**Seemings and Justification[[1]](#footnote-2)**

Jack Lyons

A popular view in epistemology holds some close variant of the following principle:

(1) Its looking to *S* as if *p* is a prima facie reason for *S* to believe that *p*.

If we find this principle intuitively plausible—as many do—we can endorse an analogous principle for memory:

(2) *S*’s seeming to remember that *p* is a prima facie reason for *S* to believe that *p*.

Or more generally:

(3) Its seeming to *S* as if *p* is a prima facie reason for *S* to believe that *p*,

where ‘seeming’ is supposed to encompass looks and apparent memories, but also other states as well, including apparent a priori intuitions.

All three principles stake out interesting and important positions on epistemological issues. First, they are committed to something other than beliefs serving as reasons (i.e., grounds, evidence) for beliefs. Second, they endorse traditional, nondisjunctivist views, as the relevant seemings are intended to be nonfactive. Third, they endorse a kind of internalism, on the assumption that seemings are not merely nonfactive but “internal” in the relevant though notoriously slippery sense of the term. Finally, they postulate an important class of beliefs: those that are both epistemologically basic (a.k.a. immediately, or noninferentially justified, i.e., beliefs whose justification does not depend on the justification of other beliefs) and defeasible. Because these basic beliefs are beliefs about external objects, the principles espouse a kind of modest foundationalism, rather than a classical foundationalism; the difference is that the latter makes our justification for beliefs about the world depend on justification for beliefs about ourselves, while the former grants us direct epistemic access to objects and properties in the world around us.[[2]](#footnote-3)

The third and more general principle specifies an epistemological view that has gone by many names: direct realism (Pollock 1986), phenomenal conservatism (Huemer 2001, 2007), dogmatism (Pryor 2000), phenomenal dogmatism (Chudnoff 2013), and seemings internalism (Lyons 2012, forthcoming).[[3]](#footnote-4) Whatever we call the view (I’ll tend to stick with the latter, for reasons that will become apparent later), it is the central concern of the fourteen original essays collected here.

Seemings internalism is subject to a couple of importantly different kinds of putative counterexamples. Several of the papers here discuss some influential cases due to Peter Markie (2005), like the following:

Suppose that we are prospecting for gold. You have learned to identify a gold nugget on sight but I have no such knowledge. As the water washes out of my pan, we both look at a pebble, which is in fact a gold nugget. My desire to discover gold makes it seem to me as if the pebble is gold; your learned identification skills make it seem that way to you (2005, pp. 356-7).

Intuitively, my belief here is not prima facie justified by this seeming. This sort of case is often (e.g., Tucker, Brogaard, McGrath) cited as an early version of the cognitive penetration of perception objection to seemings internalism (Siegel 2012, Lyons 2011). But I read Markie here as concerned with something importantly different from the cognitive penetration of perception; his objection is in some ways stronger and in some ways weaker than the cognitive penetration objection.

Cognitive penetration of perception is the controversial empirical thesis that cognitive states can directly influence perceptual states. “Cognitive states” here include beliefs, desires, and the like; “direct” influence is to be contrasted with influence due to deliberate change in location, fixation, or attention (my desire to close my eyes causes me to do so and thus affects what I see, but not in a way that counts as cognitive penetration); and “perceptual” is to be understood in a relatively strict sense, although spelling this sense out is its own controversy.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Markie’s prospector case is not obviously a case of cognitive penetration of perception, because it is not obvious that the relevant seeming is supposed to count as a genuinely perceptual state, in the relevantly strict sense.[[5]](#footnote-6) He offers that case alongside another one that is supposed to illustrate the same general point: “[t]he same phenomenological experience that makes it seem to me that [some] tree is a walnut also makes it seem to me that it was planted on April 24, 1914” (2005, p. 357). This seeming—that the tree was planted on April 24, 1914—is clearly not supposed to be a perceptual state in any strict sense.

