2   Theorizing Justification

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Just as there are many theories of the concept of *knowledge*—some that require justification and some that do not—so too there are many theories of the concept of *justification*. Any epistemology textbook or anthology would lead one to believe that the major disagreements over its analysis are internalism versus externalism and foundationalism versus coherentism. But these disagreements are not exhaustive. Equally or even more important are disagreements between actual-result versus proper-aim conceptions of justification, and between fundamentalist versus nonfundamentalist conceptions of justification. These latter disagreements determine four positions: Cartesianism, reliabilism, intuitionism, and pragmatism.

Our topic is epistemic justification. Epistemic justification is distinct from moral or practical justification. A subject may be morally obligated to believe something that is not epistemically justified for her. It may also be practically rational for a subject to believe something without evidence for its truth. Correspondingly, a subject may have plenty of evidence in favor of believing something that morally or practically she should not believe. Furthermore, a subject may have inquired whether *P* and found little evidence for *P*. Belief in *P* would then not be justified. Likewise, a subject may have conducted no inquiry whether *P*, but for all that possess plenty of evidence in favor of *P*. Belief in *P* would then be justified. Inquiry is one thing; justification is another.

Paradigm cases of epistemically justified belief include belief based on good inferences, belief in self-evident truths, belief based on perceptual representations or immediate introspective awareness, and so on. Beliefs formed, sustained, or held in certain ways count as well-formed, reasonable, supported by evidence, and so forth (Goldman 1979; Feldman and Conee 1985). Justification is the property that makes a belief justified. Our goal is to carve a good deal of the debate about justification at its joints.

We shall not discuss knowledge. Epistemic justification may or may not be a necessary condition upon knowledge. I do not assume that whatever justification is, it is a property that converts true belief (absent Gettier cases) into knowledge (*pace* Bach 1985, among others; cf. Pollock 2001, 46). It may be that property, but I do not assume that to understand what justification is, or to understand debates about its nature, one must or should conceive of it in terms of its relation to knowledge. Though knowledge is a fundamental concept in epistemology, it is not the only concept. The concept of justification is an important epistemic concept in its own right (*pace* Alston 1999). Much work in epistemology is devoted to its analysis. The present essay advances that enterprise.

The essay has four parts: The first offers a new taxonomy of theories of justification. The second elaborates on the four positions in the new taxonomy. The third makes some points of comparison between the two taxonomies. The fourth briefly discusses evidence for theory-choice.

1   Two Taxonomies

The Standard Taxonomy

According to BonJour (among many others), foundationalism versus coherentism and internalism versus externalism mark the contemporary debate. There are thus, BonJour says, "four prima facie possible overall positions" (2003, 7). The standard taxonomy is shown in table 2.1.

A New Taxonomy

Though useful and important, this taxonomy is not exhaustive. I shall develop a new taxonomy which is driven by two different distinctions. The first concerns the conceptual connection between justification and truth; the second concerns the epistemic and modal status of epistemic principles.

There are two ways justification and truth may be connected: *Either* justification makes belief *objectively* more likely to be true, *or* justification *properly aims* belief at truth. On the first, a belief is justified just in case it is held in a way that *makes* it more likely than not to be true. On the second,

Table 2.1

	Foundations	Coherence
Internalism	Foundationalist-internalism	Coherentist-internalism
Externalism	Foundationalist-externalism	Coherentist-externalism

a belief is justified just in case it is *held* in a *proper way* or *based* on a *proper method*, insofar as truth is the *aim* or *norm*. (Compare consequentialist and nonconsequentialist theories of moral rightness.) Call the former *actual-result* justification (reliable belief is the actual result of justification), and the latter *proper-aim* justification (justification properly aims belief at truth).[1]

The second distinction concerns the epistemic and modal status of epistemic principles. All parties to the present debate agree that theorists know a priori that justification necessarily supervenes on some condition *C*. All parties agree that there is some *C* such that it is a priori necessary that a belief is prima facie justified iff it satisfies *C*.[2] They disagree, however, over what *C* is.

Fundamentalists propose a condition *C* such that *theorists* can know a priori whether *particular* ways of forming, sustaining, and holding beliefs (such as introspection, memory, and perception) are *necessarily* justification-conferring. According to the fundamentalist, knowledge of which particular ways of forming, sustaining, and holding beliefs are justification-conferring is, so to speak, philosophical knowledge. *Nonfundamentalists* propose a condition *C* such that theorists *cannot* know a priori whether particular ways of forming, sustaining, and holding beliefs are necessarily justification-conferring. According to the nonfundamentalist, knowledge of which ways of forming, sustaining, and holding beliefs are justification-conferring is empirical knowledge.

For example, suppose that perceptual representational states confer prima facie justification on the beliefs they normally cause and sustain. The fundamentalist would hold that this is necessarily true, knowable by a priori reflection on the nature of perceptual representation and perceptual belief.[3] The nonfundamentalist, on the other hand, would hold that the supposition is only contingently true, not made true by the essential nature of perceptual representation or perceptual belief. The supposition is thus not a priori necessary.[4]

The new taxonomy determines four positions.[5] I have given each position a name, shown in table 2.2.

Table 2.2

	Actual-Result	Proper-Aim
Fundamentalism	Cartesianism	Intuitionism
Nonfundamentalism	Reliabilism	Pragmatism

2   Four Theories of Justification

Each position can be stated as a *thesis*, as a necessary condition upon justi-fication. Each thesis is a (putative) conceptual, a priori truth. I assume that if they are a priori, they are necessary (i.e., they are not Kripke-type, a priori contingencies).

Cartesianism: A belief is justified only if held in a way which is a priori known or knowable to *either* necessarily make the belief true *or* make the belief true more likely than not in all worlds. The way held confers prima facie justification only if it is a priori knowable that it is *either* every-instance reliable *or* all-worlds reliable.

Reliabilism: A belief is justified only if held in a way that *de facto* makes the belief more likely than not to be true in the actual circumstances of use. The way held confers prima facie justification only if *de facto* reliable.

Intuitionism: A belief is justified only if held in a way that is a priori known or knowable to necessarily constitute properly aiming belief at truth, where 'properly aiming belief at truth' means conformity to a priori necessary epistemic principles (to be listed below).

