

# Reasons and Perception

Declan Smithies

Forthcoming in *The Oxford Handbook of Reasons and Normativity*,  
Edited by Daniel Star, Oxford University Press.

This chapter is organized around four central questions about the role of reasons in the epistemology of perception:

- (1) **The ‘Whether?’ Question:** Does perception provide us with reasons for belief about the external world?
- (2) **The ‘How?’ Question:** How does perception provide us with reasons for belief about the external world?
- (3) **The ‘When?’ Question:** When does perception provide us with reasons for belief about the external world?
- (4) **The ‘What?’ Question:** What are the reasons that perception provides us with for belief about the external world?

The ‘Whether?’ question is the topic of section 1. I argue that perception makes it reasonable (that is, rational or justified) for us to form beliefs about the external world by providing us with reasons for those beliefs. This argument relies on a more general connection between reasons and rationality that informs much of the discussion in this chapter.

The ‘How?’ question is the topic of section 2. I explain how it is possible for perception to provide reasons for belief about the external world by responding to three challenges: the skeptical challenge, the over-intellectualization challenge, and Davidson’s challenge.

The ‘When?’ question is the topic of section 3. I compare and contrast two accounts of the conditions under which perception provides reasons for belief about the external world. On the Content View, perception provides reasons for belief about the external world by representing the external world. On the Knowledge View, perception provides reasons for belief about the external world by providing knowledge of the external world. I present two arguments – an argument from parity and an argument from luminosity – that combine to make a strong case for the Content View and against the Knowledge View.

The ‘What?’ question is the topic of section 4. I discuss an argument for the Knowledge View that appeals to the  $K = R$  thesis, according to which one’s reasons for belief are all and only the facts that one knows. I defend the Content View against this argument by proposing an alternative account of the ontology of reasons.

I close in section 5 by drawing the provisional conclusion that the balance of considerations counts in favor of the Content View and against the Knowledge View.

## 1. The 'Whether?' Question

Does perception provide us with reasons for belief about the external world? Here is an argument that it does:

- (1) Perception is a source of knowledge of the external world.
- (2) Perception is a source of knowledge of the external world only if perception makes it reasonable to form beliefs about the external world.
- (3) Perception makes it reasonable to form beliefs about the external world only if perception provides reasons for belief about the external world.
- (4) Therefore, perception provides reasons for belief about the external world.

This argument relies on the following commonsensical assumptions. First, we have some knowledge of the external world that has its source in perception. Second, only reasonable beliefs can be knowledge. And third, a reasonable belief is one that is held on the basis of sufficiently good reasons.

Each of these assumptions can be challenged. The first assumption is challenged by skeptical arguments that purport to show that we cannot have any knowledge of the external world on the basis of perception. The second assumption is challenged by some reliabilist theories of knowledge that take reliability not as a criterion for rationality, but as a replacement for it. And the third assumption is challenged by those who deny that rationality requires responding to reasons.<sup>1</sup>

In philosophy, everything is open to challenge. Even so, each of these assumptions has a good claim to be part of common sense. I tend to regard these commonsense assumptions as more credible than any of the philosophical theories that conflict with them. That is not to say that they are absolutely inviolable, but merely that they are reasonable starting points for further enquiry. They have a default status that can be overridden.

The third assumption needs special comment because it incorporates a substantive view about the connection between reasons and rationality that informs much of the discussion in this chapter. On this view, perception makes it reasonable or rational for us to form beliefs about the external world by providing us with reasons for those beliefs. More generally, rationality in belief and action is a matter of *responding appropriately to reasons*. I'll begin by clarifying this assumption.

What is a reason? In a much-cited passage, Timothy Scanlon writes:

I will take the idea of a reason as primitive. Any attempt to explain what it is to be a reason for something seems to me to lead back to the same idea: a consideration that counts in favor of it. "Counts in favor how?" one might ask. "By providing a reason for it" seems to be the only answer. (1998: 17)

Scanlon takes the idea of a reason as primitive – not just in the sense that it cannot be analyzed, but also in the further sense that there is nothing informative to be said about the sense in which reasons count in favor of belief and action. But I think we can say more. Reasons count in favor of belief and action in the sense that having

---

<sup>1</sup> See Scanlon (1998: Ch. 1), Parfit (2011: Ch. 1), and Broome (2013: Ch. 5).

those reasons contributes towards making those beliefs and actions reasonable or rational. This is the sense of 'reason' that is the topic of this chapter.

The word 'reason' seems to be context-sensitive: it expresses different senses in different contexts. For instance, it is now standard to draw a distinction between objective and subjective reasons.<sup>2</sup> An *objective reason* counts in favor of belief or action in the sense that it makes a belief or action advisable from an omniscient third-person perspective that takes all the relevant facts into consideration. A *subjective reason*, in contrast, counts in favor of belief or action in the sense that it makes a belief or action reasonable or rational from the limited first-person perspective of the agent. The word 'reason' seems to pick out objective reasons in some contexts and subjective reasons in others. However, this chapter is exclusively concerned with subjective reasons, rather than objective reasons.

To illustrate the distinction, consider Bernard Williams's famous example:

The agent believes that this stuff is gin, when in fact it is petrol. He wants a gin and tonic. Has he reason, or a reason, to mix this stuff with tonic and drink it? ... On the one hand, it is just very odd to say that he has a reason to drink this stuff, and natural to say that he has no reason to drink it, although he thinks that he has. On the other hand, if he does drink it, we not only have an explanation of his doing so (a reason why he did it), but we have such an explanation which is of the reason-for-action form. (1979: 18)

In a context in which the inadvisability of drinking is salient, it seems natural to say, as Williams does, that the agent has no reason to drink the cocktail. But in a context in which the rationality of drinking is salient, it seems more natural to say that he has a reason – indeed, a decisive one – to drink it. The agent has a subjective reason to drink the petrol, since there is a consideration that counts in favor of drinking in the sense of making it reasonable. But the agent has no objective reason to drink the petrol, since there is no consideration that counts in favor of drinking in the sense of making it advisable. In this way, the tension that Williams observes can be resolved by noticing the context-sensitivity of the word 'reason'.<sup>3</sup>

We should be careful to avoid begging any questions by assuming a controversial account of the connection between subjective and objective reasons. According to what Mark Schroeder (2008) calls the Factoring Account, one has a subjective reason to F if and only if there is an objective reason for one to F that one

---

<sup>2</sup> See Sepielli (this volume) for further discussion. A related distinction is often drawn between subjective and objective senses of 'ought'. See Kratzer (1981) and Bronfman and Dowell (this volume) on the context-sensitivity of 'ought'. If reasons explain facts about what you ought to believe and do, as proposed by Broome (2013, this volume), then it is no surprise that the context-sensitivity of 'ought' is mirrored in the context-sensitivity of 'reason'.

<sup>3</sup> Michael Smith (1994: 94-8) claims that the agent has a motivating reason, but no normative reason. But this is to ignore the agent's normative reason that counts in favor of drinking in the subjective sense by making it reasonable or rational.

has in one's possession.<sup>4</sup> Like Schroeder, I reject the Factoring Account. Given that our agent has no objective reason to drink the petrol, the Factoring Account entails that he has no subjective reason to drink it either. So either it is not rational for him to drink the petrol or it is rational for him to drink it in the absence of reasons for doing so. The Factoring Account therefore faces a dilemma: either it distorts our conception of rationality or it preserves it at the cost of sacrificing the connection between reasons and rationality.

The connection between reasons and rationality is worth preserving, since it illuminates the concept of a reason and imposes constraints on a theory of reasons. In particular, a theory of reasons is answerable to a theory of rationality. I assume that we have some independent purchase on the concept of rationality that can inform our understanding of reasons. In the epistemic domain, rationality is not the same as accuracy, since rational beliefs can be false. Nor is rationality merely a matter of consistency among one's beliefs, since one's beliefs must also cohere with one's perceptual evidence. My aim in this chapter is to propose an account of the epistemic role of perception in providing reasons for belief about the external world that respects these constraints on a theory of epistemic rationality.

In the sense that I am concerned with, one's reasons for belief are considerations that count in favor of belief in the sense that they contribute towards making those beliefs reasonable. But it is important to note that a belief is reasonable only if one has sufficiently good reasons for the belief. Sometimes one has reasons for belief that can be defeated – that is, outweighed or undermined – by better reasons for disbelieving or withholding belief instead. Such reasons are variously described as *pro tanto*, *prima facie* or *defeasible* reasons. If one has reasons for belief that are defeated in this way, then one's reasons are not sufficient to make the belief in question reasonable. When one's reasons for belief are sufficient to make it reasonable, then I will say that one *has reason* for the belief. Here, I am using the mass noun 'reason' instead of the count noun 'a reason'.

There is a distinction between two senses in which a belief (or an action) can be reasonable.<sup>5</sup> A belief is reasonable in the *forward-looking* sense just in case one has sufficiently good reasons for holding the belief, while a belief is reasonable in the *backward-looking* sense just in case one holds the belief for sufficiently good reasons. A belief is reasonable in the backward looking sense only if it is reasonable in the forward-looking sense, but not vice versa. The backward-looking sense is more demanding, since it requires not only having good reasons for belief or action, but also believing or acting for those reasons.

There is a related distinction between two roles that reasons can play: a normative role and a motivating role. A *normative reason* is a reason that counts in favor of belief or action, whereas a *motivating reason* is a reason for which someone

---

<sup>4</sup> A distinction is often drawn between possessed and unpossessed reasons – that is, between reasons that one has and reasons that there are but that one does not have. However, it's not clear that this distinction applies in the case of subjective reasons.