Siegel (2012) introduces explicitly perceptual seemings into the discussion: Jill believes for no good reason that Jack is angry at her, and this causes Jack to literally look angry to her. Siegel thinks that Jill’s resulting belief, that Jack is angry at her, does not derive prima facie justification from this penetrated perceptual experience.[[6]](#footnote-7) Siegel’s cases are putative counterexamples to principle (1) above, while Markie’s cases, as I read him, are putative counterexamples to (3). I agree with Siegel about the epistemic status of Jill’s belief (Lyons 2011), but I can see how the seeming internalist might resist. From the subject’s perspective, after all, the penetrated perceptual seeming is no different from a hallucination, and it’s quite reasonable and intuitive to hold that hallucinatory experiences justify (Huemer). As much as I agree with Siegel, I have even more sympathy for Markie-type cases.

There is something initially intuitively appealing about (3): after all, if *p* seems true to me, what else might the appropriate doxastic attitude be regarding *p*, if not belief? Surely not *dis*belief! Requiring suspension of belief would seem to result in treating *p* the same as propositions that don’t seem true, and presumably even the same as propositions that seem false. Denying (3) is thus counterintuitive. At the same time, however, endorsing (3) is also quite counterintuitive: we tell our critical thinking students (I do, anyway!) that the mere fact that some proposition seems true to them is not evidence for that claim. Propositions can seem true for all kinds of illicit reasons. It seems true to my neighbors that America is the greatest country in the world, but only because they’ve been told so thousands of times. $10 seems like a reasonable price for that item, but only because you’ve just been primed with the number 12 (you’d have thought it worth no more than $7 otherwise). It seems true to my cousin that abortion causes breast cancer, but only because his vehement opposition to abortion makes the spurious evidence seem compelling to him. We are all subject to the “belief bias” whereby arguments whose conclusions we believe to be true thereby seem to be valid, even if they’re not. Belief does not seem to be the appropriate doxastic attitude in these cases.

‘Seems’ isn’t being used here in any kind of hedging way (where my saying ‘it seems to me that *p*’ functions as ‘*p*, but I could be wrong’) or belief-reporting way (where ‘it seems to me that *p*’ functions as ‘*p* is something I do or am inclined to believe’); it attributes a genuine mental state, one that is experienced as revealing how things really are. Nevertheless, the seemings internalist could deny that the cases presented just now or in Markie’s papers involve genuine seemings in the relevant sense.

But this brings us to the question of what is meant by ‘seems’ and thus, what exactly (3) is claiming. This question is of central importance to the discussion of seemings internalism, and it is one of the chief virtues of this volume---and especially Tucker’s excellent introductory piece---is that it moves this particular discussion forward.

**The Fractionation of Experience**

What is the nature of seemings, and how are the various kinds of seemings (memorial, intellectual, perceptual) related? All of these seemings involve mental states that have “felt veridicality,” “the feel of a state whose content reveals how things really are” (Tolhurst 1998, 298-9). But, depending on what we take seemings to be, the differences between, say, intellectual and perceptual seemings is striking. Perceptual seemings include or are typically accompanied by (this difference will become important shortly) a distinctive rich, nonconceptual, often spatial phenomenology, in a way that intellectual seemings (e.g., its seeming true to me that 2+2=4) do not. Focusing on the common element in perceptual and intellectual seemings, as well as the striking phenomenal difference between perceptual experience and intellectual experience, leads to an important view according to which perceptual experience as we typically understand it comprises separable components: roughly, the high-level, conceptual state as of being confronted with the truth, and the low-level, phenomenologically rich, nonconceptual state.

Some version of this view, that perceptual experience contains separable components, is endorsed by several of the papers in this volume (Tucker, Cullison, Conee, Bergmann, Audi, Brogaard, and perhaps more indirectly, Tooley). For some time now, I have argued that this general account of perceptual experience is correct, and that its correctness is bad news for seemings internalism (Lyons 2005, 2009, forthcoming).

