



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

# Attitude Externalism and the State of Knowing

Towards A Disjunctive Account of Propositional  
Knowledge

Timothy E. Kunke

PhD by Research in Philosophy

University of Edinburgh

2016

## Declaration

I, Timothy E. Kunke, hereby declare that the present work being submitted for the Phd by research in Philosophy has been entirely composed by myself and has not been submitted in pursuit of any other academic degree or professional qualification.

For Lawrence,

Without your wisdom and guidance this journey would never have reached  
its objective.

# Contents

Preface	4
Introduction	6
Part I	
Psychological Externalism and the Metaphysics of Mental States and Events	
Chapter 1 Mental States and Mental Events	
Introduction	13
1.1 Steward on the Temporal Strategy	19
1.2 Mental Events and Particularity	32
1.3 Mental States and Universality	38
Chapter 2 Attitude Externalism and Knowing as a Mental State	
Introduction	49
2.1 Williamson on Broad, Prime Conditions	53
2.2 Factive Attitudes and Pure Mentality	59
2.3 Moderate Internalism vs. Attitude Externalism: Clarifying the Debate	65
Chapter 3 Mental Causation and Psychological Explanation	
Introduction	75
3.1 Necessary and Contingent Content	78
3.2 Owens' Dilemma	82
3.3 The Role of Mental States in Psychological Explanation	90
Part II	
On The Epistemology of Factive Psychological Attitudes and the Disjunctive Nature of Knowing	
Chapter 4 Remembering, Forgetting and Knowing	
Introduction	96
4.1 Contrary Psychological Attitudes and Contradictory Epistemic Conditions	97
4.2 The Entailment Thesis	104
4.3 The Connection Condition	111

Chapter 5 Seeing and Knowing	
Introduction	125
5.1 Propositional Seeing	128
5.2 The Entailment Thesis	137
5.3 Perceptual Success Terms and Factive Verb Phrases	143
Chapter 6 The Disjunctive Structure of Propositional Knowledge	
Introduction	154
6.1 Ways of Knowing	156
6.2 Explanation as Metaphysical Relation	167
6.3 Knowing as a Disjunctive Kind: The Multiformity Principle	172
Concluding Remarks	179

## Abstract

This thesis is broadly about the structure of propositional knowledge and the ways in which an individual knower can have such knowledge. More specifically, it is about the epistemology of factive psychological attitudes and the view that knowing is a purely mental state. I take such a view as being not so much a theory of knowledge, but rather an accounting of how we know, or the ways in which we know. In arguing for this view I offer a different interpretation of certain epistemic conditions, like seeing and remembering and try to show how understanding the metaphysics of mental states and events clarifies the relation between such conditions and the factive psychological attitudes implicit in them. Part one of the thesis is occupied with a discussion about a form of externalism popular in contemporary philosophy of mind, content externalism and a form of externalism popularized by Timothy Williamson which I refer to in the thesis as attitude externalism. I argue that content externalism in the style of Tyler Burge, arguably one of its most prominent advocates, faces a rather serious dilemma when it comes to the role that mental states and specific mental events are meant to play in psychological explanation. The view endorsed by Timothy Williamson, which says that some psychological attitudes, factive attitudes like 'seeing that', can be thought of as broad prime conditions is offered as a way in which the content externalist can avoid this dilemma and retain a causal-psychological explanatory thesis about mental states and events. The second part of the thesis is concerned with the epistemology of factive psychological attitudes and I focus carefully on two paradigmatic cases – seeing and remembering. I dedicate a chapter to each and offer a series of arguments to the effect that seeing and remembering though they may be thought of as ways of having propositional knowledge, it is not

necessary that they entail knowing nor that they be stative to do so. In this sense, there is a strong and important divergence in the dialectic of the thesis from the view offered by Timothy Williamson, on which many points in this thesis there is agreement. I conclude the thesis with a discussion on what I take to be a fundamental epistemological principle, which I call the *multiformity principle*. The argument there is that when a subject knows that  $p$ , there is always a specific way in which that subject knows. I further take this principle to reveal the fact that propositional knowledge is an intrinsically disjunctive phenomenon.



# Acknowledgements

This achievement is not really my own. At least, it isn't completely my own. No one ever does anything completely on their own, no matter how much is required of the individual to get the job done. I think this is especially true for a PhD thesis. In a sense, this is what makes the acknowledgments of a work like this so important. It is an opportunity to recognize that whatever this thesis amounts to in the broader scheme of things, it is as much a contribution of my entire network of friends and family as it is of my own.