<sup>5</sup> Compare Firth's (1978) distinction between *propositional* and *doxastic* senses of reasonableness and Goldman's (1979) distinction between *ex ante* and *ex post* senses of justifiedness.

believes or acts. Not all normative reasons are motivating reasons, since one might have reasons for belief or action without believing or acting on the basis of those reasons. Similarly, not all motivating reasons are normative reasons, since one might believe or act for some reason that is no good reason at all.<sup>6</sup>

Debates in the epistemology of perception are sometimes cast in the terminology of justification, warrant, or entitlement, rather than reasons. But we can easily translate back and forth. Just as reasons make our beliefs reasonable, so justifications make our beliefs justified, warrants make our beliefs warranted, and entitlements make us entitled to our beliefs. These phrases are more or less synonymous in ordinary English, although some epistemologists stipulate technical meanings for these terms on which they come apart.

These debates can also be cast in terms of evidence, but evidence is best regarded as an epistemic reason for belief. It is a disputed question whether all reasons for belief are evidential reasons or whether in addition there are pragmatic reasons for belief. For present purposes, we can bypass this dispute, since only evidential reasons will be relevant in this chapter.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. The 'How?' Question

How does perception provide reasons for belief about the external world? I address this question by answering three challenges that purport to show that perception cannot provide reasons for belief about the external world: the skeptical challenge, the over-intellectualization challenge, and Davidson's challenge.

### 2.1. The Skeptical Challenge

Skeptical arguments purport to debunk the commonsense assumption that perception provides reasons for beliefs about the external world. There are many different forms of skeptical argument, but here is an influential one:

- (1) Perception provides one with reasons for beliefs about the external world only if one has independent reasons to believe that perception is reliable.
- (2) No one has independent reasons to believe that perception is reliable.  
Therefore,
- (3) Perception provides no one with reasons for beliefs about the external world.

The argument exploits an *epistemic circularity*. On the one hand, one's perceptual reasons for belief about the external world depend upon one's having reasons to believe that perception is reliable on grounds that are independent from perception. On the other hand, no one has such independent reasons to believe that perception is reliable, since one's only reasons to believe that perception is reliable depend in turn upon perception.

Responses to this skeptical argument divide into at least two categories. Some reject premise (2) by maintaining that in fact one *does* have independent

---

<sup>6</sup> See McNaughton and Rawling (this volume) and Wiland (this volume) for more on the distinction between normative and motivating reasons.

<sup>7</sup> See Reisner (this volume) for more on epistemic and pragmatic reasons.

reasons to believe that perception is reliable – for instance, a priori reasons or default reasons.<sup>8</sup> Others reject premise (1) by maintaining that one does not *need* independent reasons to believe that perception is reliable in order for perception to provide reasons for belief about the external world.<sup>9</sup>

This division corresponds closely – if not perfectly – to a division between two contrasting accounts of the way in which perception provides reasons for belief about the external world.<sup>10</sup> Proponents of the first response typically endorse *inferentialism*: the view that all perceptual reasons for belief about the external world are inferentially mediated by reasons to believe that perception is reliable. On this view, all perceptual reasons for belief about the external world can be reconstructed in the form of an inference of the following kind:

- (1) I am having a perception of such-and-such a kind.
- (2) Perception is reliable: so if I am having a perception of such-and-such a kind, then the external world is thus-and-so. Therefore,
- (3) The external world is thus-and-so.

Meanwhile, proponents of the second response typically endorse *noninferentialism*: the view that some perceptual reasons for belief about the external world are immediate or noninferential in the sense that they depend solely on perception and do not depend upon reasons to believe anything else. But even inferentialism is consistent with the view that perception provides reasons for belief that are *quasi-immediate* or *quasi-noninferential* in the sense that they do not depend on perceptually-based reasons to believe anything else.

I cannot resolve the debate between inferentialism and noninferentialism here, but in section 2.2, I will consider how this debate bears on the question of how to avoid an over-intellectualized account of perceptual knowledge.

## **2.2. The Over-Intellectualization Challenge**

In section 1, I assumed that perception provides knowledge of the external world by providing reasons for belief about the external world. Some epistemologists reject this assumption on the grounds that it generates an over-intellectualized account of perceptual knowledge. The general form of the argument is as follows:

- (1) Having reasons for belief, and believing for those reasons, requires having certain intellectually demanding abilities.
- (2) But perceptual knowledge does not require having those abilities.

---

<sup>8</sup> See Wright (2004), White (2006), and Cohen (2010).

<sup>9</sup> See Pollock and Cruz (1999), Pryor (2000), Huemer (2001), Burge (2003), Peacocke (2004).

<sup>10</sup> Silins (2008) argues that perception provides noninferential reasons for belief, but only if one also has independent reasons to believe that perception is reliable. So he endorses noninferentialism, but like proponents of inferentialism, he accepts the first premise of the skeptical argument and rejects the second premise instead.

(3) Therefore, perceptual knowledge does not require having reasons for belief and believing for those reasons.

Tyler Burge (2003: 526-30) gives an argument of this form.<sup>11</sup> He begins from the assumption that having reasons for belief, and believing for reasons, is a matter of reasoning in a way that is guided by conceptualization of reasons. Then he argues that children and animals can acquire perceptual knowledge without having the conceptual abilities to reason in this way. He writes:

Children and higher non-human animals do not have *reasons* for their perceptual beliefs. They lack concepts like reliable, normal condition, perceptual state, individuation, defeating condition, that are necessary for having such reasons. Yet they have perceptual beliefs. There is no sound basis for denying that epistemology can evaluate these beliefs... (2003: 528)

Burge concludes that perceptual knowledge does not require having reasons for belief, or believing for those reasons, but merely requires a less demanding form of epistemic warrant, which he calls “entitlement”.

In response, however, the over-intellectualization of perceptual knowledge can be regarded as a symptom of the over-intellectualization of perceptual reasons. We need not accept the starting assumption that the abilities involved in having reasons and believing for reasons are any more intellectually demanding than the abilities implicated in perceptual knowledge. Perceptual knowledge is reasonable belief that is based on the reasons provided by perception. But forming beliefs on the basis of reasons need not involve reasoning that is guided by conceptualization of reasons. Instead, it may just involve forming beliefs noninferentially on the basis of perception. On this view, the requirements for believing on the basis of reasons are no more demanding than the requirements for perceptual knowledge.

Some epistemologists argue that avoiding the over-intellectualization problem in this way requires accepting the noninferentialist view that perceptual reasons are immediate or noninferential, and rejecting the inferentialist view that perceptual reasons are inferentially mediated by reasons to believe that perception is reliable. In my view, however, these arguments are inconclusive.<sup>12</sup>

First, there is an argument from ordinary language. In normal conditions, I can explain why my perceptual beliefs are reasonable without mentioning that my perception is reliable. And so it is argued that noninferentialism fits best with ordinary language while inferentialism is needlessly intellectualized. In reply, however, I don't need to mention the reliability of my perception because this is simply assumed in normal conversational contexts and not because this assumption plays no role in making my beliefs reasonable.

---

<sup>11</sup> Similar arguments can be found in the literature on reliabilism. For instance, Armstrong (1968: Ch. 9) argues that reasoning is required for believing on the basis of reasons and hence that noninferential knowledge is not based on reasons at all.

<sup>12</sup> See Pryor (2000) and Silins (2008) for related arguments for noninferentialism.

Second, there is an argument from introspection. My perceptual beliefs do not seem to be held on the basis of inference from premises about the reliability of perception, but they are reasonable nonetheless. But, in reply, inference is not always conscious and so it need not reveal itself upon introspection. My perceptual beliefs may be causally and inferentially dependent on beliefs about the reliability of perception even if they are not held on the basis of any conscious process of reasoning that makes the structure of the inference explicit.

Third, there is an argument from basing. The argument relies on the following principle: if one's reason to believe that  $p$  is inferentially mediated by one's reason to believe that  $q$ , then one's belief that  $p$  is reasonable only if it is held on the basis of inference from the reasonable belief that  $q$ . Given this principle, inferentialism is vulnerable to the objection that non-human animals and human infants can form reasonable beliefs on the basis of perception without having the intellectual abilities to form beliefs about the reliability of perception. In reply, however, the principle is false. Non-human animals and human infants need not conceptualize the reliability of perception so long as their beliefs are held in a way that is causally sensitive to the reliability of perception. This need not require a high degree of intellectual sophistication, since a causal sensitivity to the reliability of perception can be manifested in one's responses to defeaters – say, by withholding belief in the presence of evidence that one's perception is unreliable.

For the purposes of this chapter, we can remain neutral on the debate between noninferentialism and inferentialism, since both views raise the same question that is the main topic of this chapter – namely, what must perception be like in order to provide reasons for belief about the external world?

### 2.3. Davidson's Challenge

According to Donald Davidson, "Nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief" (1986: 310). Davidson seems to be saying that all reasons for belief are *identical* with psychological states of belief, rather than their contents, but this thesis about the ontology of reasons is not crucial here. All we need is the thesis that all reasons for belief are *provided* by other beliefs. Call this *Davidson's thesis*.

