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The New Evil Demon, a Frankfurt-style Counterfactual Intervener, and a Subject’s Perspective Objection: Reply to McCain

[Word count: 3331]

By Andrew Moon

**Abstract**. In my paper “Three Forms of Internalism and the New Evil Demon Problem,” I argued that the new evil demon problem (NEDP), long considered to be one of the biggest obstacles for externalism, is also a problem for virtually all internalists (Moon 2012a). In (McCain 2014a) and in his recent book (McCain 2014b), Kevin McCain provides challenging and thought provoking reasons for thinking that many internalists do not have any such problem. In this paper, I’ll provide some replies to McCain. Of note, I’ll show that a Frankfurt-style counterfactual intervener, who commonly appears in the free will literature, can also serve as a new evil demon in the epistemology literature. [Word Count: 111]

Key Words: Internalism, Externalism, Justification, Demon

*Introduction*

In my paper “Three Forms of Internalism and the New Evil Demon Problem,” I argued that the new evil demon problem (NEDP), long considered to be one of the biggest obstacles for externalism, is also a problem for virtually all internalists (Moon 2012a). In (McCain 2014a) and in his recent book (McCain 2014b), Kevin McCain provides challenging and thought provoking reasons for thinking that many internalists do not face any such problem. In this paper, I’ll provide some replies to McCain. Of note, I’ll show that a Frankfurt-style counterfactual intervener, who commonly appears in the free will literature, can also serve as a new evil demon in the epistemology literature.

**Background**

By ‘internal states,’ I mean nonfactive mental states. I divide internal states into two types: the conscious and the unconscious. The conscious ones include states that are what Ned Block calls phenomenally conscious, our sensory experiences, and beliefs that are at the forefront of our mind. Any internal state I have while I am dreamlessly asleep is unconscious: as I sleep, I continue to have the belief that Canada is a country, the desire for more justice in this world, and stored memories of a happy past. These internal states continue to exist unconsciously even after I wake up and go about my day. It is difficult to precisely define the difference between the conscious and the unconscious, but I believe that we have sufficient grasp of this difference for our discussion.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Internalism is the view that justificational properties supervene on internal properties.[[2]](#footnote-2) Internalism can be divided into three forms. *Moderate internalism* affirms internalism and adds that justificational properties do not supervene on conscious, internal properties; so, some unconscious internal properties are directly relevant to justificational properties. *Historical internalism* affirms internalism and adds that justificational properties do not supervene on *present* internal properties; so, some nonpresent internal properties are directly relevant to justificational properties. *Strong internalism* states that justificational properties supervene on conscious internal properties.

I argued that the NEDP applies to both moderate internalism and historical internalism but not to strong internalism. McCain focuses on my NEDP for moderate internalism. I turn now to that discussion.

**McCain’s Reply to the Global NEDP for Moderate Internalism**

*1. Recap*

The following is what I call the “global NEDP for moderate internalism.” Consider Augustine\*, who in his seventy-six years of life, shares all of Augustine’s conscious states but has no unconscious internal states. Phenomenologically, they are identical. Intuitively, the justificational status of Augustine and Augustine\*’s conscious beliefs is the same.[[3]](#footnote-3) It seems plausible to conclude that Augustine\*’s unconscious, internal states are justificationally irrelevant to his conscious beliefs. Furthermore, it seems that such cases can be generalized to show that all unconscious, internal states are justificationally irrelevant, and so moderate internalism is false.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Kevin McCain argues that Augustine\* is impossible. For Augustine\* to have conscious beliefs, he must have unconscious internal states. McCain argues for this in two ways. First, he argues that conscious belief requires the presence of certain dispositional states, which further requires the presence of unconscious internal states. Second, Augustine\* must possess certain concepts, and concept possession, on some plausible theories, requires the presence of some dispositions, which further require the presence of unconscious internal states. So, if Augustine\* is to have conscious beliefs, then he must have some unconscious internal states; this contradicts my initial description of Augustine\* as someone who has *no* unconscious internal states. Hence, Augustine\* is impossible, and impossible scenarios do not make for good counterexamples.[[5]](#footnote-5)

*2. My Reply: The Nearly Global NEDP*

Suppose that McCain is correct.[[6]](#footnote-6) I will argue that there is *still* a new evil demon problem – what I call the *nearly global new evil demon problem* – that applies to nearly all versions of moderate internalism. Some background will be necessary to present the problem. McCain thinks that if a person has a conscious belief, that conscious belief *entails* (in the broadly logical or metaphysical sense) the presence of certain unconscious internal states.[[7]](#footnote-7) To facilitate discussion, let a person’s *entailed unconscious internal state* at a time be any unconscious internal state that is entailed by the person’s conscious internal state at that time. And let an *unentailed unconscious internal state* be any unconscious internal state that is not entailed.

