

SUBJECTIVISM ABOUT NORMATIVITY  
AND THE NORMATIVITY OF INTENTIONAL STATES

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Norms of various sorts—ethical, cognitive, and aesthetic, to name a few—play an important role in human life. Not surprisingly, then, philosophers have often concerned themselves with the status of norms. One view that has sometimes been proposed is what I will call “subjectivism about normativity” (SN). By this I mean the view that whatever norms there are are not “in the nature of things” but are instead imposed by us.<sup>1</sup>

That the truth or falsity of SN is an important matter seems clear enough. For example, if SN is true, then our attempts to conform to norms are never attempts to conform to an order independent of someone’s acts of valuing. This might be thought to imply a deflationary attitude towards normativity. In other words, it might be thought that SN, the view that norms are *always* imposed, amounts to the view that norms are *merely* imposed, with deleterious consequences for the significance of human life.

Regardless of whether its implications for normativity are deflationary, however, SN is an untenable position. SN implies a certain view of intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit. If one rejects that view, then one has a *modus tollens* argument against SN. If, on the other hand, one accepts that view, one is led to a vicious regress that makes SN impossible. Either way, SN is untenable.

First, I make clear what I understand by SN. Second, I make a point about intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit, namely, that they are essentially norm-subservient. Third, I show that SN implies that such intentional states are what they are only by virtue of having a norm imposed on them. Fourth, I show that whether this implication is accepted or rejected, SN turns out to be false. I conclude by summing up the argument and making clear what has and has not been shown.

CLARIFYING SUBJECTIVISM ABOUT NORMATIVITY

To avoid misunderstanding, I will explain what I mean by “subjectivism about normativity.” One way of explaining it would simply be to say that it is the sort of view put

forward by J. L. Mackie.<sup>2</sup> However, it is better to spell things out in detail, beginning with a distinction between two ways in which things can be involved with normativity.

One way to be involved with norms is by establishing them. For example, someone who makes up a game establishes certain moves as right and others as wrong by decreeing rules that constitute the game. Similarly, someone who decides to travel to New York establishes a framework within which certain trains count as wrong trains and certain others as right trains. Let us call such involvement with normativity *norm-imposition*.

It is important to think of norm-imposition in a suitably flexible way. It seems clear enough that someone can impose norms consciously and directly by, for example, establishing rules or desiring something. This could take place in the mind of an individual or as part of a widespread social consensus; it could even be the case that human beings are hard-wired to impose certain norms. It also seems possible to impose norms unconsciously and indirectly—for example, if someone desires X, and if Y is helpful for getting X, the person who desires X, thereby directly imposing value on X, might be said to have at the same time indirectly imposed value on Y.

Norm-imposition is to be distinguished from *norm-subservience*. Within the context of a game, certain moves are legal and others illegal. The moves are involved with norms not by imposing them but by being subject or subservient to them. Similarly, trains traveling to New York are, within the above-mentioned framework, “right” trains, while trains not traveling to New York are “wrong” trains; these trains are involved with norms by being subject to them, not by establishing them.

Now, it would be implausible to claim that there is no norm-imposition and no norm-subservience anywhere to be found. People do impose norms on things, and therefore, if for no other reason, things are subject to norms. The question at issue here concerns that phrase “if for no other reason”: is there any other reason why things are subject to norms? *Some* norm-subservience is dependent on, or relative to, norm-imposition; the question is whether *all* norm-subservience is relative or dependent in this way. And what I am calling “subjectivism about normativity” is the view that *all* norm-subservience is relative to norm-imposition.

SN can be explained further by recalling Searle’s discussion of the distinction between “intrinsic” and “observer-relative” features of things. Consider a certain thing made out of plastic and metal that one finds in one’s toolbox. This thing is made of plastic and metal

intrinsically, whether or not anyone thinks of it that way or takes a certain attitude towards it. But it is (say) a screwdriver only relative to the thoughts and purposes of the people who have made it, used it, sold it, and so forth.<sup>3</sup> Using this distinction, we can ask in a new way the question we asked before. We can ask, “Is the norm-subservience of things always observer-relative, or is it sometimes intrinsic?” And SN is the view that the property of being norm-subservient is always observer-relative, never intrinsic.<sup>4</sup>

(For the sake of clarity, let me emphasize that I am contrasting “intrinsic” with “observer-relative” in the sense just explained and *not* with “instrumental”; in other words, I am not primarily concerned with the contrast between what is “instrumental” in the sense of being a means and what is “intrinsic” in the sense of being an end.)