Davidson's thesis entails that if perception is distinct from belief, then perception cannot provide reasons for belief. According to Davidson, perception *causes* belief, but cannot provide *reasons* for belief, and so cannot make them reasonable, rational, or justified. Instead, beliefs are justified by virtue of their relations – in particular, relations of coherence – with other beliefs.<sup>13</sup>

The rationale for Davidson's thesis (i.e. that only beliefs justify other beliefs) depends on two background assumptions. The first assumption is what James Pryor calls "the Premise Principle":

---

<sup>13</sup> See also Bonjour (1985). This view is sometimes known as *pure coherentism*. It is distinguished from *impure coherentism* on which perception justifies belief but only in combination with other beliefs. The view Haack (1995) dubs "foundherentism" is naturally interpreted as a version of impure coherentism.

**The Premise Principle:** The only things that can justify a belief that *p* are other states that assertively represent propositions, and those propositions have to be ones that *could be used as premises* in an argument for *p*. They have to stand in some kind of inferential relation to *p*: they have to imply it or inductively support it or something like that. (2005: 189)

The Premise Principle is hard to reconcile with the epistemology of introspection. For instance, the feeling of visualizing color is sufficient to justify me in believing that I have this feeling, but it does not represent anything from which it follows (deductively or inductively) that I have this feeling. The feeling represents color, but not that I am visualizing color. Or so it seems reasonable to suppose. Some philosophers endorse a self-representational theory of conscious experience on which all experiences represent themselves.<sup>14</sup> But this is a controversial theory and it would be rash to endorse it just in order to save the Premise Principle.

Instead, we can restrict the Premise Principle so that it applies to perception, but not introspection. Perception must represent the external world in order to provide reasons for belief about the external world.<sup>15</sup> For instance, it is because my visual experience represents that the lights are on that I now have reason to believe that the lights are on. If my visual experience were comprised of brute sensations or “qualia” with no representational content, then it would give me no more reason to believe one thing rather than any other. Moreover, perception must represent the external world with *assertive force* in order to provide reasons for belief about the external world – that is to say, it must purport to tell me what the external world is like. Visualizing that the lights are on gives me no reason to believe that the lights are on because it lacks the assertive force of visual perception.<sup>16</sup>

Davidson’s second assumption is that perceptual experiences, unlike beliefs, do not represent the external world. On his view, perceptual experiences are brute sensations that have phenomenal character but lack representational force or content. As such, they fail to satisfy the conditions imposed by the Premise Principle. As Davidson says, “The relation between a sensation and a belief cannot be logical, since sensations are not beliefs or other propositional attitudes” (1986: 311).

Davidson’s challenge can now be summarized as follows:

---

<sup>14</sup> See Horgan and Kriegel (2007) for a theory of introspection that incorporates commitment to the self-representational theory of consciousness.

<sup>15</sup> McDowell (1994) and Brewer (2005) argue that the representational content of perception must be conceptually structured in order to provide reasons for belief, but see Heck (2000) and Peacocke (2001) for criticism. I assume that experience has representational content, while remaining neutral on the further question of whether it has conceptual structure. This is a fairly minimal assumption. For instance, Siegel (2011: Ch. 2) and Logue (2014) argue that even naïve realism is consistent with the view that experience has representational content.

<sup>16</sup> For discussion of the assertive force of perception, see Pryor (2000: 547, n. 37), Heck (2000), and Chudnoff (2012).

- (1) **The Premise Principle:** perception provides reasons for belief about the external world only if it assertively represents the external world.
- (2) Perception does not assertively represent the external world. Therefore,
- (3) **Davidson's thesis:** perception does not provide reasons for beliefs about the external world.

Let us assume that the Premise Principle is correct (at least in its restricted form) and hence that perception must assertively represent the external world in order to provide reasons for belief about the external world. Even so, Davidson's argument can be blocked on the grounds that his second assumption is false: perception does not assertively represent the external world. This response takes different forms depending on whether one endorses a *doxastic* or *non-doxastic* theory of perception.

The doxastic theory identifies perception with belief, or with some related doxastic state such as the event of acquiring a belief, or the conscious manifestation of belief in judgment, or the feeling of conscious inclination towards judgment.<sup>17</sup> This is consistent with Davidson's assumption that only doxastic states like beliefs are capable of representing the external world and thereby justifying other beliefs. By identifying perception with belief, however, the doxastic theory of perception blocks the argument to the conclusion that perception cannot justify belief.

There are several compelling objections to the doxastic theory. Some objections target the claim that belief is necessary for perception. First, there is a problem with known illusions: in the Muller-Lyer illusion, my perception represents that the lines are unequal in length, but I don't believe this, since I know about the illusion. Second, there is a problem with inattentional blindness: my perception represents that there is a cufflink in the drawer, but I don't form the belief because I'm not paying attention and so I don't notice it. Third, there is a problem with cognitive sophistication: some primitive creatures, such as jumping spiders, have perceptual systems that represent the external world without having any associated cognitive system. These are all serious problems, but I want to focus on objections that target the claim that belief is sufficient for perception.

The first objection is that the doxastic theory fails to capture the distinctive *phenomenal character* of perception. Beliefs themselves have no phenomenal character – they are standing states that persist through periods in which one has no conscious experience at all, such as dreamless sleep. Beliefs are disposed to manifest themselves in conscious experience as occurrent events of thinking and judging, but the phenomenal character of cognitive experience is quite unlike that of perceptual experience. A patient with blindsight, for example, could form beliefs and judgments about the external world without thereby experiencing the distinctive phenomenal character of perception.<sup>18</sup>

The second objection is that the doxastic theory fails to capture the distinctive *epistemic role* of perception. Perception is often thought to play a

---

<sup>17</sup> See Armstrong (1968), Pitcher (1971) and Gluer (2009). Byrne (2009) says that perception "constitutively involves" belief, but he does not identify perception with belief, so his view is not vulnerable to the sufficiency objections raised below.

<sup>18</sup> See Weiskrantz (1997) for an overview of empirical work on blindsight.

foundational epistemic role in justifying beliefs without itself standing in need of justification. Beliefs, in contrast, cannot justify other beliefs unless they are justified themselves. Given Davidson's assumption that only beliefs can justify other beliefs, this implies that there is either an infinite regress of justification or a closed circle of justification. Perception is a good candidate to block the threat of infinite regress or vicious circularity because it can justify belief without needing justification. Since beliefs cannot justify beliefs without needing justification, it follows that perception is distinct from belief.

These two objections to the doxastic theory – its failure to account for the phenomenal character of perception and its epistemic role – are intimately related. As I will explain, it is in virtue of its phenomenal character that perception plays its epistemic role. The phenomenal character of perception is what sets it apart from belief and explains why it is uniquely suited to play its foundational epistemic role in justifying belief without standing in need of justification.

Laurence Bonjour, following Wilfrid Sellars, argues that nothing can justify belief without standing in need of justification. He writes:

For it is clear on reflection that it is one and the same feature of a cognitive state, namely, its assertive or at least representational content, which both enables it to confer justification on other states and also creates the need for it to be itself justified—thus making it impossible in principle to separate these two aspects. (1985: 78)

Bonjour assumes here that all representational states stand in need of justification. This follows from Davidson's assumption that all representational states are beliefs, given that all beliefs stand in need of justification. But if Davidson's assumption is false, as the nondoxastic theory claims, then Bonjour's argument collapses. Even so, the argument poses an important challenge – namely, to identify what sets perception apart from belief and explains how it can play its foundational epistemic role in justifying beliefs without standing in need of justification.

On the non-doxastic theory, perceptions are non-doxastic states that are distinct from the beliefs and other doxastic states that they cause and justify. These non-doxastic states assertively represent the external world, but they have a distinctive phenomenal character that sets them apart from beliefs and other doxastic states. Moreover, the representational force and content of perception is not wholly independent from its phenomenal character. On the contrary, the phenomenal character of perception is intrinsically representational. One cannot coherently imagine someone whose perceptual experience has the very same phenomenal character as one's own but none of the same representational force or content. And this is because perceptual experience has representational force and content that is intrinsic to its phenomenal character.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> See McGinn (1988), Siewert (1998), Horgan and Tienson (2002) and Chalmers (2004) for related proposals. Note that there is no commitment here to the claim that all representational contents of perception are intrinsic to its phenomenal

BonJour's challenge is to explain why perception, unlike belief, is suited to play its foundational epistemic role in justifying belief without standing in need of justification. The answer is that perception is distinguished from belief by the distinctive phenomenal character in virtue of which it represents the external world. It is because perception represents the external world in virtue of this distinctive phenomenal character that it is uniquely suited to play its foundational epistemic role in justifying belief without standing in need of justification.<sup>20</sup>

The force of Davidson's challenge relies on an implausible separation between phenomenal character and representational content. The mind is divided into two categories: on the one hand there are sensations that have phenomenal character but no representational content, while on the other hand there are beliefs and other propositional attitudes that have representational content but no phenomenal character. The problem is that perceptual experience has both phenomenal character and representational content. If we identify perceptual experience with belief, then we cannot accommodate its phenomenal character, but if we identify perceptual experience with sensation, then we cannot accommodate its representational content. And if we identify perceptual experience with a conjunction of the two, then we fail to capture the intrinsic connection between its phenomenal character and its representational content.

### 3. The 'When?' Question

What are the conditions under which perception provides reasons for belief about the external world? In section 2, I argued that perceptual experience must assertively represent the external world in order to provide reasons for belief about the external world. My aim in this section is to explore whether this condition is not only necessary but also sufficient. Is it a sufficient condition for perceptual experience to provide reasons for belief about the external world that it assertively represents the external world? Or are there further conditions – such as reliability, truth, or knowledge – that must be satisfied in addition?