Pragmatism: A belief is justified only if held in a way that *de facto* consti-tutes properly aiming the belief at truth, where 'properly aiming belief at truth' means conformity to our deepest held norms of proper belief-formation (where 'our' can mean the subject, the discipline, the commu-nity, the tradition, or the species).

I intend each of these to be interpreted broadly enough so as to include *be-ing a member of a coherent system of beliefs* to be that property which confers justification on belief. That is, one way a belief might be held *in the right way* is by being a member of a coherent system of beliefs.

   What would each view say about perceptual beliefs? For the Cartesian they are justified only if perception is all-worlds reliable. For the reliabilist they are justified only if perception is reliable in the circumstances of use. For the intuitionist they are justified only if it is conceptually necessary that holding beliefs on the basis of perceptual representations is among the right ways to hold a belief insofar as truth is the aim or norm. And for the pragmatist, perceptual beliefs are justified only if it is a deeply held

belief or norm that holding beliefs on the basis of states is among the right ways to hold belief.

Each of the positions will receive some further elucidation in what follows. A few preliminary comments on my labels, however, are in order.

By 'pragmatism' (in epistemology) I do *not* mean a thesis about the nature of *truth*. Pragmatism in metaphysics is the view that a belief is *true* if appropriately *justified*; pragmatism in epistemology is a view about what it is for a belief to *be* justified. Pragmatism in metaphysics is one thing and pragmatism in epistemology is another. I might have used 'norm relativism' for this position instead.

By 'Cartesianism' I mean a disjunctive thesis. The first disjunct is the traditional view that a belief is justified only if infallible. The second is the weaker but still high-octane requirement that a belief is justified only if necessarily more likely than not to be true. Such a belief may be false. 'Cartesianism' as I use it thus makes room for the possibility of false justified beliefs, *but only a very few*. Cartesianism so defined is consistent with fallibilism, but only to a limited extent. I might have used 'near infallibilism' for this position instead.

'Intuitionism' also labels a familiar position in ethics. Intuitionism in ethics holds that principles of right action (keep promises, do not cause unnecessary harm, etc.) are self-evident, a priori truths, not derivable from other truths. Intuitionism in ethics is one version of deontologism in ethics. Other versions of deontologism hold that principles of right action are a priori knowable, but are derived from other truths. I shall use the label 'intuitionism' in epistemology broadly so as to cover both the view that principles of ''right belief'' (so to speak) are self-evident, a priori truths, *not* derivable from other truths, and the view that though the principles are a priori, they are *derived* from other self-evident, a priori truths, or even from a priori evidence from cases. 'Intuitionism' as I shall use it is thus less about whether epistemic principles of right belief are derived or underived, but rather about whether they are a priori necessary truths. I might have used 'moderate rationalism' or 'deontologism' as a label for this position instead.[6]

I have stated the four positions as necessary conditions upon justification. As such they are *theses*. As theses, they are not mutually exclusive. A belief may satisfy all four conditions. Not every belief, however, is likely to satisfy all four.

A theorist is free to develop a *theory* of justification (a list of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions) by insisting that one or more of the above conditions are necessary and also jointly sufficient. ''Pure'' theories that

are clear competitors would hold that each condition states a jointly necessary and sufficient condition. ''Hybrid'' theories are possible, that is, theories that embrace more than one of the four theses as necessary conditions upon justification.[7] One might embrace both the reliabilist and pragmatist, or the Cartesian and intuitionist, necessary conditions as jointly necessary and sufficient. The most natural, or the most successful, may indeed turn out to be a hybrid; I shall not discuss such theories here. For the sake of clarity and illumination, I will treat the four pure views as complete theories of prima facie epistemic justification.[8] As such they are mutually exclusive. What follows in the rest of this section will give content to these four theories and also discuss foundationalism, coherentism, internalism, and externalism.

Epistemic Principles

There are many ways of forming, sustaining and holding beliefs. Some confer justification on the beliefs which are formed or held; some do not. Ways of forming or holding beliefs that many hold to be justification-conferring, include a priori insight, introspection, deductive reasoning, memory, and so on. For each way of forming or holding a belief we can formulate a principle that states that if a belief is formed or held in that particular way, then it will be (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified.[9] I will list nine such principles. Though the exact formulation of each principle would require entering a number of qualifications, each principle, roughly stated, is at first glance a plausible and familiar principle.

Epistemologists do not universally accept that *all* of the principles are true; there is disagreement over *which* principles are true. The reason why they disagree has to do in part with what overall theory of epistemic justification they happen to endorse. If you are a Cartesian, as I will explain below, you will only accept the first three principles. Most non-Cartesians tend to accept most of the principles. They agree that most of them are true. They disagree over *why* they are true. In each case, if a theorist accepts a principle, she does so because she believes that the way of forming and holding beliefs governed by the principle passes the relevant condition C, the condition that she believes is both necessary and sufficient for a belief to be (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified.

Here are the principles.

(AP)   If it seems to S upon understanding P that P is self-evident or necessary, then the belief that P is *prima facie pro tanto* justified.

(INT)   If it introspectively seems to S as if S is occurrently having a sensory or perceptual experience such and such (or another occurrent conscious

mental state), and this causes or sustains in the normal way the belief that S is experiencing such and such (or undergoing a certain mental episode), then that confers prima facie justification on S's belief.

(DED) If S believes P and believes (P entails Q), and believes Q on the basis of inferring Q from P and (P entails Q), then S's belief that Q is conditionally justified.

(MEM) If S seems to remember that P and this causes or sustains in the normal way S's belief that P, then that confers prima facie justification on S's belief that P.

(EIND) If S possesses a sufficiently large and representative inductive base (of observation-based beliefs) where all (most) observed Fs are Gs, then were S to infer that all (most) Fs are Gs on that basis, then S's belief that all (most) Fs are Gs would be conditionally *prima facie pro tanto* justified by the inference.

(IBE) If S possesses one explanation that better explains S's evidence than any other available alternative explanation, then S is *prima facie pro tanto* justified in believing that explanation on the basis of the evidence.