It is difficult to say precisely which internal states belong in which of the two categories, since that will depend on which theory of belief or concept possession is true. Still, we can look at individual cases and make plausible, theory-neutral judgments that some unconscious internal states are unentailed. First, unconscious beliefs that are normally thought to be *positive reasons* for our conscious beliefs will often be unentailed. Suppose I believe that *p* and *if p then q*, and on that basis, I believe *q*. In the moment afterward, while I reflect on my new, conscious belief that *q*, my beliefs that *p* and *if p then q* become unconscious. Though my beliefs that *p* and *if p then q* played a *causal role* in bringing about my belief that *q*, they will, at this later moment, be *unentailed* because there is a possible scenario in which I believe *q* and am in my present conscious state without those unconscious beliefs. It seems possible, for example, that I could have arrived at the belief that *q* by some other process: wishful thinking or testimony. At the end of these processes, I could both consciously believe that *q* and also be in the same conscious state that I was in in my initial scenario. I could have the same conscious feeling of confidence that *q*, the feeling of endorsement that *q*, the same sensory experiences, etc.

Unentailed unconscious internal states will also include unconscious beliefs that many think are *defeaters*. Suppose that Dainis looks at some widgets in a factory that appear red and forms the conscious belief that *those widgets are red*. Suppose that the factory foreman also told Dainis recently that all the widgets have red lights shining on them, so Dainis unconsciously knows that *all the widgets have red lights shining on them*. Many moderate internalists will think that Dainis’ conscious belief that *those widgets are red* is not justified because his unconscious belief that *all the widgets have red lights shining on them* is a defeater. Furthermore, this unconscious belief is unentailed; Dainis could be in the same conscious state without having that unconscious belief. So, even though it is difficult to state precisely which unconscious internal states are entailed or unentailed, we can make theory-neutral judgments that some are unentailed by examining specific cases.

I am now in a position to present my *nearly global NEDP* for nearly all versions of moderate internalism. Consider, now, Augustine\*\*, who is exactly like the original Augustine, but an evil demon has deleted all his *unentailed* unconscious internal states. Note that Augustine\*\* is clearly possible and that McCain’s argument that Augustine\* is impossible does not show that Augustine\*\* is impossible. Augustine\*\* will have all of the same conscious internal states that Augustine has; phenomenologically, there is no difference between them. Now, it seems that Augustine\*\*’s conscious beliefs will have the same justificational status as Augustine’s. (Note: *you* could be in a position like Augustine\*\*!) It seems to follow that the unentailed unconscious internal states are justificationally irrelevant. And what is true about Augustine is true about you, me, and anybody else. It seems that, for any person S, we can formulate new evil demon scenarios according to which S has a twin, S\*\*, who shares only the entailed unconscious internal states. It will seem that the justificational status of S and S\*\*’s conscious beliefs are the same and that any unentailed unconscious mental states are justificationally irrelevant.

This *nearly global NEDP* affects virtually all moderate internalists. Moderate internalists are likely to think that certain unconscious internal states are suitable candidates for being positive reasons or defeaters, i.e., for being justificationally relevant. But my examples above indicate that those candidates are all *unentailed*. So, these moderate internalists must all face my nearly global NEDP. In fact, it seems that the only internalists who are not affected by my nearly global NEDP are either strong internalists or inclined toward strong internalism. This is because no moderate internalist will restrict the justificationally relevant unconscious internal states to *only* entailed ones. I conclude that even if the *global NEDP* fails, the *nearly global NEDP* damages all extant versions of moderate internalism.

**Reply to McCain’s Reply to the Local NEDP**

*1. Recap*

Consider the following three cases:

(Case 1) Fred has been outside working all day. He looks out over the horizon and has a rich sensory experience as of a field, of trees, of a drifting cloud, and of the sun. Fred forms the belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset*. He also has the unconscious belief that *it is evening*.

(Case 2) Sally wakes up and she has no idea how long she’s been sleeping. She considers that she may have been sleeping anywhere from three to twelve hours. Sally looks out onto the horizon and has a rich sensory experience as of a field, of trees, of a drifting cloud, and of the sun. Sally forms the belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset*. Sally has no unconscious belief that *it is evening*.

