, but not in light of loss of desire or indicators that p is bad. It seems as though one could maintain faith through such a crisis of faith—indications that p is bad, even strong indications, don't automatically require the faithful to give up faith that p.

The observation that faith is conatively resilient gives us reason to prefer the view that faith is weakly positive over the view that faith entails desire. The faith entails desire view has trouble doing justice to conative resilience. The idea that desires fade, either naturally or in response to reasons, is common and familiar to many of us. If faith entails desire, then these challenges—whether psychological or normative—will shake your faith as soon as you lose your flat-out desire for the object of faith. However, losing desire doesn't, by itself, force us to conclude that your faith is lost, especially if you still view the object of faith positively.

If faith is weakly positive, by contrast, then faith can withstand the loss of desire, and the faithful can fall back on a weaker desire-like attitude, such as a second-order desire, a weak desire, a comparative desire, a belief that p is good, and the like. Because this fallback conative attitude can be relatively weak, the weakly positive view of faith better explains faith's resilience. It is also more inclusive: it allows you to have faith if you lose outright desire, but still have a weaker conative attitude.

Consider several examples. First, a marriage: if you are newly married, you probably will undergo a "honeymoon" phase of particularly strong desires: for union with the other person, for the relationship to be successful and long-lasting, etc. However, over time, these desires tend to fade; you might begin with a strong, flat-out desire to continue in your marriage, but over time, retain only a weak desire to be married and lose the flat-out desire. Suppose after a particularly intense disagreement, you find yourself with merely a second-order desire for your marriage to succeed: you want to want it to succeed. You still in some sense see the marriage as a good thing, but you lack the flat-out desire to continue in your marriage commitment. Your faith in your

---

[12] See Howard-Snyder (2019), Jackson (2021a), and Malcolm and Scott (2021, 2023) for discussions of faith's conative resilience.

spouse and your marriage can help you continue in your commitment, even if you only have a weak or a higher-order desire for your marriage to continue. I maintain that in this case, you aren't precluded from having faith that your marriage will succeed, even without a first-order, outright desire for it to be successful.[13]

Second, consider a theistic commitment: upon first converting to a religion or becoming a theist, you may experience strong desires, passion, and zeal, especially if your conversion was dramatic. But again, over time, these desires may fade. You might undergo trials or hardships that, rather than making you question God's existence, make you question whether God is someone you should *want* to commit to. That is, you might question whether God is good, have doubts about God's plan, and lose a flat-out desire for God's existence.

Plausibly, biblical characters, such as Job, underwent similar conative struggles. Job never questions whether God *exists*, but he does express strong, negative conative attitudes toward God: "Why have you made me your target?. Why do you not pardon my offenses and forgive my sins?"[14] And "Why do you hide your face and consider me your enemy?"[15] Job considers himself to be a target of God and suggests that God doesn't forgive his sins and considers Job an enemy—indications that Job has negative conative attitudes toward God. However, Job also retains a positive conative attitude that he expresses in terms of hope: "Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him; I will surely defend my ways to his face."[16]

Along similar lines, more contemporary religious figures, even religious exemplars such as Mother Theresa, struggled with a "dark night of the soul", which—in the case of Mother Theresa—included significant conative struggles and lots of negative conative attitudes toward God. She writes: "This terrible sense of loss—this untold darkness—this loneliness this continual longing for God—which gives me that pain deep down in my heart—Darkness is such that I really do not see—neither with my mind nor with my reason—the place of God in my soul is blank. There is no God in me." (Kolodiejchuk, 2007: 349, quoted in Malcolm & Scott, 2023: 142). While Mother Theresa does describe her longing for God, she is also plagued by many negative conative attitudes; she is "clouded by despair, torment, anger, feelings of abandonment, sadness, and dark nights of the soul" (Malcolm & Scott, 2023: 142; see also McKaughan, 2018). These are not primarily epistemic struggles—doubts about whether God exists—but conative struggles, involving her feeling abandoned by God and struggling to see the place of God in her life.

