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# The Dogmatism Puzzle Undone

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## ABSTRACT

According to the dogmatism puzzle, for any S and any p, if S knows that p, then she is entitled to be dogmatic about p, and so disregard any evidence against p, for she knows that (or is in a position to know that) that evidence is misleading. But this seems clearly problematically dogmatic. The standard solution to the dogmatism puzzle involves appealing to the view that acquiring new evidence (even misleading evidence) can undermine one's knowledge that p. That is why one cannot rightly disregard any future evidence against p. This solution to the dogmatism puzzle has come to be called "the defeat solution." Maria Lasonen-Aarnio has recently argued, however, that the defeat solution leaves unsolved a partial defeat version of the dogmatism puzzle, where some subject acquires *weak* misleading evidence against p, but, since it is weak, it does not rob her of knowledge that p. Lasonen-Aarnio argues that solving this partial defeat version of the dogmatism puzzle requires those who endorse the defeasibility of knowledge to either go dogmatist or reject an extremely plausible principle that she calls "Entitlement" (roughly, for any S and any e, if S knows that evidence e is misleading, then S can rightly disregard e). In this paper, however, I argue that defeasibilists face no such challenge from any version of the dogmatism puzzle, since the dogmatism puzzle, in both its original and partial defeat form, rests on an assumption that we have very good reason to think is mistaken. Specifically, the assumption that, for any S and any p, if S knows that p, then S knows (or is in a position to know) that *any* evidence against p is misleading. I further argue that rejecting this assumption also yields a neat solution to the dogmatism puzzle involving intention originally proposed by Saul Kripke and recently adapted by R.E. Fraser.

## 1 | Introduction

Harman (1973, 148) proposes the following apparent epistemological puzzle that he attributes to Saul Kripke:

> If I know that h is true, I know that any evidence against h is evidence against something that is true; so I know that such evidence is misleading. But I should disregard evidence that I know is misleading. So, once I know that h is true, I am in a position to disregard any future evidence that seems to tell against h. This is paradoxical, because I'm never in a position simply to disregard any future evidence though I do know a great many different things.

This has come to be known as the dogmatism puzzle. Taking evidence against something true to be misleading evidence, then, according to the dogmatism puzzle, for any subject S and any proposition h, if S knows that h, then she knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h is misleading.[1] "Is one not then equipped to rightly disregard such evidence?" (Lasonen-Aarnio 2014, 417). If so, this seems problematically dogmatic. After all, knowledge does not shut off inquiry in this way, for example, maybe S ought to lower her credence in h in the face of new evidence. If she is not equipped to

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rightly disregard such evidence, though, then this seems in direct conflict with an extremely plausible principle (hereafter, Entitlement): For any S and any e, if S knows that some evidence e is misleading, then she is rationally entitled to disregard e.[2] A nice pickle to be sure.

Now, one standard, very plausible solution to the so-called dogmatism puzzle (that can be traced back to Harman 1973, 149) is that if S knows that h and she acquires evidence against h, then she loses her knowledge that h. This is why S cannot rightly disregard any evidence against h. This solution to the dogmatism puzzle has come to be called "the defeat solution."

Recently, though, the defeat solution has come under criticism from Lasonen-Aarnio (2014). She criticizes the defeat solution on the grounds that there are partial defeat versions of the dogmatism puzzle where S acquires weak misleading evidence against h, but S retains her knowledge in h in the face of such weak misleading evidence. In such versions of the dogmatism puzzle, Lasonen-Aarnio (2014, 427–431) argues that the defeat solution requires that the subject lower her credence in the target proposition when confronted with weak misleading evidence, even though the subject both knows the target proposition and knows that the weak evidence is misleading. So, Lasonen-Aarnio (2014, 429) argues that defenders of the defeat solution must reject Entitlement in the face of partial defeat versions of the dogmatism puzzle. But Lasonen-Aarnio takes this to be "a severe cost" of the defeat solution (Brown 2018, 120), since "the thought that a subject is not entitled to disregard evidence she *knows* to be misleading sounds bizarre" (Lasonen-Aarnio 2014, 429).[3]

In this paper, I suggest a new solution to the dogmatism puzzle. It is one that is not susceptible to Lasonen-Aarnio's partial defeat cases, and that avoids rejecting Entitlement or going dogmatist, all the while preserving what is right about the defeat solution. That solution involves recognizing that the dogmatism puzzle itself is built on sand since it crucially rests on a mistaken assumption or premise.