(PER) If it perceptually seems to S as if some object x is F (where F is a perceptible property), and this causes or sustains in the normal way S's belief of x that it is F, then that confers *prima facie pro tanto* justification on S's belief.

(TEST) If a subject S (seemingly) understands a (seeming) report by a (seeming) speaker that P, and if that causes or sustains in the normal way S's belief that P, then that confers *prima facie pro tanto* justification on S's belief that P.

(COH) If the belief that P is a member of S's coherent set of beliefs R, then S's belief that P is prima facie justified to the degree that R is coherent.

The *pure* coherentist accepts only COH. Foundationalists accept some or all of the other principles. A foundationalist may also accept COH, but cannot accept only COH.[10]

I now further characterize the four positions, treating the Fundamentalist positions first.

Intuitionism

Intuitionism *qua* theory holds that a belief is (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified iff held in a way that is a priori knowable to be, of its very nature, a

right or proper way to hold belief insofar as truth is the aim or norm. Being actually truth-conducive is not, for the intuitionist, a constraint on being the right or proper way to hold a belief. The intuitionist denies that a reason to believe *P* is true or likely to be true as such *makes* the belief that *P*, as an objective matter of fact, true or more likely to be true. The *content* of the expression 'right or proper way insofar as truth is the aim' is given by the epistemic principles from the list above. Intuitionism, then, *just is* the view that one or more of the principles are a priori necessary, where the truth of any of the principles does not depend on the *de facto* or necessary reliability of the relevant ways of holding belief. A belief is held in a right or proper way insofar as truth is the aim iff the belief satisfies an a priori necessary epistemic principle.

Intuitionists differ over which principles are true. Most practicing foundationalist intuitionists, as far as I can tell, embrace AP, DED, INT, MEM, IBE, and EIND. There is disagreement over PER and TEST.

Intuitionist coherentism is a possible option. One might hold that the proper "ground" of a belief is membership in a coherent system of beliefs, as I noted above. An intuitionist may embrace COH. A *pure* coherentist intuitionist would embrace *only* COH. Keith Lehrer, I conjecture, could be read this way.[11]

There are three ways for the intuitionist to argue for the principles. The first is direct a priori insight into the truth of the *general* principle, based on understanding. This parallels intuitionist views in ethics (Sidgwick, Ross). This is like Chisholm's "methodist." Here is Richard Feldman on enumerative induction:

[A principle governing enumerative induction] is something we can know to be true a priori; that is, we can know it simply by understanding the concepts involved.... It is part of the concept of being reasonable to use past cases as one's guide to the future. There is no possible situation in which the condition it mentions—knowledge that things have been a certain way in the past—could fail to give you a good reason to think that they will be that way in the future. There may be cases in which that belief is false, and there may be cases in which that good reason is overridden by other reasons.... But there are no cases in which information about past regularities fails to provide some reason for beliefs about the future. That is just how being reasonable works. (2003, 138)

One may argue similarly for some or all of the other principles.

The second way of arguing for the principles is similar to how some Intuitionists in ethics argue for moral principles: Generalize from particular examples to principles. This is like Chisholm's "particularist." Describe a number of cases where it is a priori intuitive that the subject has a prima

facie justified belief, and a number of cases where it is a priori intuitive that the subject does not have a prima facie justified belief.[12] Then note that one of the principles explains both the presence and the lack of prima facie justification. The cases thus support the principle. The cases provide a priori evidence, and the evidential relation between the evidence and the principle is a priori. It is customary, for example, to analyze the concept of knowledge and other concepts in this way.

The third way is to argue a priori from the nature of the relevant belief-forming process or way of holding beliefs to the conclusion that forming or holding beliefs in that way is a right or proper way insofar as truth is the aim or norm. For instance, Tyler Burge (2003) has argued that perceptual states by their very nature confer justification on the beliefs they normally cause and sustain, for it is a priori that perceptual representations are veridical in normal conditions when the perceptual system is functioning normally. Forming beliefs on the basis of perceptual representations is holding beliefs in the right or proper way insofar as truth is the aim for perceptual representations are, by their very nature, veridical in normal conditions when the perceptual system is functioning normally; it is the function of a perceptual system to represent veridically. Perceptual beliefs, so held, are prima facie justified. This does not entail that most justified perceptual beliefs are true, for it does not entail that the subject must be in normal conditions to form perceptual beliefs.[13] Burge has argued in broadly similar fashion in favor of INT (1996) and TEST (1993).

Intuitionism is a view that is enjoying something of a renaissance. Intuitionists include Robert Audi (1988), Tyler Burge (1993, 2003a), Roderick Chisholm (1966, 1977), Richard Feldman (2003), Michael Huemer (2001), Christopher Peacocke (2004), John Pollock and Joseph Cruz (1999), as well as others. Intuitionists, as I noted, disagree on PER and TEST. Feldman, for example, rejects both. Audi and Huemer accept PER but not TEST, while Burge embraces both.[14]

Cartesianism

Cartesianism *qua* theory claims that a belief is prima facie justified iff held in a way that is a priori known or knowable to be either *every-instance* or *all-worlds* reliable. The cogito, other self-verifying thoughts, some beliefs about one's current conscious episodes, beliefs about some simple and obvious necessary truths, and some beliefs deduced from these beliefs by simple and obvious steps, are the best candidates for beliefs that satisfy the Cartesian test. Other beliefs may satisfy the requirement. But if the history of the subject is our guide, it is highly unlikely that others do.[15]

Cartesians typically hold that if any "processes" of belief-formation are sufficiently reliable they are restricted to a priori intuition, introspective access to current mental episodes, and some deductive reasoning. Cartesians are typically foundationalists. If they accept any of the principles, they accept AP, INT, and DED. They accept the principles related to various processes *provided that* the processes are sufficiently reliable. It is every-instance or all-worlds-reliable processes *first* and epistemic principles *second*. In what follows we will assume, for the sake of discussion, that the foundationalist version of Cartesianism holds that if any of the principles are true, *only* AP, INT, and DED are true.