### INTENTIONALITY AND NORMATIVITY

In this section of the paper, I turn to intentionality and argue that some forms of intentionality involve norm-subservience. This sets the stage for understanding SN’s implications for intentionality.

As is well known, intentional states are mental states that are “about” something; for example, the belief that the cat is on the mat is about the cat on the mat. What is easy to miss, however, is that normativity, and, in particular, norm-subservience, is an important element of some intentional states. Before explaining this, I should make two things clear. First, I am using “state” as a catch-all term, without meaning to imply that it is wrong to speak of, say, intentional “acts.” Second, I am taking no stand on the ontology of intentional states (for example, whether they are brain states).

Now, then, let us focus on intentional states that have what is usually called the “mind-to-world direction of fit.” These are the states that aim (so to speak) to match or map onto the world; examples include belief and perception. Such states are contrasted with states that aim (so to speak) to get the world to match them; examples include desire and hope. And the point of this section is that intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit are norm-subservient. The easiest way to make this point is to focus on a relatively simple example, namely, belief. After the norm-subservience of belief is established, I will extend the point to all other intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit.

Beliefs are, essentially, subservient to the norm of truth. Beliefs ought to be true, and being subservient to this norm is a necessary condition of something's being a belief. This becomes apparent when we compare belief with something similar to it, namely, the grasping of a content. Consider the difference between the following two intentional states: (a) believing that there is a finite number of primes and (b) simply grasping the content "there is a finite number of primes." Although these states have the same content, someone in state (b) does not have a problem, whereas someone in state (a) does, namely, the problem of having a false belief. But nothing can be problematic unless it is subservient to some norm. The reason why (a) is problematic is that beliefs are supposed to be true, and the reason why (b) is not problematic is that grasping a content is not supposed to be true (or false). Believing is subject to the norm of truth, while merely grasping some content is not. As an analogy, consider the case of drawing. Suppose that Thomas tries to make a realistic drawing of a particular dog; his drawing is subject to a norm that says that drawings ought to look like what they are drawings of. But then suppose instead that he just idly sketches a dog. In this case, his sketch is not subject to a norm that says it should look like any particular dog. Even if it turns out by chance to be a very good likeness of some dog that he has never seen, we would not say that Thomas was drawing a picture of that dog. Believing is like drawing a picture of something, and grasping a content is more like idle sketching.

This might appear to be a circular argument. If I say that having a false belief is a "problem," am I not assuming that beliefs are subject to the norm of truth? If so, then to argue from there to the conclusion that beliefs are subject to the norm of truth is question-begging. The reply to this objection is not that I am giving a non-circular argument but that I am not giving an argument in the strict sense at all. I am not arguing from the fact that false beliefs are problematic to the conclusion that beliefs are subservient to the norm of truth; that would indeed be circular. Instead, I am trying to bring out the basic point that being subservient to the norm of truth is part of what belief is. That is what the contrast with content-grasping is for: when we consider belief by itself, we are likely to miss its norm-subservience, but when we compare it with something that it is similar to but different from, its norm-subservience becomes salient. Seeing this point is not drawing a conclusion so much as it is having an insight into the nature of belief. Some things are not argued to but are instead the starting point of argument; this is one.<sup>5</sup>

I would like to consider more objections, but first I need to say something about intrinsicness. Although I have said that beliefs are *essentially* subservient to the norm of truth, that nothing can be a belief without being subservient to the norm of truth, I have made no claim about whether beliefs are *intrinsically* beliefs or *intrinsically* norm-subservient; perhaps they receive their status by means of some act of norm-imposition. Consider chess-pieces. Nothing can be a rook without being subject to the rule that says it may move along only and all open ranks and files, but from this it does not follow that there are pieces of wood or plastic that are intrinsically subject to that rule. Indeed, we know that nothing is intrinsically subject to that rule. Something is a rook only in virtue of being subjected to that rule by some norm-imposer. Likewise, then, nothing can be a belief without being subservient to the norm of truth, but from this it does not follow that anything is intrinsically subservient to that norm. The issue of intrinsicness will become very important in the next section.