For whatever reason, it always seems easiest to thank those people who obviously play a very important role in your life. These are the people that you depend on day-in and day-out for support and encouragement in most areas of your life. I am fortunate to have people—lots of people—in my life that fit this description. It is much harder to acknowledge those people who may have played some small role in influencing my thinking or inspiring me in some subtle way such that the completion of this work would never have occurred had they not been there. And those people are out there. Perhaps some of them even know who they are, and how they may have played the role they played. So, I'll start with those people. I am grateful to all of you. I am grateful for my time in Edinburgh, and meeting the many new friends and colleagues that I now have. The city of Edinburgh and the climate there is truly inspiring and highly conducive to philosophical study. The many research seminars, talks and conferences that transpired over the last several years provided me with constant interaction with some of the most brilliant individuals I have ever met. The conversations that these interactions fostered were some of the most stimulating intellectual conversations I have ever had. I am grateful for my time in such a rich stimulating environment

and having been part of the great tradition which is philosophy at Edinburgh. In particular, I'm quite happy that I had the chance to present some of my early research into the topic of this thesis at Edinburgh and get very helpful criticism and feedback from my peers. Lani, Lee, Allan, Robin, Chris, Natalie and a whole cadre of other brilliant young philosophers at Edinburgh played such an integral role in my studies there that it is nearly impossible to qualify their contributions. But I am truly grateful for our many stimulating discussions, and regular deviations from our academic responsibilities (even though philosophy still continues on at the pub). My supervisors at Edinburgh, Jesper Kallestrup and Allen Hazlett were tremendously helpful and provided me with the necessary guidance to get the project done. To all my other friends that I made while living in Scotland, Kelly and Kyle in particular, I thank you for your inspiration, support and companionship. You made living abroad so easy and enjoyable that Scotland quickly became home.

Amongst all those who've provided me with guidance and support along the way, there are some who stand out. My wife, Nichole, stands out the most. Her unwavering support and encouragement throughout our seventeen years together has really been bedrock for me. She truly does see who I am and what motivates me and her eagerness to see my goals achieved is really only matched by my own. There is no better foundation for support than an individual like this in one's life. She is truly my partner. My parents, Larry and Susan (two individuals without whom I would not exist) must also be acknowledged for their constant encouragement and support. Everything I've ever wanted to do in life has in some way been as important to them as it has been to me, and I simply would not be here (not in the philosophical sense) without their support.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the inspiration and stimulation I received from my fellow students during my master's program at San Jose State University. The students there really supercharged my aspiration to become an academic and take seriously the possibility of continuing on to a PhD program. The professors there, Anand Vaidya, Rick Tieszen, Peter Hadreas and Carlos Sanchez reawakened something in me that lay dormant after completing my undergraduate studies in philosophy. If it were not for that program, I might not have ever pursued this degree and vocation.

Finally, to my daughter, Madison. Your very existence has made me often reflect on the notion of inspiration, and I've come to realize that only the inspired can truly inspire others. You have only ever really known me while I was in school. I guess, in a sense, I have strived to accomplish this personal goal of mine for you. Though it was a goal of *mine*, to earn my PhD in philosophy, everything really changed once you arrived on the scene. What is important to me personally, is of secondary importance as what is most important is how what I do in my life will encourage and inspire you to set goals for yourself and strive as hard as you can to achieve them. You are a powerfully motivating element of my life and I know that my pursuit of this degree would have been very different, possibly non-existent had I never had you in my life.

## Preface

As the title suggests, the work that follows is both an exercise in the philosophy of mind and in epistemology. For, a developing trend in contemporary epistemology, which this work is meant to continue, is to incorporate notions traditionally associated with the philosophy of mind into our epistemological theorizing. This trend recognizes that some of our most fundamental epistemological concepts are best understood and explored only with recourse to a very specific picture of the mental. On the picture developed here epistemology is so intimately related to the philosophy of mind that to give an account of propositional knowledge is to endorse a specific view on the nature of mental states. In and of itself this is nothing too novel. Timothy Williamson has argued for such linkages between the philosophy of mind and epistemology, and if one searches hard enough one can find precursors for Williamson's work in the writings of the Oxford school of the first part of the last century. Philosophers like Cook Wilson, H.A. Prichard and even Gilbert Ryle all at one point or another espoused views on knowledge and mind similar in theme to what we find in Williamson's treatment on knowledge. However, it is Williamson's position on the nature of knowing, that has reshaped my thinking altogether on how epistemology as a philosophical discipline is to be conducted. As such, this thesis can be viewed as a kind of variation on Williamson's work. For, it is essentially Williamson's version of psychological externalism that is argued for in part I; and the epistemology in part II can be considered a kind of adaptation of Williamson's view in the light of Quassim Cassam's explanatory theory of knowing. Cassam's important work on knowledge and *ways of knowing* has informed my thinking on the disjunctive nature of propositional knowledge as much as anyone, and it is his explanatory

approach to ways of knowing along with Williamson's factive attitude account that has helped shaped the arguments of the last chapter on the disjunctive nature of propositional knowledge.