Cartesian coherentism is a possible (though implausible) position. A Cartesian could (in principle) embrace COH provided that coherence necessarily conduces truth in all worlds. If truth is coherence, this is straightforward. If truth is one thing and coherence is another, it might still be necessarily true that they march in step (or so one might argue). Perhaps BonJour's (1985) "meta-justification" of coherence can be read this way; and perhaps Davidson's "A Coherence Theory of Truth and Knowledge" (1986) paper falls in here.

Since Cartesians can be coherentists, Cartesianism is one thing and its classical foundationalist variant is another. Cartesianism and Coherentism are not contradictories (*pace* Rorty 1979; Williams 1977; and Thagard 2000, among others).

It is hard to tell who the Cartesians are across the board. Those who seem to embrace it for non-inferential justification include Timothy McGrew (1996), Richard Fumerton (1995, 2001), and Laurence BonJour (1999, 2001, 2002, 2003).[16]

Reliabilism

What unifies the nonfundamentalist camp is the rejection of a priori conceptual knowledge regarding which particular events, states, processes, or ways of holding belief necessarily confer justification. The principles, if true, are not a priori necessary truths. At best the nature of epistemic justification can only be known a priori at a rather abstract, general level. The biconditional that a belief is (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified iff it is satisfies C is a priori necessary, but whether a belief in fact satisfies C is only empirically knowable and only contingently true.[17]

The reliabilist claims that beliefs held in *de facto* reliable ways are (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified. It need not be known or knowable which ways are *de facto* reliable for those ways of holding belief to confer prima facie justification. For the reliabilist, it is not a priori necessary that *this*

way or *that* way of holding belief confers prima facie justification. Which processes are reliable—and so, which processes confer justification—can only be known empirically. Epistemic principles are neither a priori nor necessary. For example, reliabilists allow that if circumstances are right, perception is a process that confers prima facie justification. A reliabilist could thus accept that principle PER is true. However, the reliabilist rejects the claim that PER is a priori necessary. If it is known that perceptual states confer justification, then that is only empirically known. PER, if true, is (according to the reliabilist) only empirically known, contingently true. Similar remarks apply to all of the other principles.[18]

Other ways of holding belief may be *de facto* reliable as well, processes that may or may not involve internal mental states with shared overlapping satisfaction-conditions with the belief that is the output. Hence other "principles" may be, for the reliabilist, empirically knowable, contingently true.

A *pure* coherentist version of reliabilism is possible (though implausible). One might hold that coherence confers justification because, as a matter of fact, a belief is more likely to be true iff it is a member of a coherent system of beliefs. Coherence might be the one and only *de facto* mark of truth or probable truth.

Reliabilists include Kent Bach (1985), Alvin Goldman (1979, 1999), John Greco (2002), Philip Kitcher (1983), Charles Landesman (2002), Frederick Schmitt (1992), and many others.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism is a proper-aim view of justification. Most justified beliefs, on this view, need not be true. Like intuitionism, pragmatism explains what is meant by 'the right way of forming or sustaining' a belief by the particular principles embraced. Pragmatists embrace principles that reflect deeply held (or even constitutive) norms or epistemic commitments of the relevant community; the relevant community may be you, or your discipline, or your community, or your tradition, or your species, etc.[19]

There are two versions of pragmatism, one more like reliabilism and the other more like intuitionism. The first holds that a belief is prima facie justified just in case it is formed or held in a way that the relevant community believes is reliable. It is like reliabilism because of its essential use of the concept of a reliable process. So if the relevant community believes, for example, that perception is reliable, then beliefs which are held on the basis of perception are prima facie justified. It is *contingent* and only *empirically* known whether perception is *believed* to be reliable. On this version, what

is fundamental is the relevant community's *belief* (implicit or explicit) about the *reliability* of the way of holding beliefs. The way of holding beliefs need not *in fact* be *de facto* reliable to confer justification; it need only be *believed* to be *de facto* reliable.

The second version is more like intuitionism than reliabilism. On this version, what matters first and foremost is *not* what ways of holding beliefs the relevant community believes to be *reliable*, but rather what ways of holding beliefs are believed (by the relevant community) to be *the right* or *proper ways* to hold beliefs insofar as truth is the aim or norm. If the relevant community embraces a principle like PER, then it is true. The (contingently embraced) *principles* (of rightly held belief) themselves come first on this version of pragmatism, and not which ways are *believed* to be *reliable*. It is like intuitionism because its content comes directly from the principles. It differs because the principles are not, according to the pragmatist, a priori necessary truths.

These two versions interrelate. On the first, various principles will be embraced *because* the ways of holding beliefs are believed to be reliable. On the second, various ways of holding beliefs will be believed to be reliable *because* they are taken to be the right or proper ways of holding beliefs insofar as truth is the aim. If you are justified in believing *P* on the basis of perception, then you are justified in believing that a perceptual belief is true, and so justified in believing that perception gets things right.

Both versions, like reliabilism, allow all sorts of ways of holding beliefs to confer justification, though like intuitionism they tend to stick to the standard set. Pragmatists can either hold that inner mental states or events confer justification on belief, or disavow, like the reliabilist, such inner states or events. It all depends on which norms are embraced.[20]

A coherentist version of pragmatism is possible. Indeed, Rorty's 1979 pragmatist position was explicitly advertised as a version of coherentism. Pragmatists can be either foundationalists or coherentists.

Pragmatism is a view with a number of weighty adherents. Historical advocates include Hegel, Peirce, Dewey, and Wittgenstein. Contemporary advocates include William Alston (1989), Robert Brandom (1996), Catherine Elgin (1996), Hartry Field (2000), Richard Foley (1987, 2001), Mark Kaplan (1991), and Richard Rorty (1979).