There is no established terminology here, but let us use “sensations” to pick out the states with the rich, nonconceptual phenomenology distinctive of perceptual experience (Conee, Tucker 2010, Lyons 2009). The detailed, fine-grained, analog experience as of determinate colors and shadings, spread out in egocentric space: this is sensation. Seeming happens later, in different brain areas, and involves the digitization, classification, and interpretation of the information extracted in the earlier processing stages into conceptual terms. It is an empirical thesis (in my articulation of the view, anyhow) that sensations and seemings are nomologically separable; one could have sensations without their associated seemings and vice versa.[[7]](#footnote-8)

Seemings internalism is then the view that these later, classificatory states are sufficient for prima facie justification of perceptual beliefs, and so therefore sufficient even in the absence of sensations---that is, even in the absence of the phenomenology that most plainly marks out the containing experience as perceptual. When I gaze across the room, it looks to me like there’s a cup on the table. But this mental state that counts as the looking-as-if-there’s-a-cup-on-the-table in the epistemically relevant sense is the seeming. Thus, the state we are interested in is *not* the state that has a distinctive fine-grained and spatial character; it is not the state that represents the various particular shades of the various colors of the cup as viewed from here under these lighting conditions. To think so is to confuse the seeming with the sensation.

But then consider what it would be like to have a seeming without sensation. It would be like blindsight (Weiskrantz 1986), only with confidence. The experience of seeing the cat across the room would be much like Norman the clairvoyant’s “just knowing,” as he might put it, that the president is in New York (BonJour 1980). My own epistemology is an externalist one, and I don’t mind claiming that blindsighters and (some) clairvoyants can have prima facie justification—provided their belief-forming processes are at least reliable. But I don’t imagine this view having much appeal to internalists.[[8]](#footnote-9) There is something intuitively attractive about the idea that perceptual experience justifies beliefs, but if ‘perceptual experience’ now means seemings without sensations, then the intuitive attraction vanishes, and I think it would be somewhat disingenuous to claim that sensations are epistemologically irrelevant but still go on to talk about the epistemic role of experience. Perceptual seemings may perhaps be experiences in some sense of the term, but not in the sense of the term that lends intuitive plausibility to talk about appearances, how things look, and the like.

**Augmented Seemings**

Several of the papers here deny seemings internalism but endorse something similar. If seemings by themselves aren’t sufficient to justify, perhaps they can do so in conjunction with the right additional factors.

Steup and Markie both hold that an experience as of *p* doesn’t justify alone; one must also have evidence for thinking that that experience is a reliable indicator of *p*.[[9]](#footnote-10) Both authors are careful to deny that one needs to have justified *beliefs* about reliability, so long as she has the nondoxastic evidence that would justify such belief. Still, the amendment to seemings internalism amounts to abandoning modest foundationalism in favor of classical foundationalism (or possibly a kind of nondoxastic coherentism), for the view espoused here holds that the justification of perceptual beliefs depends on the (propositional) justification of (dispositional) beliefs about reliability. Steup is explicit elsewhere (2004) about rejecting modest foundationalism, and perhaps Markie doesn’t mind rejecting it either.[[10]](#footnote-11)

I am more worried, however, about the nature of this nondoxastic evidence. Presumably, it takes the form of apparent memory (e.g., to the effect that this is how things looked when *p* was true in the past), but what is an apparent memory if not a mnemonic seeming, or a memory experience? Steup is more explicit about this than Markie, who eschews memory talk in favor of talk about “having information”. Steup denies that having evidence requires having occurrent memory seemings, but then explains, “when I say that justification requires seemingly reliable seemings, I do not require actual memorial seemings but merely memory data that, upon reflection, will ground memorial seemings of reliability” (145n). Taken at face value, the proposal would be that perceptual experiences aren’t “innocent until proven guilty”—one must have evidence for their reliability to properly heed them—but memory experiences are. The mere fact that it does or would mnemonically seem to me that a certain kind of perceptual experience is reliable, licenses me to base beliefs on that experience, *whether or not I have any evidence for thinking this memory experience is reliable*. Steup and Markie can avoid this result by requiring the agent not just to have information about how things look, or have seemingly reliable perceptual seemings, but also to have memory data vouching for the memory data that vouched for the perceptual seeming. But of course, the standard circularity and regress worries loom.[[11]](#footnote-12)

A second way to augment seemings is to have seeming-sensation *pairs* do the justifying, instead of seemings alone (Audi, Huemer [at least implicitly; Huemer doesn’t make the seemings/sensation distinction but seems to have a combined state in mind]). There are two difficulties with this proposal.