I propose to focus on the contrast between the following pair of views:

- **The Content View:** One has defeasible, noninferential reason to believe that *p* on the basis of perception if and only if one has a perceptual experience that represents that *p*.<sup>21</sup>
- **The Knowledge View:** One has defeasible, noninferential reason to believe that *p* on the basis of perception if and only if one perceives that *p* and thereby knows that *p*.<sup>22</sup>

---

character. Some representational contents of perception may depend upon extrinsic relations to the external environment.

<sup>20</sup> See Smithies (forthcoming) for a more extended discussion and defence of the role of phenomenal character in the epistemology of perception.

<sup>21</sup> Proponents of the Content View include Pryor (2000), Huemer (2001), Peacocke (2004), Silins (2008), and Smithies (forthcoming).

The restriction to *noninferential reasons* is designed to set aside cases in which one has sufficient reason to believe, say, that it's just been raining on the basis of a visual experience that represents that the pavement is wet. I don't want to prejudge the debate between inferentialism and noninferentialism, so we can leave this debate open by including *quasi-noninferential* reasons for belief that do not depend on perceptually-based reasons to believe anything else (see section 2.1).

The Content View and the Knowledge View are not exhaustive options. There is a whole spectrum of intermediate views on which assertively representing the external world is not sufficient, and perceptual knowledge of the external world is not necessary, for perceptual experience to provide noninferential reasons for belief about the external world. For instance, there are versions of Reliabilism on which a perceptual experience with the representational content that *p* provides sufficient noninferential reason to believe that *p* on the basis of perception if and only if it reliably indicates that *p*.<sup>23</sup> I will focus on the Content View and the Knowledge View because intermediate views fall within the target range of arguments for and against these more extreme views.

These options are exclusive even if they are not exhaustive. They differ in extension given the assumption that perceptual experience can represent some of the same contents whether or not one has perceptual knowledge. Let us stipulate that in the *good case* one has perceptual knowledge that *p*, whereas in the *bad case* one has perceptual experience that represents that *p* in the absence of perceptual knowledge that *p*. Moreover, one has no defeating reasons in either case. The Content View says that one has reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case alike, whereas the Knowledge View says that one has reasons only in the good case. Given this extensional difference, bad cases of perceptual illusion and hallucination provide a good test case for deciding between these views. In section 3.1, I'll present an argument from parity against the Knowledge View.

### 3.1. The Argument from Parity

Here is a statement of the argument from parity:

- (1) Subjects in the good case and the bad case are equally rational insofar as they hold the same beliefs.
- (2) If subjects in the good case and the bad case are equally rational insofar as they hold the same beliefs, then perceptual experience provides equal reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case.
- (3) Therefore, perceptual experience provides equal reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case.

---

<sup>22</sup> Proponents of the Knowledge View include Unger (1975), McDowell (1995), Hyman (1999), Williamson (2000, 2007), Sutton (2007), Littlejohn (2012, this volume), Pritchard (2012), Byrne (2014), Hawthorne and Magidor (this volume).

<sup>23</sup> Proponents of Reliabilism include Goldman (1979), Sosa (1991), Burge (2003), Bergmann (2006), and Lyons (2009), although they disagree among themselves about how the reliability condition is to be understood.

The argument from parity purports to establish that subjects have equal reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case. But the Knowledge View entails that subjects do not have equal reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case. So if the argument from parity is sound, then the Knowledge View is false.<sup>24</sup>

Proponents of the Knowledge View can respond to this argument in one of two ways. The bold response is to reject the first premise: subjects in the bad case are less rational than subjects in the good case. The more cautious response is to accept the first premise and reject the second: subjects in the good case and the bad case are equally rational, although they do not have equal reasons for belief. I'll consider each of these responses in turn.

The bold response is very hard to swallow. Suppose that Macbeth undergoes a gradual transition from the good case of knowing by perception that there is a dagger before him to the bad case of merely hallucinating that there is a dagger before him.<sup>25</sup> The transition is "seamless" in the sense that Macbeth cannot know by introspection that the transition is occurring. Moreover, it makes no relevant impact on his beliefs, so he continues to believe that there is dagger before him with the same high level of confidence. What is hard to swallow is the idea that rationality requires Macbeth to abandon his belief or to reduce his confidence with the result that he is rational at the start of the transition and irrational by the end.

Some proponents of the Knowledge View respond by drawing a distinction between rationality and blamelessness.<sup>26</sup> The suggestion is that in the bad case one's beliefs are irrational, since does not have reasons for one's beliefs, but one nevertheless has a good excuse for holding them – namely, that one is in a case that is indiscriminable by reflection from the good case. Since one has such an excuse, one cannot be blamed for forming these beliefs, but it does not follow that one has reasons for those beliefs. In the bad case, one is blameless, but irrational.

Everyone should agree that blameless is not sufficient for rationality. This is best illustrated by examples in which victims of brainwashing, drugs, or mental illness form irrational beliefs through no fault of their own. Consider a patient with Capgras delusion who believes her spouse has been replaced by an imposter or a patient with Cotard delusion who believes he is dead. We do not blame patients for holding these irrational beliefs because of their cognitive disorder.

Intuitively, however, there is a rational disparity between perceptual illusion on the one hand and cognitive delusion on the other. Our evaluations of rationality are sensitive to a distinction between false belief owing to perceptual malfunction and false belief owing to cognitive malfunction. Both are blameless, but the former is rational, while the latter is not. This distinction is obscured if we maintain that both are cases of blameless irrationality.

---

<sup>24</sup> A similar argument can be run against intermediate views, such as Reliabilism. See Cohen (1984) for an early version of this argument.

<sup>25</sup> The transition must be very gradual in order to avoid violating the safety condition for knowledge. But the transition is mainly for dramatic effect: we can also compare Macbeth in the good case with his duplicate in the bad case.

<sup>26</sup> See Williamson (2007), Littlejohn (2009), Pritchard (2012), Byrne (2014).

Can proponents of the Knowledge View capture the intuitive basis of the distinction between perceptual illusion and cognitive delusion while maintaining that both are cases of blameless irrationality? Timothy Williamson (forthcoming) draws a distinction between being rational and merely being disposed to be rational. The claim is that while victims of perceptual illusion are not rational in the bad case, they are nevertheless disposed to be rational in the good case, whereas patients with cognitive delusions are neither rational nor disposed to be rational.

Here is a dilemma for Williamson's proposal. Do we manifest the same dispositions in the good case and the bad case? If so, then the beliefs that result from these dispositions are equally rational in the good case and the bad case, since a belief is rational just in case it results from manifesting a rational disposition. If not, then the proposal fails to capture the intuitive basis of the distinction.

Williamson's proposal is explicitly designed to avoid the first horn. On his view, the victim of perceptual illusion has a general disposition to be rational, but the disposition is not manifested because "the unfavorable circumstances block those manifestations". For purposes of comparison, he gives the example of Connie, a generally competent mathematician who believes contradictions when she is in the presence of a brain-scrambling machine. She does what a person with rational dispositions would do in the circumstances, but she does not thereby manifest a rational disposition, and so her beliefs are not rational.

Intuitively, however, the victim of perceptual illusion is more rational than Connie in the circumstances, even if their general dispositions are equally rational. Compare two victims of perceptual illusion: one who forms beliefs in conformity with her experience, while the other believes in contradiction with her experience, owing to the operation of a brain-scrambling machine. Both subjects are blameless, and both have generally rational dispositions, but only the former exercises a rational disposition in the circumstances. Williamson's proposal fails to capture the intuitive basis of this distinction and thereby falls on the second horn.

The more cautious response to the parity argument is to accept the first premise and reject the second. On this view, subjects in the good case and the bad case can be equally rational without having equal reasons for belief. This is to reject the connection between reasons and rationality proposed in section 1. The existence of this connection seems plausible, and even platitudinous, but it has been recently challenged by various prominent figures including Derek Parfit and John Broome. As I'll explain, however, their objections are unconvincing

Parfit proposes the following counterexample to the claim that rationality requires having and responding to reasons:

Suppose that, while walking in some desert, you have disturbed and angered some poisonous snake. You believe that, to save your life, you must run away. In fact you must stand still, since this snake will attack only moving targets. (2011: 34)

Parfit acknowledges that it would be irrational to stand still and that the rational course of action is rather to run away. But he denies that you have any reason to run

away, and claims instead that you have decisive reason to stand still, since that is the only way to avoid a snakebite.

The disagreement has a purely terminological component. Recall the distinction between objective and subjective reasons drawn in section 1. Parfit's example shows that rationality does not require objective reasons, but it does nothing to undermine the claim that rationality requires subjective reasons. In this example, objective and subjective reasons come apart: you have a decisive subjective reason to run away, but a decisive objective reason to stand still. But the disagreement also has a substantive component. When Parfit considers the response that false beliefs can provide reasons, he replies, "these reasons do not have any *normative force*, in the sense that they do not count in favor of any action" (2011: 35). But this is just to assume that the only sense in which reasons can count in favor of action is the objective sense, rather than the subjective sense. Parfit gives no reason for thinking that reasons cannot count in favor of action in the subjective sense that they contribute towards making them reasonable or rational.