Now, to begin to see that the dogmatism puzzle rests on a mistaken assumption, reflect on what makes the defeat solution attractive as a solution to Harman's original dogmatism puzzle: Why cannot we just rightly disregard any evidence against what we know? Because when we acquire counterevidence, it might very well change the evidential situation for us, since we are not usually in a good enough epistemic position to conclude that the counterevidence is misleading when we are confronted with it. There is real insight here. But there is another insight that is usually overlooked with respect to the dogmatism puzzle. It is that we are usually not in a good enough epistemic position *to begin with* simply by having some routine knowledge to conclude that the evidence against the known proposition is misleading. This hints at a clear-cut strategy for undermining the so-called dogmatism puzzle. It suggests that one of the main assumptions or premises of the dogmatism puzzle is mistaken, specifically, it does not follow from one's knowledge that h that they know (or are in a position to know) that evidence against h is misleading.

In this paper, I develop a line of argument with the aim of showing that we have good reason to think that such an assumption is clearly mistaken. There are several different construals of the mistaken assumption, but I argue that the assumption remains clearly mistaken across these different construals. If I am right about this, then the dogmatism puzzle turns out to have a simple solution, since it crucially turns on an assumption (or premise) that we have good reason to think is false. Thus, neither Harman's original dogmatism puzzle nor Lasonen-Aarnio's partial defeat version of the dogmatism puzzle put any serious pressure on defeasibilists to either reject Entitlement or go dogmatist.

## 2 | The Lynchpin

Let us turn now to examine in more detail the problematic assumption at issue in the dogmatism puzzle. In setting out the dogmatism puzzle, Harman (1973, 148) says, "If I know that h is true, I know that any evidence against h is...misleading." In developing her version of the dogmatism puzzle, Lasonen-Aarnio (2014, 417) claims that "if one knows h, one is in a position to know that" evidence against h "is misleading."

Notice, then, that one of the most crucial pieces of the dogmatism puzzle is for any S, any t, and any h: If, at t, S knows that h, then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h is misleading. Without this piece of the puzzle, there is no dogmatism puzzle at all, since, *inter alia*, it is this piece in conjunction with Entitlement that generates the allegedly paradoxical result that knowledge implies dogmatism. Both the original and partial defeat versions of the dogmatism puzzle, then, require the crucial piece of the puzzle above.

But there is a problem with this piece of the puzzle. Is not it obviously mistaken? On its face, it very clearly appears to be mistaken.[4] To see this, consider the following scenario:

> Imagine that Tammy, at t, knows that her car is parked in the driveway. She just parked it there, after all, and she has a clear memory of parking it there. Suppose Tammy's husband comes along a few minutes later and moves the car. He tells her after he moves it, "Tammy, I just moved your car to the street, so that I could blow debris off the driveway." Further imagine that Tammy knows that her husband is always honest and reliable and that he regularly blows debris off the driveway.

Now, Tammy's husband's testimony that he moved the car is future evidence *against* the proposition that Tammy's car is parked in the driveway. But the fact that, at t, Tammy knows that her car is parked in the driveway does not imply that, at t, she knows her husband's testimony that her car is no longer in the driveway is misleading since his testimony is not at all misleading. After all, he is telling her the truth.

Notice also that Tammy's knowledge, at t, that her car is in the driveway does not imply that she is in a position to know that her husband's testimony is misleading. Standardly, S is in a position

to know that p only if S has evidence or epistemic ground(s) necessary for knowledge that p, that is, S has knowledge-level justification for p, where knowledge-level justification for p requires that such justification be undefeated (cf. Kvanvig 2006, 260).[5] Take note that Tammy does not have, at t, the evidence or epistemic grounds necessary for knowing that her husband's testimony is misleading since she knows that her husband is *always* reliable and honest. She only has epistemic reason to believe what he says!

So, it must be false that, for any S, any t, and any h, if, at t, S knows that h, then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that *any* evidence against h is misleading, and so the crucial piece of the dogmatism puzzle is clearly mistaken as it is stated above.

However, is not there an obvious fix of the crucial assumption for the defender of the dogmatism puzzle with respect to this example? Just time-index the target proposition. Let us put such a formulation of the crucial piece of the dogmatism puzzle as follows:

> **Lynchpin**. For any S, any h, and any t: If S knows, at t, that h, where h includes "at t" (e.g., "that the baseball is dirty at t"), then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h, where h includes "at t" is misleading.

Note well that for the remainder of the paper the reader should assume that, where appropriate, each target proposition is relevantly time indexed, but on occasion I will signal this explicitly for the reader in the following way: "S knows that h (at t)."