Now for some objections. The first objection states that the human “design plan” could be such that some beliefs are not supposed to be true but instead have some other role to play. For example, it might be part of the human design plan for humans with serious illnesses to overestimate their chances of survival in those cases in which optimism makes survival more likely.<sup>6</sup> If this is right, then my claim that subservience to the norm of truth is a necessary condition of being a belief might seem to imply something very implausible, namely, that such survival-enhancing mental states are not really beliefs. This conclusion can be avoided, however, in the following way. One could say, first, that the wishful thinking of a sick person is still subject to the norm of truth and that it is, therefore, *per se* bad for this wishful thinking to be erroneous. Then, one could hold that the design plan, rather than removing this norm, tolerates the evil of false belief for the sake of the believer’s health.

Another objection runs as follows. My claim is that truth is better than falsehood, but perhaps this is not the point. Perhaps truth’s competitor is not falsehood but something else. Stephen Stich, for example, holds that the truth of belief is to be thought of in terms of an interpretation function that maps a belief (for Stich, a brain state) onto something with a truth-value, say, a proposition; if, to continue with the example of propositions, a given brain state gets mapped onto a true proposition, then it is true. But any interpretation function we pick will be just one of many possible interpretation functions, each of which will be both idiosyncratic (devoid of properties that make it especially worthy of adoption) and partial (leaving many brain

states out of the truth-game altogether). The interpretation function that we happen to use is called “truth,” but there are many others, TRUTH\*, TRUTH\*\*, and so on, and it is not at all clear why we should prefer truth to its competitors.<sup>7</sup> On this basis, one could argue as follows: if there is nothing special about truth, then there is nothing special about subservience to truth as a norm. Why not say that beliefs (or belief-like states) are subservient to the norm of TRUTH\*, or the norm of TRUTH\*\*? Or, why not say that beliefs are subservient to truth but that BELIEFS\* are subservient to TRUTH\*, and so on? On this second version, which seems closer to what Stich actually says, there is a large range of belief-like items, none of which should be given special consideration.

To this objection I would reply as follows. The interpretation functions that Stich talks about are better understood as various ways of assigning content to beliefs, not as various versions of belief and truth. For example, on one interpretation function, the belief that water is wet would be true just in case H<sub>2</sub>O is wet; on another interpretation function, the belief that water is wet would be true just in case either H<sub>2</sub>O or XYZ is wet. The difference between the two cases, however, is not a difference in the meaning of “true” but a difference in the meaning of “water.” In either case, truth should be thought of univocally: belief *p* is true just in case \_\_\_\_\_. Choice of an interpretation function does indeed affect whether *p* is true, but not because this choice affects what belief or truth is. Choice of an interpretation function affects whether *p* is true because it affects something about *p*, namely, its content and truth-conditions. Therefore, although there may be difficulty in deciding what the contents of our beliefs are, it does not follow that there is a difficulty in deciding what it means for them to be beliefs or what it means for them to be true. Whatever one might want to say in the end about Stich’s ideas, then, they pose no objection to the claim that belief is subservient to the norm of truth.<sup>8</sup>

A variation on the objection just discussed can be developed on the basis of remarks by Stephen Jacobson. Responding to Stich’s discussion of truth, TRUTH\*, etc., Jacobson says that these are not really alternatives to truth but that we can rehabilitate Stich’s argument by comparing truth with items such as “is rational,” “is consistent,” “has a probability of .9,” and so on. In other words, one could argue that truth is nothing special because it might be better for beliefs to be rational, consistent, and so on. The rehabilitated argument can be used to object to my claim that belief is truth-subservient. Perhaps subservience to the norm of truth is not what makes belief different from content-grasping; perhaps it is subservience to the norm of

rationality, or the norm of consistency, or something else. In reply, I will say two things. First, I could concede this point and still carry on with the main argument; as long as belief is subservient to *some* norm, we can go on to raise the question of SN's implications for belief's norm-subservience. Second, as Jacobson himself goes on to say, that belief might be subservient to other norms is no reason to think that it is not subservient to the norm of truth; our beliefs ought to be rational, consistent, and so on, but they also ought to be true.<sup>9</sup>

It is worth pausing for a moment to compare the account of belief's norm-subservience given here with the normativity of the mental discussed by authors such as Davidson and Kim. They have made the point that we cannot attribute beliefs to some person P, or determine which beliefs to attribute to P, without assuming that P is more or less rational, consistent, and so on.<sup>10</sup> Insofar as they hold that beliefs and the like are essentially norm-subservient, their concerns are similar to mine here. At the same time, however, there are some differences. They are concerned primarily with the question of what we have to assume when treating someone as a believer. Further, they claim we must assume that the putative believer actually is, to a significant degree, rational, consistent, in possession of true beliefs, and so on. By contrast, I am speaking about the nature of beliefs and believers themselves, apart from the question of what we must assume in order to treat someone as a believer or something as a belief; what we have to assume in order to treat someone as a believer or something as a belief need not be the same as what makes someone a believer or what makes something a belief.<sup>11</sup> Further, I am not saying that nothing is a belief unless it actually is true, but only that nothing is a belief unless it is subject to the norm of truth; it is essential to a belief that it ought to be true, but that point alone does not rule out even the possibility that all beliefs are false.