We can now place everyone on the table (table 2.3). To sum up so far, I first claimed that the standard taxonomy is not exhaustive. I went on to develop a new taxonomy based on two contrasts: actual-result versus proper-aim, and fundamentalism versus nonfundamentalism. I defined four theses and then four 'pure' theories. I did not discuss hybrid theories,

Table 2.3

	Actual-Result	Proper-Aim
Fundamentalists	BonJour, Fumerton, McGrew	Audi, Burge, Chisholm, Feldman, Huemer, Lehrer, Peacocke, Pollock and Cruz
Nonfundamentalists	Bach, Goldman, Greco, Kitcher, Landesman, Schmitt	Dewey, Hegel, Peirce, Wittgenstein, Alston, Brandom, Elgin, Field, Foley, Goldman, Kaplan, Rorty, Williams

though they are logically possible. I then said more about each pure theory. In searching the literature one can find a number of occupants for each of the four theories, though who the Cartesians are is hard to say. This shows that a good deal (but not all) of the debate is captured by the new taxonomy. I also claimed that coherentism is compatible with each position. I now briefly raise a few points of comparison between the old and new taxonomies.

3   Connections to the Standard Taxonomy

''Modest'' Foundationalism

I begin with a point about a ''modest'' foundationalism. The new taxonomy shows that ''modest foundationalism'' is seriously ambiguous as a positive thesis. This is important since ''modest,'' ''minimal,'' ''weak,'' or ''fallible'' foundationalism is a popular position, but it is unclear what position it is. There are (at least) five different kinds of ''modest'' or ''fallible'' foundationalism. All are compatible with reliabilism, intuitionism, and pragmatism, and one is compatible with Cartesianism. We can define them by the epistemic principles they accept (as either a priori necessary or a posteriori contingent):

Reactionary foundationalism: DED, INT, AP
Conservative foundationalism: DED, INT, AP, IBE, EIND, MEM
Moderate foundationalism: DED, INT, AP, IBE, EIND, MEM, PER
Liberal foundationalism: DED, INT, AP, IBE, EIND, MEM, PER, TEST
Revolutionary foundationalism: Any number of these or more

The label 'modest foundationalism' gets applied to any view that allows for ''fallible foundations.'' As I have described the Cartesian, even he allows for *some* false but justified beliefs. Cartesianism allows for fallibility *to a certain degree* (BonJour 2003). Hence the 'modest foundationalist' label may

refer to a version of *reactionary* foundationalism that allows beliefs to be justified that are not infallible, but for all that are based on all-worlds reliable processes. This is how Michael Williams (1996, 120–121; 2001, 102–103) uses the label; 'modest foundationalism' may also be used to refer to *conservative* foundationalism. Most naturally it refers to *moderate* foundationalism. This seems to be how Feldman (2003) uses the term. And it may refer to *liberal* or *revolutionary* foundationalists, though revolutionaries are more likely to call themselves "contextual" foundationalists if they call themselves foundationalists at all.

The reason 'modest foundationalism' is ambiguous in this way is because it was introduced as a contrast to *infallible classical* Cartesian foundationalism. On this reading, *any* foundationalist view that allows for fallible foundations of *any* sort is a "modest foundationalist" view. Which fallible foundations *count*, however, is what the five foundationalisms disagree over; hence the plurality of so-called modest foundationalist views.

The standard taxonomy would not predict this plurality; the new taxonomy does. Different versions of modest foundationalism will be embraced depending on which ways of holding a belief pass the relevant condition C that justification allegedly supervenes upon. Cartesians tend toward reactionary foundationalism. Intuitionists tend to avoid the extremes (reactionary and revolutionary) but divide over the intermediate positions. Reliabilists tend to be either moderates or liberals, shying away from feactionary and conservative foundationalism. Pragmatists tend toward liberal or revolutionary foundationalisms.

Whither Coherentism?

I claimed that for each theory a *pure* coherentist version is possible. In this section, I explain why I do not find pure coherentism very plausible. The points I raise deserve much more discussion that I can provide here. I hope to elaborate elsewhere.

First, pure coherentism is the view that *only* COH is true, and that it is true because (1) one of CRIP is true, and (2) membership in a coherent system of beliefs is co-extensive with the relevant condition C that justification supervenes upon. But if any one of CRIP is correct, it is highly implausible to suppose that *only* COH is true, that *only* membership in a coherent system of beliefs meets the relevant C. Surely on any of CRIP *some* of the other principles will be true as well; hence *pure* coherentism is likely to be false.

Second, 'coherence' is notoriously vague. Either it supervenes, in large part, on inferential and explanatory relations or it does not. If it does,

then it seems that COH is just shorthand for DED, EIND, and IBE. But if that is so, coherentist justification is just a species of foundationalist justification. On the other hand, if coherence really is a *distinct* kind of property from *ordinary* inferential and explanatory relations, it is hard to know what it is, and even harder still to see why it is epistemically relevant. Hence pure coherentism is either a version of foundationalism or is incoherent (unintelligible). Negative coherence (undermining beliefs) may prevent prima facie justification from converting to on-balance justification, but it is hard to see why coherence *per se* and coherence per se *alone* should be what *confers* justification.

Though there are theorists who call themselves coherentists, there are fewer than there used to be (e.g., BonJour is now a foundationalist and Rorty and Williams are now "contextualists," or pragmatist foundationalists), and some who call themselves coherentists are (arguably) simply rejecting reactionary Cartesian foundationalism (e.g., Quine, Davidson, Thagard).

The standard taxonomy would have us believe that foundationalism versus coherentism is fundamental. But if coherentism is implausible, and if there are a plethora of foundationalist theories, then a good deal of the current controversy lies on the new taxonomy.

Internalism and Externalism

The simple opposition "internalism versus externalism" in the standard taxonomy is too narrow, for there are three versions of internalism (and so three versions of externalism), where the third combines elements from the first two. (I ignore another version, "deontologism"; see note 6.) I shall define these notions and then comment on how they connect to the positions in the new taxonomy.

Ontological internalism is the view that justifiers are internal mental states. Internal mental states are accessible to introspection (for subjects that can introspect). This is the position Feldman and Conee (1985, 2001) call "mentalism."

Epistemic internalism is the view that a belief is justified only if the subject can know or justifiably believe that it is *justified*. (A *belief that P* is justified only if the subject's belief *that her belief that P is justified* is justified.) This might also be called the 'JJ Thesis': JB → JJB.