Broome argues that rationality comes apart from reasons in cases of rational ignorance and error about one's reasons. He writes:

It can happen that your reasons require you to F but you do not believe your reasons require you to F. Furthermore, this can happen even if you are rational. Suppose it does. Since you do not believe your reasons require you to F, you may rationally fail to F. Therefore, even though your reasons require you to F, you may be rational even if you do not F. (2013: 74)

The argument assumes that there can be rational ignorance and error about what one has reasons to do. This is certainly true in the case of objective reasons, but is it true in the case of subjective reasons? In section 3.2 below, I'll argue that subjective reasons are *luminous* in a sense that rules out the possibility of rational ignorance and error about one's reasons. The claim is that ignorance and error about one's reasons always constitutes some departure from ideal standards of rationality, even if it is not sufficient to make one irrational by non-ideal standards of rationality.

### **3.2. The Argument from Luminosity**

Here is a statement of the argument from luminosity:

- (1) One's reasons for belief and action are *luminous* in the sense that one is always in a position to know which reasons one has.
- (2) If the Knowledge View is true, then one's reasons are *not* luminous.
- (3) Therefore, the Knowledge View is false.

A similar form of argument applies to any view that is inconsistent with the luminosity of reasons, but I'll focus on the Knowledge View.

Once again, there are two responses available to proponents of the Knowledge View. The bold response is to reject the first premise by denying the thesis that reasons are luminous. The more cautious response is to accept the first

premise and reject the second by arguing that the Knowledge View is consistent with the thesis that reasons are luminous. I'll consider these responses in turn.

First, why suppose that reasons are luminous? One important motivation is to guarantee the irrationality of *akrasia* – that is, the phenomenon of believing and acting in ways that conflict with one's beliefs about how it is rational for one to believe and act. Consider the following level-bridging principle:

- **The Level-Bridging Principle:** One has reason to  $\phi$  if and only if one has reason to believe that one has reason to  $\phi$ .

If the left-to-right direction is false, then there are cases in which it's rationally permissible to  $\phi$ , although it's not rationally permissible to *believe* that it is rational to  $\phi$ . But if it's not rationally permissible to believe a proposition, then it must be rationally permissible either to *disbelieve* or to *withhold belief* instead. However, it cannot be rationally permissible to  $\phi$  while disbelieving or withholding belief that it is rational to  $\phi$ , given the plausible assumption that *akrasia* is always irrational. So the left-to-right direction is true after all. Similarly, if the right-to-left direction is false, then there are cases in which it's rational to *believe* that it's rationally required to  $\phi$ , but it's *not* rationally required to  $\phi$ . But if it's not rationally required to  $\phi$ , then it is rationally permissible to refrain from  $\phi$ ing. However, since *akrasia* is always irrational, it cannot be rationally permissible to refrain from  $\phi$ ing while believing that it's rationally required to  $\phi$ . So the right-to-left direction is also true.<sup>27</sup>

The level-bridging principle ensures that one's reasons are luminous by ruling out the possibility of rational uncertainty and error about one's reasons. Moreover, it rules out the possibility of higher-level Gettier cases in which one has reason to believe that one has reason to  $\phi$ , and it is true that one has reason to  $\phi$ , but one is not in a position to know that one has reason to  $\phi$  because there is a close case in which one has reason to believe falsely that one has reason to  $\phi$ . After all, it entails that any close case in which one has reason to believe that one has reason to  $\phi$  is a case in which one does in fact have reason to  $\phi$ .

Williamson (2000: Ch. 4) opts for the bold response. He gives an argument that is designed to establish that nothing is luminous. The argument relies on a plausible empirical assumption that our powers of discrimination are limited in such a way that we are not safe from error in borderline cases. For any condition C, there is some borderline case in which C obtains and there is a close case in which one falsely believes that C obtains. Now assume a safety condition for knowledge, which states that one knows that C obtains only if there is no close case in which one falsely believes that C obtains. For any condition C, we can find examples in which C obtains but one fails to know that C obtains.

Does it follow that one is not in a *position to know* that C obtains? In response to Williamson, I have drawn a distinction (see Smithies 2012b) between *epistemic*

---

<sup>27</sup> See Smithies (2012a) for a more detailed presentation of this argument in the case of epistemic reasons or justification for belief. In response to the objection that the level-bridging principle is regressive, I argue that the infinite regress is benign.

and *doxastic* interpretations of what it takes to be in a position to know that *p*. In the doxastic sense, one is in a position to know that *p* only if there is no close case in which one falsely believes that *p*. But in the epistemic sense, one is in a position to know that *p* so long as there is no close case in which one has reason to believe falsely that *p*. Even if Williamson's argument succeeds in showing that nothing is luminous in the doxastic sense, it fails to show that nothing is luminous in the epistemic sense. Moreover, the argument against the Knowledge View can be run using the epistemic sense of luminosity. So Williamson's bold response fails.

The more cautious response is to argue that the Knowledge View is consistent with the luminosity of reasons. John McDowell (2011) and Duncan Pritchard (2012) argue that one's reasons are *weakly luminous* but not *strongly luminous* in the sense that the presence of reasons is luminous, although the absence of reasons is not. In the good case, one has reasons for belief and one is in a position to know that one has those reasons. In the bad case, in contrast, one lacks reasons for belief, but one is not in a position to know that one lacks those reasons. So the bad case generates counterexamples to strong luminosity, but not weak luminosity.

Is weak luminosity strong enough? One might reject strong luminosity on the grounds that it is too strong. Consider *de re* propositions about an object such that you cannot entertain those proposition unless you stand in some specified relation, such as a perceptual relation, to the object. If you do not satisfy the conditions for entertaining those propositions, then they are *epistemically inert* in the sense that there is no doxastic attitude that you have reason to adopt towards them. But now we can give counterexamples to strong luminosity in which there is an epistemically inert proposition that *p* such that one lacks reason to believe that *p*, while also lacking reason to believe that one lacks reason to believe that *p*.

Arguably, however, *de re* propositions are a special case. For any proposition that one can entertain, there is some doxastic attitude that one has reason to adopt: if one lacks reason either to believe or disbelieve such a proposition, then one has reason to withhold belief instead.<sup>28</sup> Weak luminosity applies not just to reasons for belief and disbelief, but also reasons for withholding: if one has reason to withhold belief, rather than believing or disbelieving a proposition, then one has reason to believe that one has such a reason. The upshot is that one's reasons for belief and other doxastic attitudes are strongly luminous, and not merely weakly luminous, given the restriction to propositions that one can entertain.

This generates an objection to the cautious response. In the bad case, Macbeth can entertain the proposition that there is a dagger before him, so there is some doxastic attitude that he has reason to adopt. Since the luminosity of reasons applies quite generally, he has reason to believe that he has reason to adopt such an attitude. According to the Knowledge View, the attitude that he has reason to adopt in the bad case is distinct from the attitude he has reason to adopt in the good case.

---

<sup>28</sup> The word 'can' is notoriously context-sensitive. In this context, the interpretation need only be strong enough to rule out externalist contents when one does not satisfy the relevant externalist conditions. There need be no commitment to any stronger connection between reasons and abilities. See Streumer (this volume) for further discussion of this issue.

So the Knowledge View combined with the weak luminosity of reasons yields the result that Macbeth is in a position to know that he is in the bad case rather than the good case. But that is absurd. After all, as Williamson (2000: 165) says, "Part of the badness of the bad case is that one cannot know just how bad one's case is."

I'll consider two replies to this objection. The first reply exploits the distinction I have drawn in response to Williamson's anti-luminosity argument between epistemic and doxastic interpretations of being in a position to know. The claim is that subjects in the bad case are in an epistemic position but not a doxastic position to know that they're in the bad case. What's bad about the bad case, on this view, is that subjects are unable to exploit their epistemic position owing to their limited powers of discrimination. When we're in the bad case, we have reasons to believe that we are in the bad case, but we cannot respond appropriately to these reasons because we cannot discriminate the bad case from the good case.

This reply has at least two implausible consequences. The first consequence is that the bad case of perceptual illusion or hallucination involves a rational defect in cognition. As I argued above, however, we need to preserve a distinction in respect of rationality between perceptual and cognitive malfunction. What's bad about the bad case is not that one is cognitively irrational, but rather that being cognitively rational is guaranteed to result in ignorance and error about the external world given one's perceptual deficiencies.

The second bad consequence is that a fully rational thinker can always know when she is in the bad case. But the bad case is plausibly much worse than that: not even a fully rational thinker can know when she is in the bad case. Even a naïve realist like Martin (2004) concedes that a perfect hallucination is indiscriminable from veridical perfection in an impersonal sense that abstracts away from the limited cognitive capacities of particular subjects. So the point holds as much for fully rational thinkers as it does for imperfectly rational thinkers like you and me. Any conception of rationality that denies this is hard to countenance.

The second reply is to reject the assumption that one always has reason to adopt some doxastic attitude in the bad case. On this view, there is no doxastic attitude that Macbeth has reason to adopt towards the proposition that there is a dagger before him. In other words, this proposition is *epistemically inert*, and so it does not yield any counterexample to the weak luminosity of reasons. But this proposal has its own implausible consequences.

First, there is no good precedent for the claim that these propositions are epistemically inert. For any proposition that one can entertain, there is some doxastic attitude that one has reason to adopt. Consider the proposition that the number of books in my office is even. If you lack reason either to believe it or to disbelieve it, then you have reason to withhold. In general, withholding is reasonable by default in the absence of reasons for belief or disbelief. To deny this in the bad case of illusion and hallucination seems ad hoc and unmotivated.