Belief's norm-subservience is just one example of the norm-subservience of intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit. The very notion of direction of fit includes this norm-subservience, because the whole point is that the intentional states *ought* to fit the world. Perception is another good example: the difference between, for example, seeing and a merely having a visual experience is that something is wrong if seeing is unveridical, whereas merely having a visual experience, such as might happen if we conjure up a picture in our minds, is not subject to the norm of perceptual veridicality. Even the mental activity of merely grasping a content, the activity with which belief was contrasted earlier, has its own norm-subservience. It is true enough, as we saw, that nothing is wrong when we grasp a false thought, but something is

wrong when we try to grasp an incoherent thought. Such an intentional state is subject to the norm of coherence.

To summarize this section, then, beliefs and other intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit are essentially norm-subservient. They are subservient to perceptual or doxastic or epistemic (not moral) norms. Nothing is a belief unless it ought to be true, nothing is a case of perception unless it ought to be veridical, and so on. To avoid repetition of the cumbersome phrase “intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit,” I will henceforth refer to such states as “mind-to-world states” or “mind-to-world intentional states.” Now let us turn to the question of the relationship between SN and the norm-subservience of mind-to-world states.

#### WHAT SUBJECTIVISM ABOUT NORMATIVITY IMPLIES ABOUT MIND-TO-WORLD INTENTIONAL STATES

SN, the view that all norm-subservience is observer-relative, implies something important about mind-to-world intentional states. I will first speak of belief and then point out that what SN implies for belief applies to other mind-to-world states.

As has been pointed out, beliefs are, essentially, norm-subservient. If something is a belief, then it is norm-subservient. But from this it does not follow that beliefs are intrinsically norm-subservient. In other words, it is possible to hold that beliefs are essentially norm-subservient but also that they are norm-subservient only in an observer-relative way. And this would imply that the mental states that are beliefs are beliefs only in an observer-relative way. There are beliefs in the world, to be sure, but only because someone has first valued truth and imposed it as a norm on certain mental states, thereby making them beliefs.

The point is not that something is a belief only if someone believes it is a belief. The point is that something is a belief only if someone imposes on it the norm of truth. Let B be a certain mental state. B cannot be a belief unless it is subservient to the norm of truth, unless it is good for it to be true and bad for it to be false. Now, on the assumption that all norm-subservience is observer-relative, it follows that B cannot be subservient to the norm of truth unless that norm-subservience has been imposed upon it. But that means that the fact that B fulfills one of the necessary conditions of being a belief is observer-relative, and that means in



turn that B's being a belief is observer-relative. Nothing, then, is a belief intrinsically, but only in an observer-relative way.

This holds good no matter how one considers the norm-imposition to occur. One could say that it is up to individual choice whether to take truth as valuable or not. Or one could say that it is a matter of broad social convention—perhaps even universal consensus—that truth is to be valued. Or, to consider a third variation, one could say that it is somehow part of human nature to value truth, perhaps because this is how we have evolved. On that last proposal, everyone would value truth and be unable to help doing so, but subservience to the norm of truth would still depend on human imposition. It might also be held that the norm of truth is assigned indirectly. For example, suppose we value food, and suppose that having thoughts that match the world is useful for getting food. Our valuing of food has, one might say, indirectly made our thoughts subservient to the norm of truth, because it is now valuable for our thoughts to be true.<sup>12</sup> No matter how one understands the norm-subservience in question, however, the result is the same.

SN implies that beliefs are beliefs only in an observer-relative way. And the same applies to all other mind-to-world states. For instance, if all norms are imposed, then instances of seeing or hearing (as distinct from instances of having visual or auditory experiences) are what they are only in an observer-relative way.