My goal here isn't to settle nuanced interpretative questions about the exact details of Job's and Mother Theresa's conative attitudes. It's possible to interpret them as

---

[13] A referee points out that you could remain in your marriage but lack faith that your marriage will succeed or continue. I agree; however, if you lose faith that your marriage will succeed or continue, this makes it very difficult to continue in your marriage commitment; losing such faith puts you on a path to giving up the commitment. Thus, making it easier to have faith (e.g. in light of loss of desire) will make it easier to retain the commitment, since having faith and keeping the commitment are closely connected. So the weakly positive view does better at explaining resilience than the faith entails desire view. Thanks to an anonymous referee for helpful discussion.

[14] Job 7:20b-21a, NIV.

[15] Job 13:24, NIV.

[16] Job 13:15, NIV.

(say) retaining flat-out desire for God but having conflicting desires. However—at a minimum—it's not difficult to imagine very similar people in parallel situations who lose flat-out desire for God but nonetheless retain theistic faith. I maintain that a loss of desire doesn't preclude you from having religious faith. To the contrary, faith helps you continue in your commitment, despite your weakened or lost desire. Then, faith's resilience is a reason to prefer the view that faith is weakly positive to the view that faith entails desire.

5 Against faith without positivity: addressing recent challenges

This section addresses the faith without positivity view, defended most notably by Malcolm and Scott (2021, 2023). To begin, let me again emphasize that faith's having an essential conative component is widely held and *prima facie* plausible. There are several good reasons for this consensus. First, paradigm cases of faith involve positivity; Malcolm and Scott agree. If I have faith that you will get a job, I want you to get the job; if I have faith that it will be sunny, I see sunny weather as positive; if I have faith that there is an afterlife, I think the afterlife would be a good thing. Examples abound. Furthermore, and relatedly, the view that faith always involves positivity provides a clear answer to why I don't have faith that you'll never quit smoking or faith that my friend has cancer. On the faith without positivity view, it's harder to explain why these are not cases of faith. I take these to be some of the reasons that the majority view in the faith literature is that necessarily, faith involves positivity (see footnote 5). But of course, these reasons are defeasible.

In this section, I'll argue that Malcolm and Scott's objections, while creative and interesting, are ultimately unsuccessful. First, I'll offer two possible interpretations of their counterexamples, both of which are consistent with the idea that necessarily, faith involves positivity (5.1). Then, I'll make some remarks about Malcolm and Scott's view of faith and argue that my view has some key advantages (5.2). Finally, I'll argue that we don't have to follow Malcolm and Scott in fully detaching faith and positivity to explain faith's conative resilience (5.3).

5.1 Malcolm and Scott's counterexamples

Malcolm and Scott raise several doubts regarding the link between faith and positivity. In particular, they provide counterexamples: cases of faith in which the faithful do not view the object of faith positively. For example, you might have faith that people are predestined to hell—not because you want this to be true, but because this doctrine is a part of your religious commitment. You might find this doctrine confusing and difficult to swallow, and even hope that it's false, but you trust that God has a plan or reason (Malcolm & Scott, 2021: 18; 2023: 144). Similarly, a Christian who doesn't approve of alcohol usage may have faith that Jesus transformed water into wine but doesn't understand why or approve of Jesus doing this (2021: 17). Malcolm and Scott argue that faith in such cases does not involve positivity toward its object—and in fact, it may involve negativity (2021: 16–18). A related case is one of indifference to the object of faith: maybe you have faith that God is Triune, but you find this doctrine

puzzling and don't find yourself with any particular desire for it to be true, nor do you view it positively (2021: 18).

In response, I'll argue that these counterexamples fall into one of two groups, depending on how we spell out the specifics of the case. The examples in group one genuinely involve faith, but also genuinely involve some kind of desire-like attitude, even if a weak one. The examples in group two may not involve faith at all, and I'll provide an error theory for why they seem like cases of faith. I'll consider each explanation in turn.

On the first group of cases: I maintain that some of Malcolm and Scott's cases genuinely involve faith, but also involve a pro-attitude to the object of faith. Some of these cases may involve a flat-out desire; other cases may involve a weaker pro-attitude. Either way, they don't support the faith without positivity view.