Consider now how the Lynchpin handles the example above involving Tammy. Tammy knows, at t, that her car is parked in the driveway (at t). Her husband's later-than-t testimony that her car is not parked in the driveway later-than-t is not evidence against the proposition that her car is parked in the driveway (*at t*). It is evidence against the proposition that her car is parked in the driveway (*at some time after t*). Hence, the example involving Tammy does not serve to undermine the Lynchpin.

Does formulating the crucial piece of the dogmatism as Lynchpin rescue the dogmatism puzzle from failure? I do not think so. There are two cases to consider in this connection. The first case is that, at t, S knows that any evidence against h is misleading. But this clearly does not follow from the fact that S knows, at t, that h. To see this, imagine that Elena knows, at t, that there is an exam in her class tomorrow. Let q be the proposition there is an exam in her class tomorrow. At t, she knows this on the grounds that her teacher told her class that there would be an exam tomorrow. But, at t, Elena might not believe that any evidence against q is misleading. She might believe, at t, that if her reliable and trustworthy friend Bobbie told her later today that tomorrow's exam is canceled, then tomorrow's exam is canceled. Thus, Elena does not know, at t, that any evidence against q is misleading since knowledge requires belief, and Elena does not believe that *any* evidence against q is misleading.

One might have a reasonable thought, though, that, at t, Elena is *in a position to know* that any evidence against q is misleading. After all, she knows, at t, that there is an exam in her class tomorrow. This is, in effect, our second case to consider.

I think, however, that the above view, despite its prima facie plausibility, is mistaken. Observe that, at t, Elena certainly recognizes (or she epistemically ought to if she is rational) that she doesn't have, at t, sufficiently good evidence or epistemic grounds for rationally concluding that *any* evidence against q is misleading. Why not? Because it is clear that there is a genuine defeater for Elena's evidence or epistemic grounds for believing that any evidence against q is misleading. The defeater in this connection is either a mental state defeater or a normative defeater, or both.

A mental state defeater, $m_d$, is a mental state of S's such that $m_d$ in conjunction with S's actual evidence does not provide S with a sufficient epistemic reason to believe that p. For example, if I have some evidence that my sister is at the store, but I become *aware*, by way of honest and reliable testimony, that my sister is at home, then I have a mental state defeater for my epistemic grounds for believing that my sister is at the store.

Following Pritchard (2018), a normative defeater, $n_d$, is a proposition that S *epistemically ought* (*pro tanto*) to be aware of (i.e., a good but not necessarily perfect inquirer or an intellectually virtuous inquirer would be aware of such a proposition in identical conditions) and $n_d$ in conjunction with S's actual evidence does not provide S with sufficient epistemic reason for believing that p. For example, if, through inattentiveness, I miss the large, flashing sign that tells me that I am in the middle of fake barn country, then I have a normative defeater for my epistemic grounds for believing that there is a barn right there.

To see that there is either a mental state or normative defeater present in the example involving Elena, observe that, at t, Elena is aware (or she epistemically ought to be aware if she is rational) that there is *possible* counterevidence (e.g., Bobbie's testimony, the school announces that the teacher has been fired and all of his exams are canceled, her fellow students tell her that the teacher told them in the hallway that he had decided to cancel tomorrow's exam, and so on) that, were she confronted with it at t, it would not be epistemically rational at t for her to conclude that it is misleading on her present evidence, which includes her knowledge that q. Elena's awareness at t (or that she epistemically ought to be aware at t) that there is plenty of (merely) possible counterevidence that, were she confronted with it at t, it would not be epistemically rational at t for her to conclude is misleading in conjunction with her actual evidence for believing that *any* evidence against q is misleading *clearly* does not provide her, at t, with sufficient epistemic reason to believe that *any* evidence against q is misleading. After all, at t, she is aware (or she ought to be) that there is possible counterevidence to q that it would not be, at t, epistemically rational for her to believe is misleading. So, at t, how could Elena know or be in a position to know that such counterevidence to q is misleading when, at t, she is aware (or she ought to be) that if she were confronted with it at t, it would not even be rational for her at t to believe that the counterevidence is misleading?