(Case 3) [Melissa undergoes exactly what Fred undergoes but an] evil demon intervenes. First, he destroys Melissa’s unconscious belief that it is evening, and he himself causally sustains Melissa’s conscious belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset*. After three seconds, the demon manipulates Melissa’s mind so that (1) she once again has the unconscious belief that *it is evening* and (2) the belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset* is once again causally dependent on the unconscious belief and not the demon. The demon is so skilled that throughout this process, Melissa’s conscious experience remains uninterrupted as she enjoys the beautiful sunset.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Since Fred and Sally’s conscious states are identical, moderate internalists will likely say that Fred’s unconscious belief that *it is evening* explains why Fred’s belief seems justified and Sally’s belief does not. McCain seems to be such an internalist. However, intuitively, Melissa’s belief continues to be justified even when she loses her unconscious belief that *it is evening*; it does not seem that she *should* withhold the conscious belief during those three seconds.[[9]](#footnote-9)[[10]](#footnote-10) This is evidence that, contra the moderate internalist, the unconscious belief is not justificationally relevant after all.[[11]](#footnote-11)

McCain does not share my intuition. He writes,

Moderate internalists can plausibly respond, contra Moon, that it is intuitive that Melissa should withhold belief during this interval. Melissa’s case is one in which she retains a belief while losing and regaining an essential part of her evidence for that belief.[[12]](#footnote-12)

I take it that a key consideration that motivates McCain’s intuition is that Melissa has lost an “essential part of her evidence,” which results in her belief’s being unjustified. A second consideration that motivates McCain’s view is that “When [Melissa] loses the belief that *it is evening* (and her justification for that belief)Melissa becomes like Sally, whose belief Moon admits is not justified, instead of Fred” (McCain 2014, 11). McCain seems to be reasoning as follows:

1. Sally’s belief is unjustified.
2. Melissa’s belief, during the 3 seconds, is justificationally like Sally’s belief.
3. Therefore, Melissa’s belief, during the 3 seconds, is unjustified.

I respond to both of these considerations in the following section.

*2. First Reply: The Main Options*

Though it is understandable for McCain to interpret me as he did, I did not admit that Sally’s belief is not justified; what I said was that Sally’s belief *seems* unjustified. In fact, as I said in the paper, I am open to the *strong internalist* view that Sally’s belief is justified on the basis of conscious states such as her seemings or her feelings of confidence.[[13]](#footnote-13) So, I do not admit that premise 1 is true. Furthermore, since Fred, Sally, and Melissa all share the same conscious states, it is reasonable to infer, from strong internalism, that they have the same evidence. This counts against McCain’s claim that Melissa has lost an essential part of her evidence.

Most will not join me in being open to strong internalism and doubting premise 1. However, premise 2 is also suspect; it is not clear that Melissa’s belief is justificationally like Sally’s. Consider the *historical internalist* view that the reason Fred’s belief is justified and Sally’s is not is because Fred once had the conscious belief that *it is evening* in the past; Sally never formed such a belief.[[14]](#footnote-14) This *past* conscious belief makes Melissa more like Fred and less like Sally. To support the claim that the past belief is justificationally relevant, note that Melissa’s belief is like beliefs in so-called “forgotten evidence” cases, in which a person initially forms a belief on the basis of evidence and then later the evidence is lost naturally from memory. I pointed out that many epistemologists find it plausible that the belief at the later time is still justified.[[15]](#footnote-15) Similarly, Melissa also initially forms a belief on the basis of evidence – her unconscious belief – and then later the evidence is lost due to an evil demon. So, those who are open to historical internalism have reason to doubt (2). Furthermore, the important evidence in this case is the *past* evidence, so once again, Melissa has not clearly lost an essential part of her evidence.[[16]](#footnote-16)

I will compile what I think are the most plausible moderate, historical, and strong internalist replies to my three cases:

*Moderate internalist reply:* Melissa’s belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset* is unjustified during the 3 seconds. What explains the justificational difference between Fred and Sally is the unconscious belief that *it is evening*. Melissa’s belief is justificationally more like Sally’s than Fred’s because Melissa also lacks the unconscious belief.

*Historical internalist reply*: Melissa’s belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset* is justified during the 3 seconds. What explains the justificational difference between Fred and Sally is Fred’s having had a conscious belief that *it is evening* in the past, which Sally lacks. Melissa’s belief is justificationally more like Fred’s than Sally’s because Melissa also had such a past belief.