Note that desiring p is consistent with a lot of other complicated things going on in your head regarding p. For example, you could be conflicted: you desire p but also desire not-p. Many cases of weakness of will may be like this: suppose you commit to writing 500 words a day. However, you are tired today and not feeling it. You may desire to keep your commitment and write today but also have a strong desire not to write today. Plausibly, you have conflicting outright desires: a flat-out desire to write today and a flat-out desire not to write today. Note also that you can flat-out desire p even if you don't have strong emotions associated with p. You may desire to go to the gym after work, but you may not be excited about it; you might even dread it. So despite a desire for not-p, a dread of p, etc., the persons in Malcolm and Scott's cases may nonetheless have a flat-out desire for p as well; they are conflicted. For example, if you have faith that Jesus turned water into wine while, at the same time, do not approve of alcohol usage, you likely feel conflicted, and perhaps you have conflicting outright desires. As part of your Christian commitment, you trust that Jesus had a good reason to do this, and in that sense, desire that the miracle occurred. But insofar as you don't approve of alcohol, you also desire that the miracle did not occur. On this interpretation, there's no counterexample, even to the faith entails desire view.

The weakly positive view has even more resources to respond to these counterexamples. Even if it's plausible that the faithful in the counterexample lack outright desire, they could still have a weaker pro-attitude to the object of faith. Suppose you find a religious doctrine (e.g. predestination, Jesus' miracles) difficult to swallow, but trust that God has a plan and allows this for a reason. You can still have a weak conative attitude toward the object of faith—you may want to want it to be true, have a weak desire for it—in virtue of acknowledging that there is a divine reason for it. You may still feel torn, have conflicting desires, and not have strong positive emotions when you consider such puzzling doctrines. You are conflicted, and your conative attitude is complicated. However, especially if quite weak attitudes can play the required conative role, we don't need to sever the link between faith and positivity.

On the second group of cases: we don't have to maintain that these people are always conflicted; some of the cases from Malcolm and Scott may not involve faith at all. Another way of understanding (some of) the proposed counterexamples is that these are religious propositions that you might believe or accept—such as God predestined people to hell, Jesus turned water into wine, or God is Triune—but since you don't view them positively, you don't have faith that they are true. Why does it seem

like you have faith? Because it's easy to equate faith with (a) a religious proposition you accept or believe or (b) a proposition believed on the basis of testimony. But when we stop to think about it, this is too quick: a proposition accepted/believed as a part of one's religious commitment doesn't automatically amount to faith. Similarly, it's easy to label any proposition that's accepted based on testimony as faith. But here, we're confusing trusting another person—which may demonstrate faith *in* them—with having faith *that* the propositions they utter are true. For example, if a doctor reports that your mother has cancer, you may have faith in the doctor in the sense that you believe her report, but it would be inaccurate to claim that you have faith that your mother has cancer. In the same way, you might accept or believe certain claims based on testimony or as part of your religious commitment. While these claims are closely associated with faith, it's false to say that you have faith *that these claims are true*. If you genuinely have no pro-attitude, on any level, that Jesus turned water into wine or that God predestines people to hell, then, while you can still have faith in closely related propositions—e.g. that God exists, that God is a reliable testifier, and/or that Christianity is true—and you may *believe* God predestines people to hell, you don't have faith that God predestines people to hell. Once we specify the object of faith, then, it's plausible that some of these aren't genuine cases of faith at all.

To summarize the response so far: either the persons in the counterexamples genuinely have faith, in which case they genuinely have some kind of positive conative attitude to the object of faith (even if a weak one); they are (likely) conflicted. Alternatively, the persons in the counterexamples are not conflicted and completely lack any kind of positive conative attitude to p; then, they do not have faith that p (although they may have faith "in the neighborhood"—e.g. faith that closely related propositions are true, or faith in the person who testified that p, etc.).