Combined internalism is the view that a belief that *P* is justified only if the *subject* can know or justifiably believe by introspection, a priori insight, and reasoning (if necessary) that it is justified. Combined internalism restricts justifiers to things knowable by reflection alone (a priori insight,

introspection, and reasoning), and so is like ontological internalism. And combined internalism requires that for empirical beliefs to be justified they must be known by reflection alone to be justified, and so is like epistemic internalism. (But it need not require justified belief that the beliefs from reflection alone are justified; that is optional, though it usually comes along for free.) It takes an element from each view, hence "combined" internalism. It might also be called "philosophical internalism," requiring philosophical reflection on the part of the subject for all justification, including ordinary empirical justification.[21]

Reasonable externalism is the rejection of epistemic (and hence combined) internalism. The reasonable externalist does not think subjects need to justifiably *believe* that their first-*level* beliefs are justified in order for those first-level beliefs to *be* justified. Animals, children, and ordinary adults do not have such meta-beliefs or even (in many cases) the capacity for such beliefs. The reasonable externalist about justification is like the reasonable externalist about knowledge: a subject need not *know* that he knows in order to know; he need not know that the conditions necessary for knowledge obtain. Likewise for reasonable externalism about justification. To justifiably believe something, the subject need not justifiably believe that the conditions necessary for justified belief obtain; they need only obtain.

Radical externalism is the rejection of ontological (and hence combined) internalism. The radical externalist does not require that beliefs be based on or supported by other mental states to be justified. Beliefs held reliably but that come from out of the blue, as it were, may be justified for the radical externalist.

If you are an intuitionist then you must be an ontological internalist, for the epistemic principles you embrace as a priori necessary refer to internal, mental states on the left-hand sides.[22] Intuitionists that call themselves "externalists," for instance Burge (1993, 2003), are clearly ontological internalists. Burge's "externalism" is the rejection of epistemic (and hence combined) internalism.[23] No intuitionist has to be an epistemic internalist; such a variation on intuitionism, however, is possible. One might embrace epistemic norms that place in the antecedent beliefs about how one is forming one's beliefs and beliefs about whether the target belief is justified. Though one might do this, most intuitionists would not.

If you are a reliabilist you do not require internal, mental states for justification. Their presence may coincide with justification, but they are not necessary; you reject ontological internalism. You are thus a radical exter-

nalist. You also reject epistemic internalism. You are thus also a reasonable externalist.[24]

If you are a Cartesian, are you both an ontological and an epistemic internalist, hence a combined internalist? Not necessarily. There is nothing in the definition that entails either ontological or epistemic internalism. Hence there is nothing in the definition of Cartesianism that entails that an individual subject, to have a justified belief, must (be able to) justifiably believe by reflection alone that it passes the Cartesian condition on epistemic justification. The definition only requires that the belief pass the condition, that it is known or can be known by someone or other that it passes the condition, not that the subject himself knows (or can know) that it does.

However, if a belief passes the Cartesian standard then it is (most likely) based on either introspection or a priori insight or deductive reasoning or all three. For a belief that is Cartesian justified the subject will (most likely) then be in a position to know by reflection alone that it is justified. Passing the condition seems sufficient for meeting the combined internalist necessary condition. So though the position itself may not require that the subject know or be able to know that his belief is justified, if it is justified a sophisticated subject will be able to know (or justifiably believe) by reflection alone that it is justified.

The same might also be true for intuitionism. For example, a subject might be able to know by reflection alone that a belief is a perceptual belief, and might also be able to know by reflection alone that PER is true. Hence a subject might be able to know by reflection alone, given Intuitionism, that a perceptual belief is justified.

The moral here is twofold. First, that combined internalists are naturally fundamentalists, for only on *fundamentalist* views is there a possibility of knowing that an empirical belief is justified by reflection alone. But second, fundamentalists are not committed to combined internalism. At best fundamentalists are committed to ontological internalism.

If you are a pragmatist, your options are open. If you embrace the epistemic principles as they stand then you are, like the intuitionist, an ontological internalist. However you may, like the reliabilist, think that internal mental states are simply concomitant to justification and not themselves necessary. You would then be a radical externalist.[25] But if the standards of the relevant community were epistemic internalist or ontological internalist, then you would be one or the other. Pragmatists tend to think neither internalism is a priori necessary. When it comes to internalism, pragmatists can take it or leave it.

The new taxonomy thus reveals interesting facts about who is an Internalist of a certain sort and why. The new taxonomy sheds some light on what drives various internalists and externalists.

4   Evidence for Theory-Choice

How then do we decide between the four rival theories? How do we argue for a particular *C* in the formula: A belief is (at least *prima facie pro tanto*) justified iff it passes *C*? There are four ways to argue for, and so four ways to argue against, a particular *C*. The first two go straight to the *intension* of the concept of epistemic justification; the second two go from knowledge of the *extension* to knowledge of the intension.

I have discussed the first three already in connection with intuitionism. To support intuitionism, one must show that one or more of the epistemic principles is a priori necessary. This can be done in one of three ways. The first two are at the intensional level. The third moves from extension to intension. The first way at the intensional level is direct, a priori intuition of the truth of one or more of the epistemic principles. The second way is to derive one or more of the principles from other a priori known principles. The third way collects cases of justified and unjustified beliefs where it is a priori intuitive that the beliefs are justified or unjustified, and an epistemic principle is inferred a priori as the explanation for why the beliefs are either justified or not.

Each of these three ways of arguing a priori is available for the other three rival theories: Cartesianism, reliabilism, and pragmatism. One may argue that the Cartesian or reliabilist or pragmatist theory is a priori, underived from other truths. One may also argue that the Cartesian or reliabilist or pragmatist theory is derivable from other a priori truths. Or one may infer a priori from a priori intuitions about particular cases that either the Cartesian, reliabilist, or pragmatist theory is correct. One may also use all three forms of argument *against* any particular theory: It is self-evident that theory *T* is false, or it is derivable from other truths that *T* is false, or *T* is subject to counter-example.