#### IS SUBJECTIVISM ABOUT NORMATIVITY TENABLE?

SN implies that mind-to-world intentional states are observer-relative. I myself consider this an excessive price to pay for SN. It means giving up a key part of our common-sense, pre-philosophical view of the world. It seems utterly wrong to say, for example, that the fact that something is a belief is not something true about it intrinsically, but instead only a result of how someone considers it. For those who agree that this is the wrong way to understand mind-to-world states, it is possible to construct a *modus tollens* argument against SN: if SN is true, then mind-to-world states are observer-relative; but mind-to-world states are not observer-relative; therefore, SN is false.<sup>13</sup>

But what if the advocate of SN were to agree to pay the price by accepting the observer-relativity of mind-to-world states? There are at least two ways of trying to convince such a

philosopher of the inadequacy of SN. First, one could directly address the issue of whether mind-to-world states are observer-relative. I will not take that approach here. Second, one could accept, for the sake of argument, that mind-to-world states are observer-relative and then argue that, on that assumption, SN turns out to be false anyway. To such an argument I now turn.

The first step in the argument is to see that acts of norm-imposition involve mind-to-world intentional states. We can see this most clearly in the case of direct, conscious acts of norm-imposition. Such acts of norm-imposition involve prior beliefs about the things on which norms are to be imposed. For example, consider someone who is inventing a game. Such a person cannot impose value on (say) the act of kicking a ball through a certain hoop without having the prior belief that there are such things as balls and hoops and kicks.

The same general principle, that norm-imposition requires mind-to-world intentional states, holds good for indirect acts of norm-imposition as well. For example, let us consider again the idea that if Y is useful for getting X, someone who desires X indirectly imposes value on Y by desiring X. In such a case, the norm-imposer could be imposing norms on Y without having any awareness of Y, but the norm-imposer could not be doing this without having a belief about X or at any rate some mind-to-world state about X. The desire for food, for example, might confer value on being near an orchard, even if one knows nothing of orchards, but the desire for food requires some mind-to-world state having food as its object: one cannot desire food without having had a perception of it or at any rate some idea or thought of it.<sup>14</sup>

So norm-imposition requires mind-to-world intentional states. Such intentional states are logically (not necessarily temporally) prior to acts of norm-imposition, whether direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious. At first sight, that might seem to pose no problem for SN, but when we remember that mind-to-world states are norm-subservient, a very large problem comes into view. If, as SN requires, the norm-subservience of mind-to-world states is imposed, then every mind-to-world state's existence as a mind-to-world state is dependent on the mental acts that impose a norm on it. But those norm-imposing acts themselves presuppose mind-to-world states. This leads to an infinite regress.

For example, to impose the norm of truth on a mental state and thereby make it a belief, one has to have some mind-to-world intentional state: a belief that there are such things as mental states, for example, or maybe just some mind-to-world state about something for which true thoughts happen to be useful. But this mind-to-world intentional state that one must have

cannot itself be a mind-to-world state except in virtue of a norm's having been imposed on *it*. And *that* act of norm-imposition requires still another mind-to-world intentional state. Thus SN implies that every mind-to-world state requires some logically prior mind-to-world state. In fact, every mind-to-world state requires the prior existence of an infinite number of mind-to-world states.

One might try to use this regress as an argument against the view that mind-to-world states are observer-relative, but the observer-relativity or observer-independence of mind-to-world states is not the theme of this paper. So let us focus on what this regress implies for SN. It implies that no one can impose values on anything. Someone who imposes values on something must first have certain mind-to-world states. In order for that person to have such mind-to-world states, however, truth (or veridicality or whatever) must first be valued by someone. But that act of valuing must itself involve prior mind-to-world states, which depend on still other prior acts of valuing, and so on *ad infinitum*. The result is that acts of norm-imposition can't ever get started. SN, the view that all normativity is imposed, implies that normativity can never be imposed. SN implies its own negation.

## CONCLUSION

I have argued as follows. Beliefs and other intentional states with the mind-to-world direction of fit are, essentially, norm-subservient; nothing can be such an intentional state unless it is subservient to a norm. But if we hold that all norm-subservience is relative to norm-imposition, it follows that these mind-to-world intentional states have their status as mind-to-world states only relative to someone's norm-imposing acts. If we take this to be too high a price to pay, we must say that SN is false. If, on the other hand, we agree to pay this price, SN still turns out to be false, as the regress argument shows. SN says that all norm-subservience is imposed. But this imposing depends on mind-to-world states, and mind-to-world states are norm-subservient and thus (according to SN) themselves the results of prior acts of norm-imposition. For any act of norm-imposition to take place, there must first be an infinite number of acts of norm-imposition, which means that no act of norm-imposition can ever take place.