Second, we cannot explain what's bad about the bad case in terms of the purely negative notion of epistemic inertness. Consider the epistemic predicament of someone who is temporarily comatose. They have no first-order reason to adopt doxastic attitudes and they have no second-order reason to believe that they have no first-order reason. But the bad case is not like that. Certainly, there are cognitive

differences, since subjects are disposed to form beliefs in the bad case of perceptual illusion and hallucination, but not in a comatose state. However, these cognitive differences fail to explain the relevant epistemic differences. Compare my epistemic predicament in the bad case with that of my temporarily zombified twin. We form the very same beliefs, but the epistemic difference between us cannot be captured in purely negative terms. What's bad about the bad case is not merely that one lacks reason to believe that one is in the bad case. In addition, one has reason to believe falsely that one is in the good case.

Finally, this reply repeats the mistake of diagnosing what's bad about the bad case in terms of cognitive irrationality. But now the guarantee of irrationality is not merely "medical" in the way that it was before. On the first reply, we are psychologically destined to be irrational in the bad case, but our more fully rational selves are not. On the second reply, in contrast, there is no way to avoid irrationality in the bad case. Just by virtue of entertaining the proposition one is guaranteed to adopt some doxastic attitude towards it – even if it is merely the attitude of not yet having made up one's mind. But on this option, no such doxastic attitude is reasonable. So the bad case is an *epistemic dilemma* in the sense that whatever doxastic attitude one adopts, it is guaranteed to be unreasonable. Whatever you do, you just can't win! I take this to be a very unattractive consequence of the view.

In section 3, I have considered two arguments against the Knowledge View. These arguments are powerful, but they need to be weighed against the positive arguments for the Knowledge View. In section 4, I'll consider an argument for the Knowledge View that appeals to a thesis about the ontology of reasons.

#### 4. The 'What?' Question

What are the reasons that perception provides for belief about the external world? I assume that if one has reason to believe a proposition, then there is something that is the reason that one has.<sup>29</sup> Our question is: what kind of thing is this reason?

This question has an indirect bearing on the debate between the Content View and the Knowledge View. Although neither view entails an answer to this question, one can argue for the Knowledge View, and against the Content View, as a consequence of the more general thesis that one's reasons for belief are the facts that one knows. Call this the R = K thesis:

- **The R = K thesis:** one has the proposition that  $p$  as a reason if and only if one knows that  $p$ .

The R = K thesis is inspired by Williamson's E = K thesis, which states that one has the proposition that  $p$  as part of one's evidence if and only if one knows that  $p$ .<sup>30</sup> They are equivalent given that all and only reasons for belief are evidence.

---

<sup>29</sup> As explained in section 1, I reject the Factoring Account, so I deny that subjective reasons are a subset of objective reasons. I also deny that the status of something as a subjective reason is independent of its being possessed.

The R = K thesis is inconsistent with the Content View. If we have the same reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case, then our reasons for belief are not coextensive with what we know, since we know more in the good case than we do in the bad case. So if the R = K thesis is true, then the Content View is false.

The Knowledge View is not directly entailed by the R = K thesis alone, but it can be motivated by combining the R = K thesis with further assumptions. I'll outline two strategies for closing the gap between the R = K thesis and the Knowledge View. But first let me explain why the R = K thesis does not entail that one has reason to believe that  $p$  if and only if one knows that  $p$ .

According to Williamson, one knows that  $p$  only if the epistemic probability that  $p$  is 1. This is a consequence of the R = K thesis, since the epistemic probability of a proposition is defined as its probability given one's total evidence – that is, one's total set of reasons for belief. Now suppose that one's knowledge that  $p$  makes it probable that  $q$ , but without entailing that  $q$ , so that the probability that  $q$  is high, but less than 1. In that case, arguably, one has the proposition that  $p$  as a reason to believe that  $q$  without knowing that  $q$ . The R = K thesis does not rule this out.

So the R = K thesis allows that you have reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case alike. Consider the case of perception. In the good case, you have reason to believe that  $p$  because you know via perception that  $p$ . In the bad case, in contrast, you have reason to believe that  $p$  because you know that it seems that  $p$ , which makes it probable that  $p$ . In the good case, your reasons to believe that  $p$  entail that  $p$ , whereas in the bad case, your reasons make it probable that  $p$  without entailing that  $p$ . So you have reasons in the good case and the bad case alike, but you have more reasons, and better reasons, in the good case.

The Knowledge View goes further than the R = K thesis insofar as it claims that there is nothing that one has noninferential reason to believe on the basis of perceptual experience in the bad case. This is not entailed by the R = K thesis alone, but I'll now consider two strategies for closing the gap.

The first strategy rules out cases in which one has *noninferential* reason to believe that  $p$  without knowing that  $p$ . If the R = K thesis is true, then all reasons are grounded in knowledge, but we can distinguish further between the way in which inferential and noninferential reasons are grounded in knowledge. Let's say that an inferential reason to believe a proposition is grounded in knowledge of other propositions, whereas a noninferential reason to believe a proposition is grounded in knowledge of that very proposition. This allows for cases in which one has inferential reason to believe that  $p$  without knowing that  $p$  in virtue of knowing some other proposition that  $q$ . But any noninferential reason to believe that  $p$  is grounded wholly in knowledge that  $p$ . A consequence of this view is that in the bad case one can have inferential reasons for belief about the external world, but one cannot have noninferential reasons for belief.

The second strategy rules out cases in which one has either *inferential* or *noninferential* reason to believe that  $p$  without knowing that  $p$ . On this view, one has

---

<sup>30</sup> See Williamson (2000: 185) for the E = K thesis: "Knowledge, and only knowledge, constitutes evidence." Compare Williamson (2007: 120) for the R = K thesis: "that  $p$  is available to you as a reason if and only if you know  $p$ ."

reason to believe that  $p$  only if the epistemic probability that  $p$  is 1. Consider a lottery in which the epistemic probability that my ticket will lose is arbitrarily high, but less than 1. In this case, Williamson claims that I don't know that my ticket will lose and, moreover, I don't have reason to believe it. I have reason to be highly confident that it will lose, but I don't have reason to believe this outright in the sense of being disposed to assert that it will lose and to take this for granted as a premise in reasoning. But when I come to know that my ticket lost by watching the draw, then I can reasonably believe it. A consequence of this view is that in the bad case one has neither inferential nor noninferential reasons for belief, although one may have reason for a high degree of confidence that falls short of belief.<sup>31</sup>

What I've done so far is to explain how the R = K thesis can be used in motivating the Knowledge View. There is plenty here to discuss, but given limited space, I want to press on now and examine arguments for the R = K thesis. Following Williamson (2000: 193), the master argument can be summarized as follows:

- (1) All reasons are propositions.
- (2) All reasons are known facts (i.e. true propositions).
- (3) All known facts are reasons.
- (4) Therefore, all and only known facts are reasons.

As Williamson (2000: 194) acknowledges, each premise is contentious, but the argument as a whole provides a useful framework for organizing our discussion.

The Content View is inconsistent with the R = K thesis, so it stands in need of an alternative account of what our reasons are. There are at least three options corresponding to the three premises in the master argument. The first option is to deny that all reasons are propositions on the grounds that some reasons are *experiences*.<sup>32</sup> The second option is to concede that all reasons are propositions, but to deny that all reasons are known facts on the grounds that some reasons are *false*.<sup>33</sup> The third option is to concede that all reasons are facts that are least knowable, if not actually known, but to deny that all knowable facts are reasons on the grounds that all reasons are *luminous* facts.<sup>34</sup>

If we have equal reasons for belief in the good case and the bad case, then what are the reasons that we have? What is Macbeth's reason to believe that there is a dagger before him in the bad case of perceptual hallucination? On the first account, his reason is a perceptual experience, which represents that there is a dagger before him. On the second account, his reason is the false proposition that there is a dagger

---

<sup>31</sup> Williamson's own view is hard to pin down. In his (2000), he allows that there can be justified false beliefs and Gettier cases in which justified true beliefs fall short of knowledge. In his (2007), he says that only knowledge is *fully* justified, but it is not entirely clear whether he allows that an outright belief can be justified without being fully justified.

<sup>32</sup> See Pollock and Cruz (1999), Conee and Feldman (2008), Turri (2009).

<sup>33</sup> See Schroeder (2008, 2011), Fantl and McGrath (2009), Comesana and McGrath (2014).

<sup>34</sup> See Smithies (2012b).

before him, which is represented by his perceptual experience. On the third account, his reason is the luminous fact that he has a perceptual experience that represents that there is a dagger before him. I'll consider each of these accounts in turn.

#### **4.1. All Reasons are Propositions?**

The first option for proponents of the Content View is to deny the premise that all reasons are propositions on the grounds that some reasons are *experiences*. On this view, Macbeth's reason to believe that there is a dagger before him is his visual experience, which represents that there is a dagger before him. This is a reason that he has in the good case and the bad case alike.

Why suppose that all reasons are propositions? We often report reasons in propositional form. We might say, for example, that Jones's reason for resting is that he feels tired. But we don't always talk this way: it would be fine to say instead that Jones's feeling tired is his reason for resting. So the appeal to ordinary language is indecisive in the absence of any compelling reasons to regard one of these ways of talking as a better guide to the ontology of reasons than the other.