The first is that of matching sensations with seemings. Because sensations don’t have the same contents as the seemings they are associated with, this is nontrivial. Would the Audi/Huemer proposal be that *any* sensation paired with the seeming that *p* prima facie justify the belief that *p*? Can it be a radically different sensation each time, for the same seeming? Does yours need to be at all similar to the sensationI have when it perceptually seems to me that *p*? Again, it’s easy to see how background beliefs might constrain the accepted pairings, but the resulting proposal threatens to slip into some version of coherentism or classical foundationalism.

Brogaard addresses this difficulty. Her proposal is that *S*’s seeming that *p* prima facie justifies the belief that *p* only if it is accompanied by a sensation *s*, such that (i) *s* reliably causes it to seem to *S* that *p*, and (ii) its seeming to *S* that *p* reliably indicates *p*. Brogaard’s view is therefore an externalist view, in fact, a version of indicator reliabilism (Alston 1988). Indicator reliabilism, however, is the wrong kind of reliabilism; its concessions to internalism don’t actually solve any of the problems for externalist theories more generally. Consider a modified version of Lehrer’s (1990) Truetemp case: Mr. Truetemp has (unbeknownst to him) had a device implanted in his head, which causes him to have a particular gustatory hallucination, which in turn causes it to seem to him that the ambient temperature is 102º F. Truetemp believes that it’s 102º outside, and his belief satisfies Brogaard’s theory, but the belief is not prima facie justified. Or, to slightly modify the Markie example that motivates Brogaard, the novice prospector, for no good reason or from wishful thinking, etc., forms a firm and enduring belief that *this* is what gold looks like. Lucky for him, he’s right. Now that sensation reliably causes it to seem to him that he’s looking at gold, and the seeming reliably indicates the presence of gold. But the prospector is no better off epistemically than in Markie’s original example.

A second difficulty is that, although the move reappropriates the intuitively appealing sense of ‘perceptual experience’, the problems resulting from the fractionation haven’t been solved. Why build an epistemology around seemings (as distinct from sensations) in the first place? Presumably because sensations alone can’t justify the relevant beliefs.[[12]](#footnote-13) I have just suggested that seemings alone can’t do so either, at least in an internalist framework. Why should we think that the combination can? Obviously, there are cases where two things that can’t justify alone can do so together. For example, the beliefs that *p* and that *q* aren’t by themselves evidence for the belief that (*p* & *q*), but together they are. These, however, are cases where the solitary bits don’t entail or significantly raise the probability of the target belief in isolation but do so when conjoined. What’s missing in the perceptual case, however, isn’t significant probability raising. Given *either* my current seeming or my current sensation, the probability that there’s a cup in front of me is very high, and the probability is at best only very slightly higher given the conjunction of the sensation and the seeming. What is missing in the perceptual case, rather, is evidence that is usable and appreciable by the subject as such. A sensation-seeming complex could provide this—if, for example, the sensation gave the subject a reason to deem the seeming trustworthy. But this is classical foundationalism (or coherentism) and thus no help to the modest foundationalism seemings internalism was supposed to support. Maybe there’s another way the complex could do this work, within a modest foundationalist framework, but this is something the advocate of the combined state would want to spell out and not simply assume.

**Nonperceptual Seemings**

Episodic memories are often accompanied by sensory/perceptual imagery. The visual and other images that come to mind when I think about this morning’s breakfast are similar enough to sensations that what was already said about sensations in the context of perceptual epistemology should apply here, if we simply broaden the terminology or introduce new terms. Semantic memory and intuition, however, are different. The seemings of semantic memory and intuition are not normally accompanied by anything very much like sensations, at least not the kind of rich, spatially encoded, viewpoint dependent representation of secondary qualities we associate with the senses. This fact might seem to undermine my earlier claim that perceptual seemings without sensations would be like blindsight with confidence. Memory and intuition, after all, don’t feel like blindsight, so maybe perceptual seemings without sensations wouldn’t either.