Think of it this way. If we are to avoid widespread skepticism about knowledge, then Elena knows that q on the basis of her teacher's testimony. But suppose that she doesn't know that she knows. Further, suppose that she begins to consider possible lines of counterevidence to q, for example, Bobbie's testimony that the exam tomorrow has been canceled, the school announces that the teacher has been fired and all of his exams are canceled, her fellow students tell her that the teacher told them in the hallway that he had decided to cancel tomorrow's exam, and so on. She recognizes that were she to be confronted with this counterevidence to q at t, then she could not rationally conclude, at t, that it is misleading on her present evidence, and so she is not in a good enough epistemic position at this moment to rationally conclude that *any* evidence against q is misleading. After all, she knows that there is possible counterevidence (merely possible, so it does not undercut or rebut her knowledge that q) that is just too strong for her to rationally conclude that it is misleading on her present evidence. That recognition in conjunction with her actual evidence for believing that *any* evidence against q is misleading does not provide her, at t, with a *justifying* reason to believe that *any* evidence against q is misleading. In which case, there is good reason to think that, at t, Elena is not in a position to know that *any* evidence against q is misleading.

Thus, in light of the above, the Lynchpin looks to be false. For any S, any t, and any h: S knowing, at t, that h (at t) does not imply that, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading.

But wait! If S does not know (or is not in a position to know) that *any* evidence against h (at t) is misleading, then does not that indicate that S does not know that h (at t)? If that is so, then that looks like an unhappy, skeptical consequence of the above argument.

In reply, assuming antiskeptical fallibilism about knowledge, we know all sorts of things and, yet, if we are antiskeptical fallibilists, we recognize that there is some *possible* amount and/or *grade* of counterevidence that we cannot simply judge as misleading because we have some routine knowledge. So, assuming that the dogmatism puzzle is not exclusively a puzzle for infallibilists or skeptics, then, there is no good reason to think that lacking knowledge that any evidence against p is misleading, because one's epistemic grounds for believing such a thing is subject to a defeater, implies that one does not know that p to begin with.

To see this more clearly, consider two cases. First, suppose that Ed believes that if a coworker tells him that his car has been stolen, then it is stolen. Ed does not believe that any evidence against the proposition his car is parked down the street is misleading, and so Ed does not know such a thing, even though (if we are to avoid a problematic skeptical result) Ed knows that his car is parked down the street. Second, suppose that I know that my wife's birthday is January 28, but I am still not in a good enough epistemic position to rationally judge that *any* counterevidence to this proposition is misleading. Since I recognize that were my wife's mom to lie to me that my wife's real birthday is January 26, with her mom supplying an apparently genuine (but really fake) birth certificate to that effect, and her mom falsely explaining that she simply lied to my wife all her life because her mom preferred a January 26 birthday for her daughter, I would not be in a good enough position to judge it as misleading simply because I have some routine knowledge about my wife's birthday. Notice that I do not even have to be confronted with such misleading counterevidence for this point to hold. I know, right now, in the absence of any such counterevidence, that if I *were* to be confronted with such counterevidence, then I *would not* be in a good enough epistemic position to rationally judge it as misleading, even though I know, right now (if I know anything at all), that my wife's birthday is January 28.

Does rejecting the Lynchpin, however, commit one to either rejecting Entitlement or going dogmatist? Not at all. Obviously, rejecting the Lynchpin does not commit one to dogmatism. Entitlement does not imply that when one has, at t, knowledge that h (at t), then, at t, they have knowledge (or are in a position to have knowledge) that any future evidence against h (at t) is misleading. So, one can embrace Entitlement while rejecting the Lynchpin of the dogmatism puzzle.

However, is there some way to rework or refashion the Lynchpin such that it can navigate around the example involving Elena above? Perhaps. In this connection, then, let us consider a few different reworkings.

We have been reading the Lynchpin in a synchronic way, but notice that the Lynchpin can be given a diachronic reading. Many philosophers—for example, Borges (2015, 3678; 3680) and Kripke (2011, 43)—clearly favor a synchronic reading of the Lynchpin of the dogmatism puzzle, but suppose we give it a diachronic reading. The diachronic reading is as follows: If S knows, *at t*, that h (at t), then, *at t or at some later time* $t_1$, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any future evidence against h (at t) is misleading. Does this construal of the Lynchpin salvage the dogmatism puzzle from the solution?

Not at all. Consider the example involving Elena above. If, at t, Elena's not in an epistemic position to know that Bobbie's testimony is misleading, then, in the face of that testimony at $t_1$, Elena is certainly not in an epistemic position at $t_1$ to know that Bobbie's testimony is misleading. Hence, adopting a diachronic reading of the Lynchpin does not rescue Lynchpin from failure.