Williamson (2000: 194-7) argues that evidence must consist of propositions in order to play the theoretical roles that are central to our ordinary concept of evidence. For instance, evidence is the kind of thing that can confirm a hypothesis by raising its probability or rule out a hypothesis by being inconsistent with it. But only propositions can play these roles. Therefore, evidence consists of propositions.

We can give a parallel argument that reasons must be propositions in order to play the theoretical roles that are central to our ordinary concept of a reason. For instance, our reasons for belief make it reasonable to believe some propositions rather than others by entailing them, making them probable, or ruling them out by being inconsistent with them. But only propositions can play these roles. Therefore, reasons are propositions.

In response, one might insist on a distinction between reporting the reasons or evidence in propositional form and the reasons or evidence thereby reported. Thus, Earl Conee and Richard Feldman write: "The proposition reports the evidence or represents it. But it is not identical to the evidence" (2011: 321). With this distinction in hand, one might say that the logical and probabilistic roles that Williamson identifies are played not by reasons themselves, but rather by reports of the reasons in propositional form. On this view, the theoretical role of reasons is rather different: reasons are what make it the case that beliefs are reasonable and thereby serve as the basis for reasonable beliefs. Compare John Pollock and Joseph Cruz, who write: "A state M of a person S is a reason for S to believe Q if and only if it is logically possible for S to become justified in believing Q by believing it on the basis of being in the state M" (1999: 195).

There is an important moral to be drawn here. Our ordinary concepts of reasons and evidence are associated with many different theoretical roles and there may be no one thing that can play all of these roles.<sup>35</sup> If so, then we may be forced to accept multiple conceptions of reasons or evidence corresponding to the various

---

<sup>35</sup> See Kelly (2014) for an overview that makes the same point.

different roles that are reflected in our ordinary concept. I'll have more to say more about this possibility in section 4.3 below.

#### 4.2. All Reasons are Known Facts?

The second option for proponents of the Content View is to concede that all reasons are propositions, but to deny that all reasons are known facts on the grounds that some reasons are *false*. On this view, Macbeth's reason to believe that there is a dagger before him is the false proposition that there is a dagger before him, which is represented by his visual experience. This is a reason that he has in the good case and the bad case alike.

One might deny that all reasons are known facts on the grounds that not all reasons are *believed*. For instance, if my experience assertively represents that *p*, but I just happen to withhold belief that *p*, then it's plausible that I'm failing to respond to the reasons or evidence in my possession. If so, then having the proposition that *p* as a reason does not require believing that *p* as opposed to merely perceptually representing that *p*.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps I must believe that *p* if the proposition that *p* is to figure as a premise in reasoning. But it doesn't follow that I must believe that *p* in order to have the proposition that *p* as a normative reason, or even a motivating reason, so long as *reasoning* is not required for basing one's beliefs on reasons.

If I don't need to believe that *p*, then I don't need to know that *p* in order to have the proposition that *p* as a reason. Do I need to be in a *position* to know that *p*? If so, then the R = K thesis can simply be revised as follows:

- **The Revised R = K Thesis:** one has the proposition that *p* as a reason if and only if one is in a position to know that *p*.

A more serious objection is that one can have the proposition that *p* as a reason without even being in a position to know that *p* because it is false that *p*.

Why suppose that all reasons are facts? Peter Unger (1975) gives a semantic argument that begins with the observation that sentences like the following sound rather odd: "Fred's reason for running was that the store was going to close in a few minutes, but in fact it *wasn't* going to close." Unger claims that such sentences sound odd because they are false. Therefore, he concludes that if someone's reason for belief or action is that *p*, then it is a fact that *p*.<sup>37</sup>

Juan Comesana and Matthew McGrath (2014: 71-6) agree that these sentences sound odd, but they propose a pragmatic explanation in place of Unger's semantic explanation. According to their proposal, saying that someone's reason is that *p* presupposes that *p* without thereby entailing that *p*. They motivate this proposal in two ways. First, they note that the presupposition lapses in certain contexts. For instance, in a context in which it's common knowledge that Sally didn't

---

<sup>36</sup> Compare Schroeder (2011) for the proposal that one has a proposition as a reason just in case one has a *presentational attitude* towards that proposition: in the terminology of this paper, one represents it as true with assertive force.

<sup>37</sup> See Unger (1975: Ch. 5). Compare Hyman (1999), Hornsby (2008), Hawthorne and Magidor (this volume) for related arguments.

get another offer, but merely thought she did, we can say, “Her reason for turning down the job was that she had another offer.” Second, in a context where this is not common knowledge, one can explicitly cancel the presupposition by saying, “Sally’s reason for turning down the job was that was that she had another offer; and that made perfect sense; however, her source was lying – she never had the other offer.”

Williamson (2000: 200) gives an argument from the function of evidence. One of the central functions of evidence is to confirm a hypothesis by inference to the best explanation when the hypothesis explains the evidence better than the alternatives. So evidence is the kind of thing that hypotheses explain. But facts are the kind of thing that hypotheses explain. Therefore, evidence consists of facts.

In response, however, one might claim that what hypotheses explain is not the *evidence*, but rather our *possession* of the evidence, where this is constituted by facts about our mental states, such as the fact that we believe or perceptually represent the propositions that comprise our evidence.

Williamson also gives an argument from cases. Suppose that many balls are drawn from a bag and all of them are black. Williamson takes it as a datum that my evidence is consistent with the hypotheses that some *unobserved* balls are red, but not with the hypothesis that some *observed* balls are red. He explains the datum by appealing to the claim that all evidence is knowledge: I know that all the observed balls are black but I don’t know that all the unobserved balls are black.

The datum can be disputed, but let us grant it for the sake of the argument. We can explain it with the proposal that one has the proposition that *p* as part of one’s evidence only if one has *knowledge-level justification* to believe that *p*. In Williamson’s example, one has knowledge-level justification to believe that all observed balls are black, but not that all unobserved balls are black. This proposal is distinct from Williamson’s because one can have knowledge-level justification to believe that *p* even when it is false that *p*.

A similar response applies to Williamson’s chain reaction argument:

Our known evidence justifies belief in various true hypotheses; they would count as evidence too, so this larger evidence set would justify belief in still more true hypotheses, which would in turn count as further evidence.... The result would be very different from our present conception of evidence.  
(2000: 201)

The concern is that a non-factive conception of evidence allows that one’s degree of justification gradually decreases as one continues along the chain of justification. But we can avoid the objection so long as we insist that one’s evidence must have knowledge-level justification. A proposition is excluded from one’s evidence as soon as one’s degree of justification to believe it drops below that level. But again, a proposition need not be true in order to have knowledge-level justification.

Finally, Williamson argues that one’s evidence cannot rule out truths:

If one’s evidence included falsehoods, it would rule out some truths, by being inconsistent with them. One’s evidence may make some truths improbable, but it should not exclude any outright. (2000: 201)

But why should we accept that one's evidence cannot rule out truths? Suppose my perceptual evidence rules out the hypothesis that I am a handless brain in a vat by giving me knowledge-level justification to believe that I have hands. Since I have the same evidence in the good case and the bad case, the same is true of my envatted duplicate. In that case, his perceptual evidence rules out a truth. Since evidence can be misleading, this should not be surprising. According to Williamson, misleading evidence can make truths improbable, but it cannot be inconsistent with truths. However, there is not much pressure to agree with him on this point.

### **4.3. All Known Facts are Reasons?**

The third option for proponents of the Content View is to concede that all reasons are facts that are least knowable, if not actually known, but to deny that all knowable facts are reasons on the grounds that all reasons are *luminous* facts. On this view, Macbeth's reason to believe that there is a dagger before him is the luminous fact he has a visual experience that represents that there is a dagger before him. This is a reason that he has in the good case and the bad case alike.

Why suppose that all known facts are reasons? Williamson (2000: 203-7) argues that there is no plausible restriction that is motivated by reflection on the function of reasons or evidence. But in section 3.2, I argued that reasons must be luminous in the sense that one is always in a position to know which reasons one has. The function of reasons is to make beliefs rational in such a way that the facts about rationality will be luminous to the agent. But only luminous facts can play this role. Therefore, only luminous facts are reasons.

Williamson also gives a positive argument that all known facts can function as reasons or evidence.<sup>38</sup> The argument is that if you know that *p*, then it is permissible to treat the proposition that *p* as a reason for belief and action – for instance, by using it as a premise in theoretical or practical reasoning. Thus, he writes: “If, when assessing an hypothesis, one knows something *e* which bears on its truth, should not *e* be part of one's evidence?” (2000: 203-4)

By these standards, the restriction to luminous facts is implausible. In most ordinary contexts, it sounds perfectly fine to say that someone's reason for believing that *q* is that *p*, where *p* is a non-luminous fact about the external world, rather than a luminous fact about the subject's mental states. We don't always reason from premises about our own mental states; indeed, we reason more often from premises about the external world. And the same is true when citing evidence for scientific theories. So luminosity is, as Williamson (2000: 173) notes, “a severe constraint on the nature of evidence. It is inconsistent with the view that evidence consists of true propositions like those standardly offered as evidence for scientific theories.”

In reply, we can distinguish two distinct conceptions of reasons or evidence that play two distinct functional roles. First, there's a conception of reasons or evidence as facts that contribute towards making belief and action reasonable or rational or justified. And second, there's a conception of reasons as propositions that

---

<sup>38</sup> Compare Littlejohn (2012) and Byrne (2014) for related arguments.

can serve as premises in good reasoning. But these two conceptions of reasons are distinct and conflating them threatens to distort our conception of rationality.