The fourth way to argue for a particular theory is like the third. The idea is to move from extension to intension. But the fourth does not appeal to *a priori* intuitions about the applicability or inapplicability of a concept to particular cases; rather it relies upon empirical first-person and third-person judgments. From the first person, this means reflecting on how one is disposed to apply the concept to cases, where one lacks the rational intuition that the concept necessarily applies (or necessarily fails to apply). One just

notes how one applies (or withholds) the concept, without having a priori intuitions about the necessary applicability or necessary inapplicability of the concept. One simply reflects from the armchair on one's use. From the third person, this amounts to anthropological observations of the use of the concept, to where and when it is applied or withheld. This is the point of view of the anthropologist. The anthropologist surveys practices and notes when the term is applied and when it is not. The anthropologist then generalizes and states principles that govern the use of the concept. In both cases, from either the first person or the third, one infers a general theory about its contours from the use of the concept, and a general theory of the intension of the concept from these contours. This approach is also like Chisholm's "particularist" (cf. Pollock 2001, 46–47).

Ideally, all four forms of evidence would point in favor of one of the four theories. One can find all four of these ways of arguing at work throughout the literature. What one finds less often is an explicit statement of the (implicit) methodology of theory-choice; the epistemology of epistemology often goes without saying (cf. Sosa 2005).

Will direct a priori reflection (our first method for theory-choice) on the two broad theoretical claims, "a belief is justified only if it is more likely than not to be true" and "a belief is justified only if properly aimed at the truth," settle whether actual-result or proper-aim accounts of justification are correct? This is not the place to settle the matter, but let me end by expressing two doubts.

First, suppose you find the actual-result view more obvious upon reflection. There will be those who find the proper-aim view more obvious instead. The fact that others reasonably disagree is a reason for thinking that it is not entirely obvious that one's initial reaction is correct. The question will, at this stage, remain open.

Second, the existence of more detailed a priori arguments, counter-examples from reflection on particular cases, and empirical investigation into the use of the concept will further drive the debate. If such evidence exists and is relevant, direct a priori reflection on the most abstract issue in the debate is highly unlikely to settle the debate. More evidence is required. Only the investigation of more concrete epistemic principles and reflecting on particular cases, I conjecture, will settle whether an actual-result or proper-aim theory is true.

Much of the debate in the theory of epistemic justification has turned on concrete cases and on arguments about the nature of memory, introspection, perception, explanatory inference, and so forth. A priori reflection and empirical inquiry play a large role in these debates. Reflection on the

logical space of theories and the nature of the relevant evidence for or against any particular theory should both illuminate and advance the debate.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. This distinction is, I believe, the same as Audi's (1988) distinction between "ontological" (getting actual truth) and "teleological" (aiming at truth properly) conceptions of justification. He does not at the same time, however, draw attention to the fundamentalist/nonfundamentalist divide in epistemology.

2. Our topic is the *analysis* of the concept of epistemic justification. If you reject conceptual analysis then you are not a participant to the present discussion. For rejections, see Kitcher 1992, Stich 1988, and Devitt 2005; for defense of the a priori and conceptual analysis, see Casullo 2003 and Sosa 2005. Alvin Goldman is a clear case of a theorist who accepts the existence of the a priori but severely limits its scope; see Goldman 1999 and Goldman and Pust 1998.

3. This in no way implies that perceptual justification is a priori justification. What is a priori knowable is that perceptual representations empirically justify perceptual beliefs; see Peacocke 2004, 148ff.

4. In earlier versions of this essay I defined fundamentalism as the view that theorists can know by reflection alone (a priori knowledge combined with introspective knowledge and inference) whether a particular *belief* is justified. If fundamentalism (about justification) were true, philosophers would thus be those who could know whether particular *beliefs* were justified, and not just whether particular *ways* of hold-

ing beliefs conferred justification. Questions from Bonnie Paller prompted me to rethink this way of drawing the distinction. My earlier distinction is close to Richard Fumerton's distinction between the internalist-metaepistemologist and externalist-metaepistemologist (Fumerton 1995, 66–67, 171): "if externalist metaepistemologies are correct, then . . . [p]hilosophers as they are presently trained have no special *philosophical* expertise enabling them to reach conclusions about which beliefs are or are not justified." The distinction as presented in the text *allows* for the possibility that philosophers *cannot* know by reflection alone whether a particular belief is formed, sustained or held in a particular *way*, and so cannot know by reflection whether a particular *belief* is justified.

5. Previous discussions have *listed* (most of) the positions; see, for instance, Field 2000 and Cohen 1984. But that is all they have done (beyond criticizing various positions). They have not shown how the positions *agree* and how they *differ*, and how certain arguments against one view apply to others. The new taxonomy and the kinds of evidence for theory-choice I discuss below will show just that.

6. I avoid using the label 'deontologism', for that connotes the "deontological conception of justification" (as criticized by Alston, Plantinga, and others), which tends to be a theory of when a *subject* is "justified" in believing something: When a subject has reasoned well, carried out a proper inquiry, considered alternative points of view, and so forth. It is not necessarily a theory of when a *belief* is justified. "Intuitionism" as I see it is a theory of when a *belief* is justified. It is a theory that applies equally well to the beliefs of adults, higher animals, and young children. The traditional deontological conception applies to the intellectual *activities* of adults, and not to higher animals and children.

7. Alston offered a "hybrid" nonfundamentalist theory in his paper "An Internalist Externalism" (1988). On my taxonomy, he combines reliabilism (the externalism) with pragmatism (the internalism).

8. Additional conditions would have to be added to explain the relationship between prima facie and undefeated justification, and between *pro tanto* and on-balance justification. See also the following note.

9. Each principle states when a belief formed or held in a certain way enjoys *prima facie pro tanto* justification. Prima facie justification is defeasible justification; '*pro tanto*' literally means "for a little" or "just so much." In law it means something like "to that extent," or "as far as it goes." I use it to mean *some* justification as opposed to *enough* or *on-balance* justification. For example, an experience as of a red apple in the distance may confer some justification on the belief that there is a red apple but not *enough* or *on-balance* justification. The belief that there is a red apple may not be justified (on-balance) though it is partially (*pro tanto*) justified. Or one person may tell me that *P*, and my understanding her assertion may provide some justification, but it is only until another person also tells me that *P* that my justification converts from *pro tanto* to on-balance. For discussion and elaboration, see Graham 2006.