5.2 True grit and causal theories

Malcolm and Scott's positive view of faith has two components. On Malcolm and Scott's view, faith involves "true grit". That is, faith is a resilient attitude that helps the faithful bounce back, adapt, persevere, and resist when facing challenges (see 2021: 24ff; 2023: ch. 3). Furthermore, they endorse a causal theory of faith and positivity, on which faith often *causes* positive attitudes but there's no modal or necessary connection. In their words (2021: 14): "Faith is usually but contingently accompanied by positive attitudes towards its object or content." This contrasts with "modal views" on which necessarily, faith is positive (faith entails desire and faith as weakly positive are both modal views).

While we can't here give all aspects of the causal, true-grit view (and its book-length defense) the attention it deserves, I'll make a few points about some of the benefits of modal views and how defenders of such views might respond to their arguments.[17] First, I'll address a motivation for the "true grit" view. Malcolm and

---

[17] Thanks to an anonymous referee for encouraging me to expand on this. For another response to Malcolm and Scott, and an alternative "faith without positivity" view, see Waggoner (Forthcoming).

Scott (2023: 145–7) argue that their "true grit" view of faith does better than the positivity theory. They motivate this with examples (2023: 146), such as:

(4) Peter has faith that Franz will give up smoking.

(5) Peter has faith that Franz will continue smoking.

(4) sounds reasonable, but (5) sounds odd. Regarding the ability of the modal view to explain the oddness of (5), they say: "Suppose that Peter wishes Franz ill and believes that Franz's death would be a good thing; suppose he also believes that Franz's continuing to smoke raises the chance of this happening. Even with the requisite positive desires in place, that Franz will continue to smoke looks like an odd thing for Peter to have faith about" (2021: 27; 2023: 146). Here I have two points. First, those who endorse the modal view almost never think that a positive conative attitude, plus perhaps some beliefs, is sufficient for faith: the modal view merely specifies a necessary condition for faith. Part of this reason (5) sounds odd is that Peter may lack faith's other conditions, or it's at least underspecified whether he meets them. Furthermore, as Malcolm and Scott (2023: 146) point out, (5) is just generally an odd attitude to have in normal circumstances—a point that all parties can appreciate, even if we build up the case so Peter meets the other conditions for faith to make it plausible that (5) is true.

Second, once it is clarified that Peter meets the other conditions for faith (positive cognitive and conative attitudes, a commitment to Franz's smoking, resilience to counterevidence and other obstacles, a disposition to commit without searching for new evidence, and the like), it's reasonable to think that Peter has faith that Franz will continue to smoke. Malcolm and Scott argue that if Peter has a firm belief and resolute commitment to Franz's continuing (i.e. true grit) but lacks a positive attitude, this is "evidence" that Peter has faith that Franz will continue to smoke (2023: 146). However, if Peter's attitude demonstrates true grit but lacks positivity, this doesn't seem like a faith commitment. It's more intuitive that Peter has faith that Franz will continue to smoke if he has the commitment and resilience plus a positive attitude. Compare: you might have a firm belief and resolute commitment that the COVID-19 pandemic or the Holocaust occurred (say, to combat conspiracy theories) but you do not have faith that either occurred, despite your unwavering belief, your tendency to sincerely vocally assert these events occurred, and your disposition to continue to believe they occurred when facing counterevidence. Here, you have a commitment to the occurrence of these tragedies, but it is not a faith commitment, precisely because you lack a positive conative attitude to the relevant propositions. So it's not clear that true grit view does better than the modal view here.

There are two reasons to prefer the modal view (on which there's a necessary connection between faith and positive conative attitudes) to a causal view (on which there's merely a contingent connection between faith and positivity). The modal view enjoys widely held intuitive appeal; I and most others writing on faith find the modal view more plausible. One reason for this consensus is because it explains the range of examples of faith we've discussed: why, when desire is lost, faith is lost, and when faith is present, desire is present. The causal view doesn't do as well, because, on that view, loss of desire doesn't automatically indicate loss of faith. Here, Malcolm and Scott may simply disagree that this is a feature of the examples, but if their counterexamples are ultimately not successful (as I've argued in the previous subsec-

tion), there's good inductive reason to think these general connections hold. To put this another way: the causal view posits a contingent connection between faith and positivity to capture the many examples connecting faith and positivity but denies the necessary connection to accommodate certain counterexamples. While this is of course a coherent position, if the counterexamples are unsuccessful (as I've argued), the modal view should be preferred, given (i) its intuitive appeal and (ii) a plausible inductive principle that if a connection holds in all cases that we are aware of, it holds generally.