One might think, though, that if Elena were to *know* (or be in a position to know) that she *knows* that there is an exam tomorrow, then she would be in an epistemic position at that moment to know (or be in a position to know) that Bobbie's testimony is misleading since she knows (or is in a position to know) that she knows that there is an exam tomorrow. So, maybe the dogmatism puzzle requires the additional assumption that knowing that p implies knowing (or being in a position to know) that one knows that p, and so if S knows that h (at t), then she knows (or is in a position to know) that she knows that h (at t), therefore, she knows (or is in a position to know) that evidence against h (at t) is misleading.

There are two serious problems with such an approach, however. First, the KK principle—that is, knowing that p implies knowing that one knows that p—and the weak KK principle—that is, knowing that p implies that one is in a position to know that they know that p—both appear to be false. To see this, consider the following scenario:

> Suppose S is a rational agent and an introduction to philosophy student. She hasn't thought about the KK principle (or weak KK principle) much. She's heard, though, that it's a very unpopular principle among analytic epistemologists. Now, S has some routine knowledge. She knows, for example, that penguins eat krill. In the philosophy department one day, S decides to discuss with the philosophy faculty whether or not she knows or she's in a position to know that she knows that penguins eat krill. S offers them what she takes to be her evidence for this view. But every philosophy faculty member that S talks to tells her (by way of some kind of argument) that, while she knows that penguins eat krill, she's not justified in believing, given her current evidence, that she knows that penguins eat krill. S takes these philosophers to know more about the matter than her, so she defers to their judgment on the matter.

At least two things look to come out of the above scenario. First, on a very natural interpretation of the scenario, S does not believe that she knows that penguins eat krill, since S is a rational agent and S does not take herself to have justification for believing that. If knowledge requires belief, then it appears to be false that knowing implies knowing that one knows. Second, take note that even if S somehow rationally retains her belief that she knows that penguins eat krill, she does not know and she is not in a position to know that she so knows. Why is that? Because her epistemic grounds for believing that she knows that penguins eat krill are defeated by the testimony of the philosophers in the department that she is not justified (on what she takes to be her present evidence) in believing that she knows that penguins eat krill. So, if knowledge requires knowledge-level justification and defeated justification is not knowledge-level justification, then knowing does not imply knowing (or being in a position to know) that one knows. Thus, given two fairly plausible assumptions about what knowledge requires, both the KK principle and the weak KK principle appear to be falsified by the above example. At the very least, the example above illustrates exactly how questionable both principles are.

This last remark segues nicely into the second problem with the above approach supposedly rescuing the dogmatism puzzle from failure. To build into the dogmatism puzzle such a controversial assumption as the KK principle or the weak KK principle is dialectically unfavorable for the defender of the Lynchpin. Why is that? Because the critic of dogmatism could plausibly reject such principles, and thereby arrive at a reasonable solution to the dogmatism puzzle. Surely, that makes resolving the dogmatism puzzle too easy for the defeasibilist or nondogmatist. Therefore, neither the KK principle nor the weak KK principle seem to me to be saviors of the dogmatism puzzle.

A critic of defeasibilism might be tempted, at this point, by the thought of going infallibilist about knowledge. This would appear to secure the result that when some subject knows some proposition she knows (or is in a position to know) that evidence against that known proposition is misleading. After all, she knows the target proposition infallibly. Consider, then, formulating the Lynchpin of the dogmatism puzzle in an infallibilist way as follows: If, at t, S knows *infallibly* that h (at t), then, at t, she knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading.

The trouble with the infallibilist response, however, is that it, then, looks to be much less clear that there is a genuine epistemic problem with S disregarding evidence against h (at t). After all, if she knows *infallibly* that h (at t), then, intuitively, she can unproblematically disregard any future evidence against h (at t), since she has infallible knowledge that h (at t). On such a view, embracing dogmatism might reasonably seem like the way to go in the face of the dogmatism puzzle. Hence, adopting the infallibilist view would make embracing dogmatism seem reasonable, which would make the dogmatism puzzle seem not particularly paradoxical.

Moreover, if one were to go infallibilist in this connection, then, even if the Lynchpin were salvaged, it would make the dogmatism puzzle solely an epistemological puzzle for infallibilism about knowledge, since the dogmatism puzzle would only arise in situations where the subject has infallible knowledge. However, the dogmatism puzzle is not typically taken to be solely a problem for infallibilism about knowledge. It is also believed to be a problem for fallibilists, particularly defeasibilist fallibilists. Lasonen-Aarnio (2014, 432) illustrates this point nicely when she says that her partial defeat version of the dogmatism puzzle is supposed to be uniquely troubling for fallibilism, since, by her lights, Entitlement is a "casualty of" the fallibilist "way of thinking." In which case, going infallibilist in defense of the Lynchpin does not appear to be a satisfactory strategy for salvaging the Lynchpin, since it makes the dogmatism puzzle of no consequence for fallibilism. That does not seem to be a happy result for the defender of the Lynchpin.