I’ll focus on semantic memory. (I think the case of a priori intuition is a close enough parallel that it doesn’t require separate discussion.) It seems to me that Stonehenge is older than the pyramids. I don’t remember where I learned this, and I don’t have any visual imagery of having read it or auditory imagery of having heard it, and although I have visual images of the monuments, the pyramids and Stonehenge look—to my mind’s eye—more or less equally old. Still, I don’t *just* have the seeming that Stonehenge is older; it also seems to me that that seeming is a memory (and not an a priori intuition, or a guess, etc.). I thus have two seemings:

*S1*: Stonehenge is older than the pyramids.

*S2*: *S1* is mnemonic.

Although it would be unusual, I could have *S1* without *S2*. Do we want to say that *S1*, in that case, prima facie justifies me in believing that Stonehenge is older than the pyramids? *S1* alone *would* feel like blindsight, and it’s again unlikely that most internalists would say yes. Instead, they might either give up the strict statement of seemings internalism, conceding that seeming that *p* is not sufficient for prima facie justification, or qualify the type of seeming they have in mind, to include only those combined seemings that include first order seemings and second order seemings about the provenance of the former.[[13]](#footnote-14)

A classical foundationalist can claim that the combined *S1-S2* seeming justifies while *S1* alone does not, because the agent needs some reason to think *S1* is reliable, a reason that *S2* helps to provide. This provides an internalist theory, but it abandons the central modest foundationalist thesis that we don’t need justified beliefs about our experiences in order for them to justify beliefs. A reliabilist, on the other hand, can claim that when *S1* is the result of a reliable memory process it is sufficient to justify the relevant belief, whether it seems to be a mnemonic seeming or not. (The reliabilist can also hold that when we are being unusually reflective, we also enjoy the kind of justification just described by the classical foundationalist.) This offers a modest foundationalist theory of memory, though of course one that an internalist won’t find attractive.

Of course, one can *claim* that the combined seeming is sufficient to justify while *S1* alone is not, thus endorsing internalism and modest foundationalism at the same time. What is unclear, to me at least, is whether there is any convincing rationale for that claim. *S1* is already an internal state, in both the mentalist and access internalist senses of ‘internal’. To require the combined seeming without endorsing classical foundationalism strikes me as an attempt to mollify a certain internalist intuition without endorsing the classical foundationalism this intuition demands.

However these issues are resolved, there are a number of other beliefs that ought to be covered by a principle like (3) above but which are neither perceptual beliefs nor memory beliefs nor a priori intuitions. I believe that there are more mosquitos in my neighborhood than cats; I believe that standing just so on my desk drawer would be dangerous; I believe that my friend would like this new band I’ve just heard. We can stipulate that these beliefs were never stored in memory; obviously they aren’t a priori. They are in some sense causally dependent on other things I believe, but it is not obvious that they are epistemologically based on these things. If challenged, I wouldn’t be able to say which of my other beliefs give rational support to these, and if I had to specify which of these were my actual (causally relevant) reasons for holding these beliefs, I would be guessing. Rather, these beliefs—these “a posteriori intuitions”—just *seem to me* to be true.

At least some such a posteriori intuitions are justified, and a seemings epistemology is well situated to account for this justification. Seemings *internalism*, however, is not up to the task. Even if these are good, other a posteriori intuitions are bad, and seemings internalism has no good account of the difference. Earlier I mentioned that it seems true to my neighbors that America is the greatest country in the world, but it only seems true to them because they’ve heard it so many times. The point of this sort of case, like the standard cognitive penetration cases, is that my neighbors don’t *know* that this is why it seems true to them, but the *fact* that this is why it seems true to them renders their belief unjustified. One possible seemings internalist response is to simply bite the bullet and claim that all of these seemings confer prima facie justification and thus that all of these beliefs are prima facie justified. (This strikes me as a better response than biting the other bullet and claiming that none of them are.) But it is worth asking whether a seemings *externalism* can do a better job with them.

**Seemings Externalism**

There are several ways to work out an externalist seemings-based epistemology. I want to sketch the way I prefer (for details, qualifications, and arguments see Lyons 2009, forthcoming).