Second, the causal, contingent view of faith and positivity on which faith involves true grit raises the question: how is faith different than belief? It's been widely documented in psychology that flat-out belief demonstrates gritty resilience (see Jackson (2019) and Flores (forthcoming) including the many references therein). Belief also often goes along with desire; there are many things we believe to be true and want to be true. So how is faith different? Malcolm and Scott may reply that faith is more likely to cause positivity or that faith causes positivity in a larger range of cases; on that view, the difference between faith and belief appears to be a matter of degree, not of kind. But it seems as though faith and belief are qualitatively different attitudes. Here, the modal view does better: faith necessarily involves a positive conative attitude, and belief does not, so there's a clearer demarcation between attitude types. While I don't expect this to be the final word on modal vs. causal views of faith, I nonetheless think the modal view has some key advantages over Malcolm and Scott's view.

5.3 Can resilient faith lack positivity?

In Sect. 4, we noted that a key feature of faith is resilience in response to lost desire. Malcolm and Scott agree: "Religious faith may be clouded by despair, torment, anger, feelings of abandonment, sadness and dark nights of the soul such feelings were widely felt and documented by Mother Theresa" (2021: 15; 2023: 142). They, however, take this to support the faith without positivity view: "Faith in crisis can become detached, if only briefly, from positive evaluations or beliefs about the object or content of that faith. We do not, however, regard these cases as losses of faith. Indeed, faith is often seen as helping one to get through such crises" (2021: 16; 2023: 142).

I agree that faith can help one get through such crises, but I disagree that we have to give up the connection between faith and positivity to explain this. As we saw, on my preferred view, the positive attitudes involved in faith can be quite weak: a second-order desire, a judgment that p is better than certain alternatives, or a very weak desire. As a concrete example: you may have, in full awareness, lost your desire for God to exist, but regret that you feel this way, and wish that you felt differently. This feeling of regret and disassociation from your lack of desire may be enough, by itself, to count as a positive attitude to the object of faith.[18] So the weakly positive view leaves quite a bit of space for those going through crises, such as Mother

---

[18] Thanks to Klaas Kraay and Jeff Tolly.

Theresa, to count as faithful. We need not fully detach faith and positivity to explain crises of faith.

This brings me to a final advantage of the weakly positive view: it provides a clear boundary for when faith is lost. It's a truism that some have faith and others do not, and over time, some people go from having faith to not having faith, whereas others go from not having faith to having faith. Part of the reason we care about the nature of faith is to be able to identify when these changes occur. However, if faith can be detached from positivity, even if briefly, as Malcolm and Scott suggest, it's much more difficult to know when someone loses faith, as opposed to when their faith is retained but facing a conative challenge. The faith as weakly positive view, by contrast, provides a clear answer: faith is lost when faith's object is no longer viewed positively, in any sense. And faith is possible when its object is viewed positively. We are thus able to cleanly identify cases of faith, while, at the same time, not being too exclusive.

Thus, overall, while Malcolm and Scott raise some interesting counterexamples, I ultimately think the counterexamples don't establish that faith that p can be fully detached from a positive view of p; in fact, the modal view has some key advantages over Malcolm and Scott's view. Furthermore, while I agree that conative resilience is a significant feature of faith, this feature is better explained by the weakly positive view than by the faith without positivity view.

6 Conclusion

This paper laid out three views on the relationship between faith and desire: faith entails desire, faith without positivity, and faith is weakly positive. The first two views represent two extremes. On the first view, faith that p always involves a flat-out desire for p. On the second view, faith doesn't require any kind of positive view of its object. I've argued for a third, moderate view: that faith is weakly positive. That is, while necessarily, faith involves positivity, this positive component of faith can be significantly weaker than a flat-out desire.