What is the upshot of all this then? Simply it does not follow from one's knowledge of h (at t) that she knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading. Thus, it just is not correct that, for any S, any t, and any h, if, at t, S knows that h (at t), then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading. Therefore, as should be clear, we have very good reason to think that the Lynchpin is clearly mistaken, and so, given this, it is rational to reject it.

Now, since the Lynchpin is crucial to generating the dogmatism puzzle in both its original and partial defeat form, by rejecting the Lynchpin one arrives at a nice solution to the dogmatism puzzle. And it is a solution that does not require either rejecting Entitlement or embracing dogmatism.

### 2.1 | Dogmatic Intentions

What about dogmatism puzzles that involve intention, though? R.E. Fraser (2022, 5) claims that to satisfactorily resolve the dogmatism puzzle, one must resolve these puzzles involving

intention as well. What are such dogmatism puzzles involving intention? Fraser (2022, 5) adapts them from Kripke (2011) in the following way:

> Suppose A knows that p at $t_1$. She realises that she might get some evidence against p in the future. But she knows that any such evidence will be misleading. So she forms an intention: ignore any evidence she gets against p...Let's make this vivid. Suppose Celia knows her souvenir coin is fair. On her walk home from the factory, she idly imagines a scenario in which she gets evidence that her coin is biased—perhaps that her coin comes up heads a million times in a row. She resolves to maintain her high confidence that her coin is fair regardless of whether she receives such evidence. That seems dogmatic. But here, Defeat is no help: when Celia forms her intention, her knowledge that p has not yet been defeated.

Notice, importantly, that dogmatism puzzles involving intention clearly turn on the Lynchpin as well. A's knowledge that p at $t_1$ is supposed to put her in an epistemic position such that she knows that any evidence against p is misleading. If, however, we have good reason to reject the Lynchpin, as I argue above, then dogmatism puzzles involving intention are no more a threat to the defeasibilist than the versions of the dogmatism puzzle from Harman and Lasonen-Aarnio.

To see this clear, consider Fraser's version of the intention puzzle above. The fact that Celia knows that her souvenir coin is fair at $t_1$ does not imply that she knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against her souvenir coin being fair is misleading. Celia recognizes that a coin coming up heads 1 million times consecutively is evidence against the proposition that the coin is fair. Then she is aware (or she epistemically ought to be if she is rational) that were she confronted with such counterevidence, it would not be epistemically rational for her to believe that such counterevidence is misleading on her present evidence. So, since she is aware (or she epistemically ought to be aware) that there is plenty of possible counterevidence that it would not be rational for her to believe is misleading, she neither knows nor is she in a position to know that any evidence against the proposition her souvenir coin is fair is misleading.

Of course, if we were of the opinion that she really knew such possible counterevidence is misleading (e.g., God told her that the coin is fair), we would not have any problem with her forming an intention to ignore such possible counterevidence. For example, I know that any evidence against the proposition that black people are not inherently criminal is misleading, so, quite clearly, there is no epistemic problem in me forming an intention to ignore such counterevidence. In fact, that is precisely what I have done. However, I am rarely in such an epistemic position with respect to counterevidence against what I know, although I take it that it is fairly evident that I am in such a position at least some of the time.

The central point here, though, is simply that if the Lynchpin is mistaken, as I have been at pains to argue that it is, then the intention dogmatism puzzle cannot get off the ground, since the dogmatism puzzle involving intention crucially turns on the Lynchpin. Therefore, the dogmatism puzzle involving intention does not present the nondogmatist with any real difficulty independently of the classic version of the dogmatism puzzle from Harman or partial defeat versions of the dogmatism puzzle from Lasonen-Aarnio.[6]

## 3 | The Closure-Based Twist

However, is not there just a very simple deduction a subject in the dogmatism puzzle could make such that she, then, knows that any evidence against what is known is misleading, and so she is in a position to know in this sense? Perhaps. Let us attempt to incorporate this intuition into a different way of thinking about the Lynchpin of the dogmatism puzzle. By my lights, the best version of this view comes from Sharon and Spectre (2010).[7] They put a closure-based twist on the dogmatism puzzle. This closure-based twist can be viewed as a way of defending the Lynchpin. Roughly, we can formulate Sharon and Spectre's (2010, 308–309) closure-based twist on dogmatism puzzle in the following way:

1. S knows that p (assumption).
2. S knows that (if p is true, then for all evidence e, if e counts against p, then e is misleading) (assumption).
3. Necessarily, if S knows that h and forms the belief that q by properly deriving it from h, then S knows that q (closure).
4. S knows that (for all evidence e, if e counts against p, then e is misleading) (from 1, 2, 3).