Norm-imposition rests on norm-subservience, just because norm-imposition rests on mind-to-world states and mind-to-world states are essentially norm-subservient. Trivially, the

regress has to stop with something that is unimposed; non-trivially, the fact that norm-imposition presupposes something norm-subservient means that the regress has to stop not only with something unimposed but also with something norm-subservient. At the basis of norm-imposition there is intrinsic, unimposed norm-subservience.

I have not, of course, claimed that all norm-subservience is intrinsic. The fact that there are games, languages, and the like shows that much norm-subservience is imposed. Nor have I made any claims about how intrinsic normativity is grounded—the argument against SN is neutral on that matter. Figuring out which cases of norm-subservience are imposed and which are intrinsic, and figuring out the ground or grounds of intrinsic normativity, are topics for other inquiries.<sup>15</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I leave aside the question of whether norms can be imposed by non-humans, although the account I give of norm-imposition is consistent with that possibility.

<sup>2</sup> Although “subjectivism” is not Mackie’s preferred term. See his *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (New York: Penguin, 1977) chap. 1, which is helpful in distinguishing the view I am discussing from other views that one might want to call “subjectivism”; also not to be neglected is the extension of Mackie’s principles to the case of aesthetic normativity in his “Aesthetic Judgements—A Logical Study,” in his *Persons and Values*, ed. Joan Mackie and Penelope Mackie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 60-76. Still another useful explication of subjectivism is Steve F. Sapontzis, “Groundwork for a Subjective Theory of Ethics,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 27 (1990) 27-38.

<sup>3</sup> John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (New York: The Free Press, 1995) 9-13.

<sup>4</sup> Searle himself appears to be committed to SN (see, for example, *Construction*, pp. 14-15), although this sits uncomfortably with some of his other views. For analysis of Searle’s position, see my “Intentionality, Normativity, and Problem for Searle,” forthcoming in *Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review*.

<sup>5</sup> For another author who holds that beliefs are supposed to be true, see David Velleman, “On the Aim of Belief,” in his J. David Velleman, *The Possibility of Practical Reason* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000) 244-81.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 11-17, 40-42.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Stich, *The Fragmentation of Reason* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1990) 101-27. For an argument that these various conceptions are not in fact competitors, see Nenad Mišcevic, “Relativism-Pragmatism and the Goals of Cognition,” *Pragmatics and Cognition* 2 (1994) 111-131.

<sup>8</sup> For a similar analysis, see Stephen Jacobson, “In Defense of Truth and Rationality,” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 73 (1992) 345-46, n. 14; Alvin Goldman, “Stephen P. Stich: *The Fragmentation of Reason*,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 51 (1991) 189-93, esp.

191; and Gilbert Harman, “Justification, Truth, Goals and Pragmatism: Comments on Stich’s *The Fragmentation of Reason*,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 51 (1991) 195-99, esp. 196.

<sup>9</sup> See Jacobson, “Defense of Truth,” 338-41 and 345-46, n. 14.

<sup>10</sup> See Donald Davidson, “Mental Events,” “Psychology as Philosophy,” and “The Material Mind” in *Essays on Actions & Events* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) 207-260; Jaegwon Kim, “What is ‘Naturalized Epistemology’?,” in his *Supervenience and Mind* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 216-36, esp. 227-230.

<sup>11</sup> Kim, at least, appears to share this more ontological concern, although his argument does not require him to develop it. See Kim, “Naturalized Epistemology,” 229.

<sup>12</sup> This way of understanding the instrumentalist theory of truth’s value is expressed well in Hilary Kornblith, “Epistemic Normativity,” *Synthese* 94 (1993) 357-76. A terminological point: Kornblith contrasts “instrumental” value with “intrinsic” value, whereas (as noted above) when I say “intrinsic” I mean to draw a contrast with what is observer-relative.

<sup>13</sup> It is instructive to compare this argument with the one proposed by Frank Jackson in his “Non-Cognitivism, Normativity, Belief” (*Ratio [New Series]* 12 (1999) 420-35); Jackson argues against non-cognitivism (not subjectivism) about normativity on the grounds that it implies that there are no beliefs at all (even observer-relative ones).

<sup>14</sup> For discussion, see Edmund Husserl, *Logische Untersuchungen V*, §41, in his *Gesammelte Werke* (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1984), Band 19/1, pp. 514-5.

<sup>15</sup> I am grateful for anonymous comments and also for comments from Anne-Marie Gorman, Jon Jacobs, Mark Murphy, and Linda Zagzebski.