*Strong internalist reply*: Melissa’s belief is justified during the 3 seconds, and Fred, Sally, and Melissa *all* have the justified, conscious belief that *that’s a beautiful sunset*.[[17]](#footnote-17)

McCain, a moderate internalist, takes the moderate internalist reply. However, the views of his fellow internalists – historical internalism and strong internalism – have some reasons in favor of them and would entail the falsity of the moderate internalist reply. This is part of why I find the moderate internalist reply unconvincing.[[18]](#footnote-18)

I will report that I find none of the replies satisfactory. The historical internalist reply gets the intuitions right about these three cases, but I also think that historical internalism faces its own NEDP.[[19]](#footnote-19) The strong internalist reply is problematic because it makes the counterintuitive claim that Sally’s belief is justified.[[20]](#footnote-20) The moderate internalist reply is problematic because it makes the counterintuitive claim that Melissa’s belief is unjustified (and hence, faces a NEDP). Since externalism also seems to face the NEDP and these three internalisms exhaust the possible types of internalism, I believe that we have a true epistemological puzzle.

*3. Second Reply: The Frankfurt-Style Counterfactual Intervener*

Still, even if McCain’s arguments are inconclusive, the important point of contention between us about the justificational status of Melissa’s belief remains, and so it is unresolved whether moderate internalism faces a NEDP. In the following two sections, I will try to resolve this dispute.

My strategy will be to identify the factor that McCain thinks makes unconscious internal states directly relevant to justification and then to show that that factor does not actually play such a role. In his book, McCain develops and defends a theory of *evidence possession*, according to which unconscious internal states count as evidence possessed by the agent (and hence, are justificationally relevant) only if they are *accessible upon reflection* (i.e., they *can* be made conscious upon reflection).[[21]](#footnote-21)

An argument inspired by Harry Frankfurt (1969) shows that accessibility cannot play this role. Let Melissa\* be like Melissa except that, during the 3 seconds, a demon does not delete Melissa\*’s unconscious belief that *it is evening*. Instead, the demon simply watches for any sign that Melissa\* might try reflect in a way that might make that belief conscious. If she does, the demon will distract Melissa\* so that she cannot make her unconscious belief conscious. Fortunately, in the actual world, Melissa\* never reflects; her conscious state remains like Fred’s. Intuitively, Melissa\*’s belief continues to be justified. This sort of case can be generalized. For any unconscious internal state U, even if a demon rendered it inaccessible to the believer, the justificational status of the relevant belief would remain the same. How could the intentions of a demon, perhaps a million miles away, be relevant to a belief’s justification? And it is especially unlikely that any *internalist* should think the demon is relevant. Note that my Frankfurt-style case counts against any view that says that accessibility makes unconscious states justificationally relevant. It also counts as a counterexample to McCain’s account of evidence possession.

One might object that I should interpret ‘accessibility’ as *ability* (or ability upon reflection).[[22]](#footnote-22) In my scenario, Melissa\* still has the ability to make her belief conscious even though the demon would prevent her from *exercising* that ability, just as a prisoner still has the ability to play piano, even though his jail cell prevents him from exercising that ability.[[23]](#footnote-23) However, a similar counterexample is available. Let Melissa\*\* be exactly like Melissa except that, during the 3 seconds, a demon destroys Melissa\*\*’s ability to make her unconscious belief conscious.[[24]](#footnote-24) After the 3 seconds, the demon heals Melissa\*\* so that she once again has the ability. Throughout this process, Melissa\*\*’s conscious state remain like Fred’s; she has no knowledge that anything has happened. Intuitively, Melissa\*\*’s conscious belief was justified throughout. This sort of case could be generalized to show that mere ability makes no difference. I conclude that McCain is incorrect that accessibility (upon reflection) makes the unconscious belief justificationally relevant.[[25]](#footnote-25)

*4. Third Reply: A Version of the Subject’s Perspective Objection*

There is another line of reasoning from my cases to strong internalism. It is inspired by Michael Bergmann’s *subject’s perspective objection*, which is a major motivation for internalism*.* It states that what is outside the subject’s perspective is irrelevant to justification.[[26]](#footnote-26) In other words,

1. Only what is part of one’s perspective is directly relevant to justification.

Consider a version of the original NEDP for reliabilism. We can imagine a demon victim who is consciously like Fred, but to whom a demon is alternating back and forth between making his vision reliable and unreliable. It seems that whether the demon victim’s belief is formed reliably is justificationally irrelevant. Why? It is completely outside his perspective! Factors outside of the subject’s perspective seem to be irrelevant to justification.