According to the closure-based view above, if S knows that p (and S knows that if p is true, then any evidence against p is misleading), then S knows that any evidence against p is misleading by way of appeal to closure. In essence, then, the closure-based view attempts to shore up the Lynchpin by appealing to knowledge closure.

Does the appeal to closure save the Lynchpin? I do not think so. The reason I do not think so is that (3), as it stands, is clearly false. To see this, consider the following scenario adapted from Pryor (2013, 101):

> **MISLEADING**. Grace knows that p. She believes q because she competently deduces q from p, and she retains her knowledge in p all the while. However, right at the moment that Grace completes the deduction, a respected, usually reliable, knowledgeable logician friend of Grace's tells her that p doesn't entail q.[8]

In MISLEADING, intuitively, Grace does not know that q, even though she has competently deduced it from p. Grace does not know that q because Grace has a relevant defeater against her epistemic grounds for believing that q, namely, the testimony of her logician friend. If that is right, then (3) must be false. To save closure from MISLEADING, we need to add an antecedent

condition to (3) to the effect that the subject has not acquired a relevant defeater for the entailed proposition. Let us call this a "no-defeaters condition."

A no-defeaters condition on closure is widely endorsed by analytic epistemologists—see, for example, Kvanvig (2006, 262), Baumann (2011, 599), Simpson (2021, 12341), and others. As far as I can see, any *correct* principle of closure must include a no-defeaters condition to avoid or resolve counterexamples like MISLEADING. The trouble, however, vis-à-vis the dogmatism puzzle is that if a no-defeaters condition is added as an antecedent condition to (3), then that modified closure principle is not satisfied in the standard exemplifications of the dogmatism puzzle, since, as is argued above, there is either a mental state defeater or a normative defeater, or both, present in those cases.

The subject S in dogmatism puzzle cases is aware (or epistemically ought to be aware) that there is some possible counterevidence to p that she cannot rationally conclude, right now, is misleading given her present evidence, and so she cannot know (or be in a position to know) that *any* evidence against p is misleading. Her epistemic grounds for the proposition *any* evidence against p is misleading are defeated by her awareness (or that she epistemically ought to be aware) that there is some (merely) possible counterevidence to p that she cannot rationally conclude is misleading on her present evidence. In which case, S's epistemic grounds for accepting that, for all evidence e, if e counts against p, then e is misleading, are defeated by her awareness (or that she epistemically ought to be aware) that there is some possible counterevidence to p that she cannot rationally believe to be misleading on her present evidence. Hence, the no-defeaters condition of the modified closure principle is not satisfied, and so an appeal to the correct principle of knowledge closure in this connection does not certify that S knows that, for all e, if e counts against p, then e is misleading.

Let us connect this thought with the example involving Elena from above. In that example, there is a defeater for Elena's epistemic grounds for believing, at t, the proposition that any evidence against q is misleading. That defeater is that Elena is aware (or she epistemically ought to be aware) that there is plenty of possible counterevidence to q that she is not in a good enough epistemic position, at t, to rationally conclude to be misleading—for example, Bobbie's testimony. Thus, the no-defeaters condition of closure is not satisfied in the example involving Elena, since there is present in that example either a mental state defeater or a normative defeater, or both, such that her epistemic grounds for believing that any evidence against q is misleading are defeated. Consequently, all the antecedent conditions of no-defeat closure are not satisfied in such an example, and so an appeal to a closure principle with a no-defeaters condition is violated in such an example. Hence, an appeal to closure is not going to deliver the result that, for any S, any t, and any h, if S knows that h (at t), then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that *any* evidence against h (at t) is misleading. Therefore, appealing to closure would not be able to rescue the Lynchpin from failure either.

Near the end of their paper, Sharon and Spectre (2010, 320) appear to explicitly endorse just such a view of the matter. In their words:

> In essence, this...basically supports the commonsensical thought that propositions of this sort cannot be known under the circumstances since the evidence available to the person does not support them. Take Sorensen's case, for example. My memory that I just parked the car in the school lot provides proper support for my belief that the car is in the parking lot. But this evidence in no way supports the belief that Doug's report is false. Or think of Jim's case—reading in *The Times* that Manchester United won the match seems like proper justification for the belief that Manchester United in fact won. It is, however, utterly inappropriate evidence for knowing that if *The Guardian* says otherwise, it is mistaken (Sharon and Spectre 2010, 320).