James Pryor (2005) draws a related distinction between *justification-makers*, which are facts that justify beliefs in the sense of making them justified, and *justification-showers*, which are propositions that can be used in justifying beliefs in the sense of showing them to be justified. Given the ambiguity in the phrase 'to justify', it's easy to confuse these two roles, but it is important to keep them apart. Some philosophers use the term 'reason' to pick out the former, while others use the term to pick out the latter. But we needn't choose between these two conceptions of reasons. Instead, we can recognize them both.

I claim that the *justification-making* role is played by luminous facts about the subject's mental states: these are the facts that make beliefs reasonable, rational, or justified. In contrast, the *justification-showing* role is played by propositions that serve as premises in good reasoning: these propositions can be true or false and so they need not be luminous facts about the subject's mental states. It seems to me that the concept of rationality or justification is distorted when we try to find one thing and make it play both of these roles.

At the same time, I think these two conceptions of reasons are connected. Showing your beliefs to be justified by the most demanding standards requires citing the facts that ultimately make them justified. We typically operate with less demanding standards, but the only most demanding standards reveal the foundational structure of our reasons. What are the most basic premises that serve as the foundational starting points – epistemically, if not psychologically – for all good reasoning? I claim that these are luminous facts about one's mental states. So the facts that make your beliefs reasonable are also the starting points for all good reasoning. That is not to rule out a more permissive conception of reasons that includes any proposition that can figure in good reasoning. But all reasons in this permissive sense are ultimately grounded in luminous facts about experience.

## 5. Conclusion

Let me end with a contrast between two rival accounts of what reasons are and what it takes to have and respond to reasons. On Williamson's account, reasons are facts about the external world. Having those reasons is a matter of knowing those facts, while responding to those reasons is a matter of using this knowledge in theoretical and practical reasoning.

This account is not well suited to the proposal that perception provides reasons for belief and action. It leads to an over-intellectualized account of the epistemology of perception and it also makes it difficult to explain the cognitive rationality exhibited in cases of perceptual illusion and hallucination. But there is an alternative account that is much more congenial to the position of this chapter.

On this alternative account, all reasons are facts, but not all facts are reasons. Reasons are facts about one's mental states that are luminous in the sense that one is always in a position to know that they obtain when they do. There is no further requirement that one must actually know that these facts obtain in order to have and respond to one's reasons. One has the fact that  $p$  as a reason just in case it is a luminous fact about one's mental states. Meanwhile, one responds to this reason by

believing or acting in a way that is causally sensitive in the right kind of way to the fact that  $p$ . One need not actually believe that  $p$  or know that  $p$  so long as it is a luminous fact about one's mental states.

Ultimately, we need to resolve more general questions about the connection between reasons and rationality in order to settle more specific questions about the role of reasons in perception. But thinking through the more specific questions can also help to shed light on the more general questions. I hope to have made some progress towards that end in this chapter.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> I'm grateful to Alex Byrne, Clayton Littlejohn, Mark Schroeder, Susanna Siegel, and Daniel Star for their feedback on an earlier draft of this chapter.

## References

- Armstrong, D. 1968. *A Materialist Theory of Mind*. London: Routledge.
- Bergmann, M. 2006. *Justification Without Awareness: A Defense of Epistemic Externalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- BonJour, L. 1985. *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Brewer, B. 2005. Perceptual Experience Has Conceptual Content. In E. Sosa and M. Steup, *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Broome, J. 2013. *Rationality Through Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Burge, T. 2003. Perceptual Entitlement. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 67.3: 503-48.
- Byrne, A. 2009. Experience and Content. *Philosophical Quarterly* 59: 429-51.
- Byrne, A. 2014. Perception and Evidence. *Philosophical Studies* 170: 101-13.
- Chalmers, D. 2004. The Representational Character of Experience. In B. Leiter, *The Future for Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chudnoff, E. 2012. Presentational Phenomenology. In S. Minguens and G. Preyer, *Consciousness and Subjectivity*. Ontos.
- Cohen, S. 1984. Justification and Truth. *Philosophical Studies* 46: 279–295.
- Cohen, S. 2010. Bootstrapping, Defeasible Reasoning, and A Priori Justification. *Philosophical Perspectives* 24: 141-59.
- Comesana, J. and M. McGrath. 2014. Having False Reasons. In C. Littlejohn and J. Turri, *Epistemic Norms*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Conee, E. and R. Feldman. 2008. Evidence. In Q. Smith, *Epistemology: New Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Conee, E. and R. Feldman. 2011. Replies. In T. Dougherty, *Evidentialism and its Discontents*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Davidson, D. 1986. A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge. In E. LePore, *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Fantl, J. and M. McGrath. 2009. *Knowledge in an Uncertain World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Firth, R. 1978. Are Epistemic Concepts Reducible to Ethical Concepts? In A. Goldman and J. Kim, *Values and Morals*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Gluer, K. 2009. In Defence of a Doxastic Account of Experience. *Mind and Language* 24: 297-327.
- Goldman, A. 1979. What is Justified Belief? In G. Pappas, *Justification and Knowledge*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Haack, S. 1995. *Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Heck, R. 2000. Non-Conceptual Content and the 'Space of Reasons'. *The Philosophical Review* 109.4: 483-523.
- Horgan, T. and U. Kriegel. 2007. Phenomenal Epistemology: What is Consciousness That We May Know It So Well? *Philosophical Issues* 17.1: 123-44.
- Horgan, T. and Tienson, J. 2002. The Intentionality of Phenomenology and the Phenomenology of Intentionality. In D. Chalmers, *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Hornsby, J. 2008. A Disjunctive Theory of Acting for Reasons. In F. MacPherson and A. Haddock, *Disjunctivism: Perception, Action, Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Huemer, M. 2001. *Skepticism and the Veil of Perception*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Hyman, J. 1999. How Knowledge Works. *Philosophical Quarterly* 50: 433-51.
- Kelly, T. 2014. Evidence. In E. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/evidence/>
- Littlejohn, C. 2009. The Externalist's Demon. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 39.3: 399-434.
- Littlejohn, C. 2012. *Justification and the Truth-Connection*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Logue, H. 2014. *Experiential Content and Naïve Realism: A Reconciliation*. In B. Brogaard, *Does Perception Have Content?* New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lyons, J. 2009. *Perception and Basic Beliefs: Zombies, Modules, and the Problem of the External World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, M. 2004. The Limits of Self-Awareness. *Philosophical Studies* 120: 37-89.
- McDowell, J. 1994. *Mind and World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McDowell, J. 1995. Knowledge and the Internal. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 55.5: 877-93.
- McDowell, J. 2011. *Perception as a Capacity for Knowledge*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press.
- McGinn, C. 1988. *Consciousness and Content*. *Proceedings of the British Academy* 74: 219-39.
- Parfit, D. 2011. *On What Matters, Volume 1*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Peacocke, C. 2001. Does Perception Have a Nonconceptual Content? *Journal of Philosophy* 98. 5: 239-64.
- Peacocke, C. 2004. *The Realm of Reason*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pitcher, G. 1971. *A Theory of Perception*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Pollock, J. and J. Cruz. 1999. *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Pritchard, D. 2012. *Epistemological Disjunctivism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pryor, J. 2000. The Skeptic and the Dogmatist. *Noûs* 34.4: 517-49.
- Pryor, J. 2005. There is Immediate Justification. In E. Sosa and M. Steup, *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Scanlon, T. 1998. *What We Owe To Each Other*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Schroeder, M. 2008. Having Reasons. *Philosophical Studies* 139: 57-71.
- Schroeder, M. 2011. What Does it Take to 'Have' a Reason? In A. Reisner and A. Steglich-Petersen, *Reasons for Belief*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Siegel, S. 2011. *The Contents of Visual Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Siewert, C. 1998. *The Significance of Consciousness*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Silins, N. 2008. Basic Justification and the Moorean Response to the Skeptic. *Oxford Studies in Epistemology* 2: 108-40.
- Smith, M. 1994. *The Moral Problem*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Smithies, D. 2012a. Moore's Paradox and the Accessibility of Justification. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 85.2: 273-300.
- Smithies, D. 2012b. Mentalism and Epistemic Transparency. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 90.4: 723-41.
- Smithies, D. Forthcoming. Perception and the External World. *Philosophical Studies*.
- Sosa, E. 1991. *Knowledge in Perspective: Selected Essays in Epistemology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sutton, J. 2007. *Without Justification*. MIT Press.
- Turri, J. 2009. The Ontology of Epistemic Reasons. *Nous* 43: 490-512.
- Unger, P. 1975. *Ignorance: A Case for Scepticism*. Oxford University Press.
- Weiskrantz, L. 1997. *Consciousness Lost and Found: A Neuropsychological Exploration*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- White, R. 2006. Problems for Dogmatism. *Philosophical Studies* 131.3: 525-57.
- Williams, B. 1981. Internal and External Reasons. In R. Harrison, *Rational Action*. Cambridge University Press.
- Williamson, T. 2000. *Knowledge and Its Limits*. Oxford University Press.
- Williamson, T. 2007. On Being Justified in One's Head. In M. Timmons, J. Greco, and A. Mele, *Rationality and the Good*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Williamson, T. Forthcoming. Justifications, Excuses, and Sceptical Scenarios. In F. Dorsch and J. Dutant, *The New Evil Demon*. Oxford University Press.
- Wright, C. 2004. Warrant for Nothing (and Foundations for Free)? *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 78.1: 167-212.