Now, according to a plausible interpretation of *perspective*,

1. Something is a part of one’s perspective only if it is conscious.

For example, plausibly, the perspectives of the aforementioned demon victim, Fred, Sally, and the Melissa’s, are all identical. What separates them, the *un*conscious beliefs or the accessibility of the unconscious beliefs, seems to be outside of their perspective. Lastly, (1) and (2) entail

1. Only what is conscious is directly relevant to justification.

So, reflection on these new evil demon cases still leads us to strong internalism.

In the end, given that we did not share intuitions about the original Melissa case, I suspect that McCain will not share intuitions about these new cases. Until somebody comes up with a further argument that can tilt the balance, we will remain at a standstill. Fortunately, this discussion can still advance the internalism/externalism debate by challenging us to consider how various versions of the NEDP can move us toward different versions of internalism, or perhaps, even back to externalism.[[27]](#footnote-27)

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1. In my earlier papers, I used words like ‘occurrent’ and ‘accessed’ to denote what I now denote with the single word ‘conscious’. I used ‘dispositional’, ‘background’ and ‘stored’ to denote what I now denote with the single word ‘unconscious’. These other words, especially ‘occurrent’ and ‘dispositional’, are more likely to confuse than to clarify. Although some use ‘occurrent belief’ to mean conscious belief, *any* belief, conscious or unconscious, is at least in a loose sense of the word, *occurring* and so is occurrent. It seems better to just use ‘conscious belief’ to mean conscious belief. And although some use ‘dispositional belief’ to mean unconscious belief, it is still easily confused with ‘disposition to believe’, despite some philosophers’ attempts to distinguish these two (e.g., (Audi 1994)). It seems better to just use ‘unconscious belief’ to mean unconscious belief. Thanks to those who contributed comments to my 1/12/14 post on the blog *Certain Doubts*, especially Chris Tucker, John Turri, and David Chalmers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This definition refers to *propositional justification*, the justification one has *for* a belief, even if one does not actually believe. Internalists normally think a belief is *doxastically justified* only if it is propositionally justified *and* based on that propositional justification. (See ch. 1 of (Bergmann 2006) for a more complete characterization of the distinction.) In this paper, the distinction will not matter since, for any case in which a belief’s justification is in question, the internalist should think that it is *either* both propositionally and doxastically justified *or* neither propositionally nor doxastically justified. See also footnotes 9, 10, and 18. Thanks to Richmond Campbell and Jon Matheson for helping me see that I should address this. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. To help motivate the intuition, consider that you could be in a position like Augustine\*; it might appear to you that you have unconscious mental states, but in fact you do not. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See (Moon 2012a, 349–350) for a more complete development of this argument, including an argument that unconscious internal states are justificationally irrelevant to other unconscious beliefs. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Peter Markie has also independently given me a version of this objection. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. I have some doubts that he is correct, but engaging in that discussion would take us into difficult issues in philosophy of mind that are too far astray from the focus of this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. State *S* *entails* state *T* if and only if, in any possible world in which *S* is instantiated, *T* is also instantiated. For what I mean by ‘broadly logical sense’, see (Plantinga 1974, 1–9). All modal terms in this paper should be understood in this broadly logical sense. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. These are drawn from (Moon 2012a, 351); the only difference is that here I am sticking to ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’ terminology. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The intuition is that the belief continues to be *doxastically justified*. McCain notes that Melissa’s belief’s not being *doxastically* justified does not *entail* that she ought to withhold; perhaps she just needs to base her belief on her evidence (McCain 2014a, 10). But by the moderate internalist’s lights, as McCain notes, her belief would not be doxastically justified because her belief is not *propositionally* *justified* by her unconscious belief that *it is evening*; so Melissa should still withhold her conscious belief. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. One might object that Melissa’s belief could not be doxastically justified because it is causally sustained by a demon and so not properly based on its propositional justification. In reply, the belief could be *both* causally sustained by the demon and *also* be caused by its propositional justification; and this would be enough for doxastic justification. But how could it *also* be caused by its propositional justification? I give two examples for how the historical and strong internalist might answer this question in the next section. Thanks to Jon Matheson for this objection. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. See Moon (2012a, 350–352) for more development of this argument. To help motivate this intuition, consider that you could be in the same position as Melissa. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. McCain also gives the case of Sam. Everything I say about Melissa will apply equally to Sam. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See (Moon 2012a, 357) for more discussion to motivate this strong internalist view about Sally. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. I am not saying that this is the only position the historical internalist can make, but I think it is a plausible one. See (Moon 2012a, 354) for more discussion of this option. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See (Moon 2012a, 353) for more discussion of forgotten evidence cases. I say “so-called” because the word ‘forgotten’ can be misleading for the reasons given in (Moon 2012a, 356). I am not sure just how analogous those cases are to my Melissa case, but that discussion extends beyond this paper. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In (Moon 2012b, 315–316), I gave a reason to think that on an *internalist understanding of evidence*, one should not think that one can believe on the basis of evidence that no longer exists because such evidence is not introspectively accessible. Historical internalists will likely disagree. I now think that ‘internalism’ and ‘internalist understanding of evidence’ are vague enough to include historical internalist views, although I still think that virtually all internalists *would* accept this internalist understanding of evidence. For more discussion, see (Moon 2012a, 353), especially footnotes 17 and 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. These are what *I* take to be the most plausible replies to these cases. There are other options. One could be a moderate internalist and think that the unconscious belief that *it is evening* is justificationally irrelevant; one could be a strong internalist and say that all the beliefs are unjustified (for my reply to this option, see footnote 20); etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. This illustrates my point in footnote 2 that the internalist should think that Melissa’s conscious belief is *either* both not doxastically justified and not propositionally justified (given moderate internalism) *or* both doxastically justified and propositionally justified (by past internal states given historical internalism or by present conscious states given strong internalism). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. See (Moon 2012a, 354–357). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Jon Matheson has suggested to me the strong internalist reply that all of the beliefs are unjustified. But this results in the counterintuive claim that *Fred*’s belief is unjustified, which would have the further counterintuitive implication that many of our perceptual beliefs, which are like Fred’s, are also unjustified. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. More specifically, he defends the following view: “S has p available as evidence relevant to q at t iff at t S is currently aware of p or S is disposed to bring p to mind when reflecting on the question of q’s truth” (McCain 2014b, ch. 3). The counterexample I raise to the above loose formulation will also apply to this more precise formulation. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Thanks to Matthew Frise for this objection. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Here I was helped by Chris Franklin’s discussion of ability and opportunity (Franklin 2011, 693-699). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Perhaps, for example, the demon destroys certain crucial neurons. Would the destruction of this ability also destroy the unconscious belief? Not necessarily. The unconscious belief could still play a causal role in Melissa\*\*’s behavior, even if Melissa\*\* did not have the ability to make the belief conscious. Plausibly, for example, it is possible for some unconscious racist beliefs to play a role in S’s behavior, even if S doesn’t have the ability to make that belief conscious (because of his self-denial). Unfortunately, these philosophy of mind claims are controversial; for some, my case of Melissa\*\* will just reduce to the case of the original Melissa, since Melissa\*\* will have just lost her belief. Then, this move I am making does not advance the dialectic, and I will have to rely more heavily on the objection I make in the next section. Thanks to Philip Swenson and Darren Abrahamson for helpful discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. I’ll note that, according to my definition of NEDP in (Moon 2012a, p. 348), these Frankfurt-style cases count as instances of the NEDP. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Thanks to Jon Matheson for helping me see that I could apply a version of the subject’s perspective objection to my argument. What Bergmann calls the ‘subject’s perspective objection’ against externalism is slightly different than what I am presenting here, but I believe that what I say here is in the spirit of his objection. Bergmann says that if what justifies the belief is outside the believer’s awareness, then “from her perspective it is an *accident* that her belief is true” (Bergmann 2006, 12). I find the talk about *accidentality* both interesting but puzzling, so I just stick with the bare point that what is outside a believer’s perspective is irrelevant to justification. See (Rogers and Matheson 2009, 58&64) for helpful discussion about Bergmann’s points about accidentality. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Thanks to Matthew Frise, Clayton LittleJohn, Peter Markie, Jon Matheson, and Kevin McCain for helpful written comments on this paper. Thanks also to the audience at Dalhousie University’s weekly colloquium on 1/17/14 for helpful questions. Lastly, thanks both to those who contributed to the discussion of my posts on this paper at the blog *Certain Doubts* and also to Jon Kvanvig for maintaining the site. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)