Some cognitive subsystems are more or less modular, in Fodor’s (1983) sense. Most importantly, these are systems whose operation is fast, involuntary, largely inaccessible to introspection, and largely (though importantly, not entirely) insensitive to the agent’s occurrent beliefs, desires, and goals. The high-level conceptual outputs of these modular systems are seemings. The outputs of perceptual modules are perceptual seemings, the outputs of memory modules are memory seemings, etc. Seemings confer prima facie justification if they are the result of a reliable cognitive process. Cognitive processes are individuated finely enough that, e.g., different perceptual seemings may result from different cognitive processes. This yields the following principle:

(4) If *p* is the content of the output of one of *S*’s modular cognitive systems, and this state (i.e., this seeming that *p*) is the result of a reliable process, then *S* is prima facie justified in believing that *p*.

Note that the seeming is not said to provide a *reason* for believing that *p*. This is because, although I think that seemings are type-distinct from beliefs, I suspect that seemings are often token identical to beliefs.[[14]](#footnote-15)

The proposal is doubly external: not only is reliability necessary for prima facie justification, but it is not always introspectible whether a given item is a seeming. The outputs of modular systems will have certain properties: they will tend to incline us toward belief; they will seem to present something as true; they will persist even when we know they’re illusory; they will be cognitively spontaneous: i.e., not the result of an introspectible reasoning process. Thus, they will have the phenomenology internalists associate with their seemings, although on the present view, the phenomenology itself does not suffice to *make* something a seeming. A state could seem introspectively to be a perceptual seeming but turn out to be neither perceptual nor a seeming, depending on its causal history.[[15]](#footnote-16)

It would take much more space than I have here to work out the details, and maybe it can’t even be done (Tucker 2014), but I think (4) offers a promising way to distinguish between the seemings that do and the seemings that don’t confer prima facie justification—or better, to account for the various degrees of justification conferred by the different sorts of seeming.

Some cases of cognitive penetration of perception (e.g., Jill believes Jack is angry because he looks angry, but he only looks angry because she already believed he was angry) are cases where the fact of penetration reduces the ordinary epistemic effect of a seeming, or look. Other cases, however, do not. I might believe for no reason at all that there are snakes in the woods around me and this might penetrate perception in such a way that I am now better at spotting the snakes that are there (Lyons 2011). Here, because the penetration has an enhancing rather than a distorting effect, the epistemic efficacy of the seeming is not reduced.[[16]](#footnote-17)

Similarly, there are good and bad (or better and worse) cases of a posteriori intuition. My aforementioned belief, that standing on my desk drawer just so would be dangerous, is the result of a causal assessment process, perhaps a simulative one whereby I imagine myself standing on my desk drawer and allow my background folk physics knowledge to constrain the way the rest of the inner movie plays out, in accordance with the imaginative inputs I’ve provided and the laws of physics as I understand them (or, really more likely, as the relevant module understands them). This process will be reliable to the extent that the knowledge embodied in the relevant submodules is approximately correct, or adequate to my current environment; the process is immune to interference or disruption by extraneous factors; the inputs I’m prone to use are relevant to the question at hand; etc. I would expect that in most cases, a seeming thus produced would count as reliably formed.

My neighbor’s belief that America is the greatest country in the world, on the other hand, is based on a seeming that results from a simple process of indoctrination by repetition. Depending on the details of the process (is it sensitive to counterevidence elsewhere in the agent’s belief corpus? does it take only beliefs as inputs, or does anything the agent hears get fed in, whether she initially believed it or not? etc.) it might turn out to be highly reliable, or highly unreliable. I would expect that once we learn the details, a seeming thus produced would count as unreliably formed.

Again the details will need to be worked out, both theoretical (Lyons in prep) and empirical. But there is promise here: a reliabilist seemings externalism may well have the theoretical resources to capture our intuitions about the epistemic statuses of various seemings states. At the same time, if offers a unified view of the epistemologies of perception, memory, a priori intuition, and a posteriori intuition as well. Much of the unity derives from the fact that sensations play no important role in the epistemology of perception.