As it stands, then, appeals to closure appear to fall flat in connection with the dogmatism puzzle.

Perhaps, it is worth pointing out to the reader here as well that the above line of reasoning does not imply the denial of Entitlement. To see this, consider the following scenario. Imagine I have excellent evidence for the proposition that climate change is anthropogenic. I have looked closely at the models that are used by the scientists in this field, I have reviewed the relevant scientific studies and IPCC reports, I have sufficiently researched alternative explanations of rising global temperatures, I have read the testimony of a large number of experts in the field of climate science (broadly conceived), and so on. Intuitively, I am aware that I have the kind of evidence that I need to have for climate change being anthropogenic to rationally conclude that, say, the flimsy testimony of some oil company executives that climate change is not anthropogenic is misleading. Consequently, intuitively in such a case, it is epistemically rational for me to conclude, by, say, appeal to closure, that the flimsy testimony of the oil company executives is misleading. Epistemically, there is nothing puzzling about this at all. Why is not it puzzling? Because I can justifiably reject the testimony of the oil company executives because I am in a sufficiently good epistemic position to rationally conclude that such testimony is misleading.

## 4 | Conclusion

Let us take stock. I surveyed a number of ways of defending the Lynchpin of the dogmatism puzzle that, for any S, any h, and any t, if S knows that h (at t), then S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading. I argued that none of these defenses survive close scrutiny. As a result, I think that we have good grounds for thinking that it is false that for any S, any t, and any h, if S knows that h (at t), then, at t, S knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading. Consequently, we have good reason to think that the dogmatism puzzle is not so puzzling after all. The dogmatism puzzle has, as it were, been undone.

Take note, importantly, that the view that it is false that for any S, any t, and any h, if S knows that h (at t), then, at t, she knows (or is in a position to know) that any evidence against h (at t) is misleading does not negatively impact Entitlement. It is perfectly plausible that if S knows that some piece of evidence against h (at t) is misleading, then she can rationally disregard that piece of evidence. That is, she need not give up her belief in h or adjust her credences in h in the face of evidence that she knows to be misleading. Hence, one can easily embrace Entitlement, if she rejects the Lynchpin, and so, on such a view, neither Harman's original version of the dogmatism puzzle nor Lasonen-Aarnio's partial defeat version poses any real trouble for defeasibilists or nondogmatists.

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**Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

**Data Availability Statement**

The author has nothing to report.

**Code Availability**

N/A.

**Endnotes**

[1] In this paper, I assume a broad or loose account of evidence, where anything that justifies one in believing some proposition or counts in favor of believing some proposition is considered evidence.

[2] What does "she's rationally entitled to disregard evidence against h" mean? In this paper, I take it to mean that she is rationally entitled to *not* take evidence against h into consideration solely in connection with whether to believe, disbelieve, or withhold judgment about h or adjust her credences with respect to h. So, S being rationally entitled to disregard evidence against h does not, on my view, imply that S does not take the evidence against h into consideration about other things she believes or has credences in—for example, my wife's testimony that I am not typing on my computer right now can be rationally disregarded by me regarding the proposition of me typing on my computer right now, since I know such testimony is misleading, but my wife's testimony is excellent evidence for the proposition that she knows how to speak.

[3] Sensible responses to Lasonen-Aarnio's criticism of the defeat solution have been offered in the literature. See, for example, Veber (2004, 567), Ye (2016), and Brown (2018, 121–125).

[4] Borges (2015, 3679) is at least one philosopher who agrees. Although he goes on to develop an importantly different argument than I do in this paper, he says near the beginning of his paper that "intuitively, one cannot know that future evidence against p is misleading simply because one knows that p."

[5] Note well: For the remainder of this paper, I take it that for one to be in a position to know, at t, some proposition p, she must have, at t, epistemic grounds necessary for knowledge that p—that is, she must have, at t, knowledge-level, undefeated justificatory grounds for p.

[6] In what follows, I set aside dogmatism puzzles involving intention, but what I say in the remainder of this paper applies equally well to such puzzles.

[7] Veber (2004, 560–562), Kripke (2011, 43–44), and Borges (2015, 3681) also offer similar closure-based formulations of the dogmatism puzzle.

[8] See Simpson (2021) for a gang of other examples that militate against a closure principle without a no-defeaters condition.

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