The qualification ''*prima facie pro tanto*'' will not matter here, but it does matter over-all in a complete theory of epistemic justification, and so at times I will make it explicit in the text.

10. Cf. Haack 1993.

11. For the intuitionist the *subject* does not have to know the principle for the principle to govern her beliefs. If PER, for example, is necessarily true, then a subject's perceptual experiences will confer prima facie justification on her beliefs even if she does not *know* that PER is true. Indeed, it will govern her beliefs even if she cannot *understand* the principle. The *theorist* must know or be able to know the principle a priori, but the *subject* whose beliefs are governed by the principle need not. The ''combined internalist'' (defined below) denies this: The subject, to be justified, must have (or be able to have) ''philosophical'' knowledge that her belief is justified in order to have justified belief.

12. It is a priori intuitive that justification is present when it is intuitive that justification, given the case, is necessarily present; and it is a priori intuitive that justification is lacking when it is intuitive that, given the case, justification is necessarily absent.

13. For comparison, see Peacocke 2004.

14. I discuss TEST in my ''Liberal Fundamentalism and Its Rivals'' (2006) and elsewhere; I discuss PER in Graham 1999.

15. This is on the assumption that metaphysical realism is true, that there is a logical or metaphysical gap between the nature of the mind and the nature of the world. If idealism is true, then perceptual beliefs may satisfy the Cartesian test for they are, in a way, simply introspective beliefs. And if an extremely strong version of content externalism is true, then perceptual beliefs may also pass the Cartesian test.

16. Though not Cartesians generally, Kitcher (1983, 1992) and Goldman (1999) both seem to impose all-worlds reliability as a constraint on a priori justification. For criticism, see Casullo 2003.

17. Goldman (1992, 1999) ''rigidifies'' the condition: A way of forming beliefs confers justification if and only if it is reliable in the actual world. The result is that processes which confer justification do so necessarily; but it is not known or knowable a priori which ones confer justification. The principles, then, may be necessary truths for Goldman, but they are not a priori necessary truths (i.e., they are not conceptual truths).

18. Indeed, for Goldman, even whether a belief is a priori justified is only empirically knowable, for whether the belief is a priori justified depends upon the psychological mechanism that produced it and its properties, and those are only knowable empirically. It is cognitive psychology, for Goldman, that tells us whether our beliefs

are justified or not, though it is philosophy that tells us what the general criteria are for justified belief. See Goldman 1999 and Goldman and Pust 1998.

19. The norm may be explicit or implicit. It may be possible to make mistakes about the norm, and so make mistakes about when a belief is justified. The belief that one conforms to a norm does not guarantee that one does.

20. Most pragmatists tend to hold that the *process* of justifying a claim to another is prior to the *property* of a belief's being justified (Rorty 1979, Brandom 1996; cf. Audi 1988, Foley 1987). I shall assume this is inessential. A pragmatist can hold that the reason a belief has the property is because the belief passes the norm set by the relevant community, and the reason why the subject could justify the belief to another is for the same reason. What is primary, then, is the norm. The norm explains why the belief is justified and why the subject can justify her belief to another.

21. For similar ways of defining the first two internalisms, see Alston 1998, Fumerton 1995, Heil 2002, Pryor 2001, and Schmitt 1992. I have avoided using the word 'access' in the definitions of ontological and epistemic internalism. Ontological internalism does not entail that justifiers are introspectively accessible, for certain creatures with mental states might not be able to introspect them (viz., higher animals and children). *We* can introspect our mental states, but *that* we can is not essential; what matters is the mental state, not the access. Epistemic internalism involves knowledge or justified belief (of a higher order) about whether a belief (of a lower order) is justified. Introspection is one way among others, though surely the standard way, to form beliefs about one's own beliefs. Combined internalism builds in introspective ''access'' as necessary. BonJour is a combined internalist. ''Internalism,'' for BonJour, *just is* a combined internalism.

22. Possessing inductive evidence or an explanation means believing that there is such evidence for believing the explanation, etc.

23. Burge (1993) distinguishes between ''entitlement'' and ''justification.'' The former he says is externalist, and the latter internalist. This is misleading. Perceptual representations, he holds, *entitle* perceptual beliefs. The nonconceptual perceptual representations are internal mental states (though they metaphysically supervene on causal-explanatory external relations to external environmental conditions). They satisfy the ontological internalist condition. The subject need not know why they confer entitlement. Hence epistemic (and also combined) internalism is false. Now the same seems true of what Burge calls ''justification.'' A justification for Burge is a set of reasons that the subject possesses in favor of a conclusion, and the subject can tell that the reasons support the conclusion. Justifications (for Burge) are arguments; the reasons (premises) are internal mental states. Once again they satisfy the ontological internalist condition. And the subject need not know why reasons support their conclusions (i.e., the subject does not need a philosophical account or explicit understanding of why arguments justify). Epistemic internalism, again, is not required. Burge's distinction thus strikes me not as an ''externalist'' versus

''internalist'' distinction, but just the distinction between non-inferential and inferential justification. See also Burge 2003b, 337.

24. Reliabilists are fond of pointing out that justified belief about whether a first-level belief is justified is possible on their view: A belief that a first-level belief is justified might be reliably formed, and so justified. (Likewise they point out that a subject might know that he knows.) They thus show that they can satisfy the epistemic internalist condition. But ''internalists'' (like BonJour, Stroud, and Fumerton) are not satisfied with that. What they want is something further, what I have called *combined* internalism: The target first-level belief must be shown to be justified by reflection alone, and they tend to impose an actual-result condition, and so it must be shown by reflection alone that the empirical belief is actually likely to be true. Reliabilists cannot claim *that* condition is met, simply by showing that certain higher-order beliefs are reliably formed.

25. Rorty's ''epistemological behaviorism'' (1979) rejects inner mental perceptual experiences as necessary for justification; at best they are causally relevant to perceptual belief. What matters for Rorty is the linguistic ability to justify one's beliefs to others. This involves, for example, the belief that one sees a tree. Such a belief, though it is not an experience and may not refer to an experience, is itself an inner mental state. Rorty is thus not a radical externalist.

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