The weakly positive view explains faith's conative resilience better than the faith entails desire view; you can retain faith through a loss of desire, and positive attitudes weaker than desire can play the relevant conative roles. The weakly positive view is more principled and plausible than the faith without positivity view and gives a clear boundary for when faith is lost. Thus, faith is weakly positive.

Declarations

Conflict of interest There are no potential conflicts of interest.

Human and animal rights This research does not involve human or animal subjects

References

Alston, W. (1996). Belief, Acceptance, and Religious Faith. In J. Jordan & D. Howard-Snyder (Eds.), *Faith, freedom, and rationality* (pp. 3–27). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Anscombe, E. (2000). *Intention* (2nd ed.). Harvard University Press.

Audi, R. (2011). *Rationality and religious commitment*. Oxford University Press.

Ballard, B. (2017). The rationality of faith and the benefits of religion. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion,81*, 213–227.

Boespflug, M. (2016). Is augustinian faith rational? *Religious Studies,52*, 63–79.

Born, E. D. (2018). The logic of hope: a defense of the hopeful. *Religious Studies,54*, 107–116.

Buchak, L. (2014). Rational Faith and Justified Belief. In L. F. Callahan & T. O'Connor (Eds.), *Religious faith and intellectual virtue* (pp. 49–73). OUP.

Buchak, L. (2017a). Reason and Faith. In W. J. Abraham & F. D. Aquino (Eds.), *The oxford handbook of the epistemology of theology* (pp. 46–63). OUP.

Buchak, L. (2017b). Faith and steadfastness in the face of counter-evidence. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion,81*, 113–133.

Chignell, A. (2013). Rational Hope, Moral Order, and the Revolution of the Will. In E. Watkins (Ed.), *Divine order, human order, and the order of nature: historical perspectives* (pp. 197–218). Oxford University Press.

Day, J. P. (1969). Hope. *American Philosophical Quarterly,6*(2), 89–102.

Downie, R. S. (1963). Hope. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,24*(2), 248–251.

Dunnington, K. (2018). Justification by faith. *Religious Studies,54*, 527–547.

Elliott, E. (2020). 'Ramseyfying' probabilistic comparativism. *Philosophy of Science,87*(4), 727–754.

Flores, Carolina. (Forthcoming). Resistant Beliefs; Responsive Believers. *Journal of Philosophy*.

Gaultier, M. Benoit. (Forthcoming). On the Nature (and Irrationality) of Non-religious Faith. *Erkenntnis*.

Golding, J. L. (1990). Toward a pragmatic conception of religious faith. *Faith and Philosophy,7*(4), 486–503.

Gregory, A. (2012). Changing direction on direction of fit. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice,15*, 603–614.

Howard-Snyder, D. (2013). Propositional faith: what it is and what it is not. *American Philosophical Quarterly,50*(4), 357–372.

Howard-Snyder, D. (2017). Markan faith. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion,81*, 31–60.

Howard-Snyder, D. (2019). Can fictionalists have faith? It all depends. *Religious Studies,55*(4), 447–468.

Ichikawa, J. J. (2020). Faith and epistemology. *Episteme,17*(1), 121–140.

Jackson, E. (2019). Belief, credence, and faith. *Religious Studies,55*(2), 153–168.

Jackson, E. (2020a). The Nature and Rationality of Faith. *The New Theists* (Joshua Rasmussen and Kevin Vallier, eds.), pp. 77–92. New York: Routledge.

Jackson, E. (2020b). The relationship between belief and credence. *Philosophy Compass,15*(6), 1–13.

Jackson, E. (2021a). Belief, faith, and hope: on the rationality of long-term commitment. *Mind,130*(517), 35–57.

Jackson, E. (2021b). The ethics of religious belief. *Religious Studies Archives,4*, 1–10.

Jackson, E. (2022a) Faith, Hope, and Justification. In *Propositional and Doxastic Justification,* edited by Luis R.G. Oliveira and Paul Silva, Routledge Studies in Epistemology. pp. 201–216 Routledge.