Like several of the authors here, I insist on a distinction between seemings and other experiential states involved in perception, memory, and the like. I think that the disunified conception of experience and the correlative austere conception of seemings, once we really understand the latter, deprive seemings internalism of much of its intuitive motivation---so much that we might as well endorse a seemings externalism instead. Some internalists (e.g., Tucker) won’t find anything counterintuitive about the claim that Norman, Truetemp, and blindsighters are justified, so long as they have seemings---even when the rich, sensory phenomenal character has been stripped from the seeming. I don’t know how popular such a view will be among internalists, but this volume clarifies and highlights these issues enough that we should soon begin to find out.[[17]](#footnote-18)

*University of Arkansas*

*Fayetteville, AR*

*jclyons@uark.edu*

**References:**

Alston, W. P. (1988). An internalist externalism. *Synthese* 74, 265-283.

BonJour, L. (1980). Externalist theories of empirical knowledge. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* 5, 53-73.

Chudnoff, E. (2013). *Intuition*. Oxford: OUP.

Fodor, J. A. (1983). *Modularity of mind*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Huemer, M. (2001). *Skepticism and the veil of perception*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

-----. (2007). Compassionate phenomenal conservatism. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 74, 30-55.

Lehrer, K. (1990). *Theory of knowledge*. New York: Routledge.

Lyons, J. C. (2005). Perceptual belief and nonexperiential looks. *Philosophical Perspectives* 19, 237-56.

-----. (2009). *Perception and basic beliefs: Zombies, modules, and the problem of the external world*. New York: Oxford University Press.

-----. (2011). Circularity, reliability, and the cognitive penetrability of perception”. *Philosophical Issues* 21, 289-311.

-----, forthcoming, “Perception and Intuition of Evaluative Properties,” in A. Bergquist and R. Cowan (eds.) *Evaluative Perception*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

-----. (in prep). Cognitive processes for epistemologists.

Markie, P.J. (2005). The mystery of direct perceptual justification. *Philosophical Studies* 126, 347-373.

Pollock, J. (1986). *Contemporary theories of knowledge*. Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Pryor, J. (2000). The skeptic and the dogmatist. *Nous* 34, 517-49.

Siegel, S. (2011). Cognitive penetrability and perceptual justification. *Nous* 46, 201-22.

Sosa, E. (2003). Does knowledge have foundations? In E. Sosa and L. BonJour, *Epistemic justification: Internalism vs. externalism, foundations vs. virtues*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Steup, M. (2004). Internalist reliabilism. *Philosophical Issues* 14, 403-25.

Tolhurst, W. E. (1998). Seemings. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 35, 293-302.

Tucker, C., 2010, “Why open-minded people should endorse dogmatism,” *Philosophical Perspectives* 24, 529-545.

-----. (2014). If dogmatists have a problem with cognitive penetration, you do too. *Dialectica* 68, 35-62.

Weiskrantz, L. (1986). *Blindsight: A case study and implications*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williamson, T., 2000, *Knowledge and its Limits*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