Jackson, E. (2022b). Faith and reason. In *The Handbook of Philosophy of Religion,* edited by Mark A. Lamport. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield. pp. 167–177

Jackson, E. (2023b). Faith: contemporary perspectives. *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://iep.utm.edu/faith-contemporary-perspectives/

Jackson, E. (2023a). Faithfully taking pascal's wager. *The Monist,106*(1), 35–45.

Jackson, E. (Forthcoming). The Epistemology of Faith and Hope. In *The Blackwell Companion to Epistemology, Third Edition*, edited by Kurt Sylvan. Wiley-Blackwell.

Kaplan, M. (1996). *Decision Theory as Philosophy*. CUP.

Kolodiejchuk, B. (2007). *Mother Teresa - come be my light: The revealing private writings of the Nobel Peace prize winner*. Doubleday.

Kvanvig, J. (2013). Affective theism and people of faith. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy,37*, 109–128.

Lebens, S. (2023). Amen to daat: on the foundations of jewish epistemology. *Religious Studies,59*(3), 465–478.

Malcolm, F., & Scott, M. (2017). Faith, belief, and fictionalism. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly,98*(1), 257–274.

Malcolm, F., & Scott, M. (2021). True grit and the positivity of faith. *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy,17*(1), 5–32.

Malcolm, F., & Scott, M. (2023). *A philosophy of faith: belief, truth, and varieties of commitment*. Routledge.

Matheson, J. (2018). Gritty faith. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly,92*(3), 499–513.

McAlister, B. (2018). The perspective of faith: its nature and epistemic implications. *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly,92*(3), 515–533.

McKaughan, D. (2018). Faith through the dark of night: what perseverance amidst doubt can teach us about the nature and value of religious faith. *Faith and Philosophy,35*(2), 195–218.

Moon, A. (2017). Beliefs do not come in degrees. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy,47*, 760–778.

Mugg, J. (2016). In defence of the belief-plus model of faith. *The European Journal for Philosophy of Religion,8*(2), 201–219.

Page, Meghan. (2017). The Posture of Faith. *Oxford Studies in Philosophy of Religion* (edited by Jonathan L. Kvanvig) 8: 227–244.

Paul, S. K., & Morton, J. M. (2019). Grit. *Ethics,129*, 175–203.

Plantinga, A. (2000). *Warranted christian belief*. Oxford University Press.

Platts, M. (1979). *Ways of meaning*. Routledge.

Pojman, L. (1986). Faith without belief? *Faith and Philosophy,3*, 157–176.

Rettler, B. (2018). Analysis of faith. *Philosophy Compass,13*(9), 1–10.

Schellenberg, J. L. (2005). *Prolegomena to a Philosophy of Religion*. Cornell University Press.

Schroeder, T. (2015). "Desire." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Edward N. Zalta, ed.) Available at: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/desire/

Schueler, G. (1991). Pro-attitudes and direction of fit. *Mind,100*, 277–281.

Scott, M. (2020). Faith, fictionalism, and bullshit. *Thought: A Journal of Philosophy,9*(2), 94–104.

Sliwa, P. (2018). Know-How and Acts of Faith. In M. A. Benton, J. Hawthorne, & D. Rabinowitz (Eds.), *Knowledge, Belief, and god: new insights in religious epistemology* (pp. 246–263). Oxford University Press.

Smith, M. (1994). *The Moral Problem*. Blackwell.

Steffánson, H. O. (2017). What Is 'real' in Probabilism? *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy,95*(3), 573–587.

Swinburne, R. (1981). The nature of faith: In *Faith and Reason*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. pp. 104–124.

Tweedt, C. (2023). The perspectival account of faith. *Religious Studies,59*(4), 635–650.

Tweedt, C. (2024). An argument for the perspectival account of faith. *Religious Studies,60*, 1–20.

Waggoner, M. (Forthcoming). What's love (and belonging) got to do with it? Negative and positive conative elements underlying gritty faith. *Faith and Philosophy*.

Whitaker, R. K. (2019). Faith and disbelief. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion,85*, 149–172.

Zangwill, N. (1998). Direction of fit and normative functionalism. *Philosophical Studies,91*, 173–203.

Zangwill, N. (2008). Besires and the motivation debate. *Theoria,74*, 50–59.