1. *Seemings and Justification: New Essays on Dogmatism and Phenomenal Conservatism* (2013). Edited by Chris Tucker. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. xi +384 pp. $74. All citations consisting of otherwise unspecified page numbers or author’s names will refer to this collection of essays. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. The internalism and foundationalism here need to be restricted to the domains the aforementioned principles cover. Because they only offer sufficient conditions for justification, they don’t prohibit e.g., reliability (as Bergmann p. 154 notes) or coherence also sufficing for the justification of some beliefs. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Pryor intends ‘dogmatism’ to be a significantly more general view, embraceable by reliabilists and anyone else who believes in justification that is both immediate and defeasible (pp. 96-7), but the term usually has the broader meaning. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Normally, in the cognitive scientific discussions, the interesting influence is not only direct, but synchronic, so that cognitive penetration and perceptual learning are kept separate. Epistemologists should keep them separate too. We will likely want to say different epistemological things about perceptual learning (which is almost always epistemically good) and cognitive penetration of perception (which is not). For brevity, I will sometimes use ‘cognitive penetration’ to refer to cognitive penetration *of perception*. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. He does refer to the wishful thinking belief as a “perceptual belief,” (p. 357), but he never insists that there is anything particularly perceptual about the *seeming*, which is the issue here. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Or at least, not as much as it would were the experience not the result of such penetration. I’ll ignore this complication in what follows. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. The various agnosias are most naturally viewed as instances of intact sensation without the seeming states that would ordinarily accompany them; seemings without their associated sensations would presumably be achievable by direct stimulation of the relevant neurons, or perhaps by somehow blocking introspective access to the earlier processing so that none of it counts as sensation (sensations, I assume, being necessarily conscious). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Tucker 2010 defends an internalism according to which blindsighters have seemings without sensations, and he doesn’t see anything counterintuitive about claiming that blindsighters are justified, provided these seemings have a strong, clear, assertive character. I am predicting, on the basis of my own internalist intuitions (I do have some!), that his view will be relatively rare among internalists. I could be wrong. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Here it is useful to suspend the sensation/seeming distinction and go with the ambiguous ‘experience.’ I *think* that Markie is thinking of sensations here and that Steup is thinking of seemings, or maybe the conjunction of seemings and their respective sensations. Another difference between the two is that Steup only requires the agent to have the experience and the evidence of reliability, while Markie further requires that the evidence of reliability mediate or explain the agent’s doxastic response to the experience. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. On the other hand, Markie explicitly states that he wants perceptual beliefs (about external objects) to be immediately justified and argues that he satisfies this desideratum by having the perceptual belief be based entirely on the experiential state and not on any beliefs. But the perceptual belief’s justification still depends on the agent’s being justified in believing that the experience is a reliable indicator. The perceptual belief isn’t based on this in a causal sense of basing, but surely few classical foundationalists ever had this sense of basing in mind. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Steup (148) indicates that he does indeed think that the memory data needs to itself be vouched for. He addresses a circularity worry, and though I don’t find his response convincing, I can’t pursue it here. Chris Tucker points out to me that elsewhere, Steup (2004) invokes just a single mnemonic seeming (that my apparent memories [including, presumably, this one] are reliable). This might ameliorate the regress worry, but it only makes the circularity worry worse. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Why not? Because one can have a sensation of *p* without it seeming to her as if *p*, and in these cases, she has no prima facie justification for *p* (Lyons 2009, Tucker 2010). Suppose, to take a simple example, that my sensation represents the hen as having 36 speckles but it doesn’t seem to me to have 36 speckles—only many speckles, or more than 20ish, or so. I wouldn’t be justified in believing that it had 36 speckles (Sosa 2003, Tucker 2010). Lengthier arguments can be found in Lyons 2009, chapter 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. I can now articulate another problem with Brogaard’s view. Her view requires a sensation-like experience that accompanies and reliably causes the seeming whose content matches that of the justificandum belief. If there’s an experience accompanying semantic memory seemings or a priori intuition seemings, however, it is something like *S2*. If we think of *S2* as having an indexical content (e.g., ‘*that* seeming is mnemonic’), then it is something that accompanies *all* my apparent memory seemings and thus doesn’t reliably cause any of them. If we think of it as having a rigid content (e.g., ‘my seeming that Stonehenge is older than the pyramids is mnemonic’) then (a) it’s not at all clear that there is a distinct such state, and (b) it trivializes her appeal to sensations in the perceptual case, for any apparently perceptual seeming is going to have some such analogue of *S2*, and we won’t need actual sensations (of color, perspectival shape, etc.) to buttress the seemings. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Thus, although I agree with most seemings theorists in thinking that seemings are a distinct kind of propositional attitude, I think there’s something to be said in favor of a doxastic view of seemings (Williamson 2000, Conee, Brown, Tooley). My view is a compromise between these two camps. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. The reliability requirement rules out both access internalism and mentalism; the etiological constraint on seemings rules out access internalism, but perhaps not mentalism, depending on how narrowly “mental” is being construed. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. McGrath supplements seemings internalism with the claim, roughly, that if a seeming has a history that would make that seeming irrational were it a belief, then that seeming does not confer the ordinary justification. Although I lack the space to discuss it here, I doubt that this proposal will be able to handle such innocuous cases of cognitive penetration, if it can handle the invidious cases it was designed to handle. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. Thanks to Chris Tucker for helpful comments on an earlier draft. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)