Finally, it must be said that much of the metaphysical discussion in the first part of the thesis is based on the work of Helen Steward. Her insights in "The Ontology of Mind: Events, Processes and States" not only served as an inspiration but in a very real sense laid the groundwork for the structure of the thesis. It is her conception of *temporal shape* and her treatment on the topic of mental states in the philosophy of mind that made possible the view advocated for in this thesis. Her work has also, I think, served to provide metaphysical support for important points in Timothy Williamson's treatment on knowledge, as Williamson himself has indicated.

## Introduction

If I say that belief is a kind of state of mind, most would not find this to be a controversial claim. Of course belief is a kind of state of mind. I might say that desire, hope, fear, anger, frustration, as well as happiness and sadness are kinds of states of mind. Again, nothing said here appears controversial. In fact, statements like these may seem quaint and uninformative. We have a kind of everyday notional understanding of what is meant by 'state of mind', and these are very standard examples of such states. What about knowledge? Is the claim 'knowing is a state of mind' just as uncontroversial as the claim 'belief is a state of mind'? Prima facie it doesn't seem like it should be any more or less problematic than any of the other claims. However, this claim, which has been endorsed by some philosophers, most recently by Timothy Williamson has been met with incredible resistance. There seems to be something very controversial about saying that knowing is a state of mind. But what is it that is so controversial? The project this thesis is the result of is an attempt to understand just why this claim is considered so controversial and what exactly it means to say that knowing is a state of mind. For it is not obvious just what could be so problematic with such a claim, and the amount and degree of resistance Williamson's claim has met with really merits some investigation. While Williamson's overall epistemology has been debated from many perspectives, it is his particular form of psychological externalism and the debates that it engenders that will be the focus of the first part of this thesis. The claim that knowing is a state of mind is supported by a new, radically different form of externalism, which is a quite substantial deviation from other more traditional forms of externalism in the philosophy of mind.

Consider a contemporary view about mental content, which says that the content of one's thought, that is, what it is that one is thinking about, is an abstract entity and is at least partly fixed by factors external to the thinker. Views of this type go by many names, but in general they are referred to as externalist views about mental content. The basic idea with this form of externalism is something like the following. If a subject S believes, say, that water is a translucent substance, the content of that belief that 'water is a translucent substance' is not wholly determined by what is going on in the subject's head. In order for such a belief to be about 'water' the subject's historical relations to the environment must be considered. The famous Twin-Earth examples of Putnam and Burge have made the case for this view rather well, and as such the view has been adopted by many theorists. Mental content is, in many cases, dependent upon one's relation to the environment as the individualistic properties of the subject are not always sufficient for determining such content. So, in some sense at least, some fact or truth about the world can be part of one's mental state, if we think of the content of one's thought as at least partly constituting the mental state one is in. However, the content, on this type of view, is still just an abstract entity, something in the public domain available to anyone who entertains such content. And that one *believes* that water is a translucent substance, though the content 'water is a translucent substance' may be partly fixed by factors external to the subject, does not depend upon the way things are in the world. That is to say, the mental attitude of *believing* is just a mental attitude, which for most, is the result of the individualistic properties of the subject. Regardless of what the content is, call it *p*, *believing* that *p*, insofar as it is a *believing* is just a mental attitude or mental state of the individual and not something that requires the world to be any particular way. The same goes for *desiring* that *p* or *hoping* that *p*. When one believes that *p* is true, nothing in

the world need be any specific way in order for one to *believe* that *p*. We can have false beliefs. One may believe all kinds of falsehoods and nothing in the world need correspond to these beliefs in order for one to have them. Thus, one can *believe* that *p* independently of how things are in the world. Fear, anger, happiness, sadness, frustration, all of these are different states of mind and anyone can be in any one of them independently of how the world is. The world does not need to cooperate in any specific way for anyone to be in any of these states. In a sense, we regard a state of mind as a state of the person who is in that state, not a state of the world, or some weird hybrid world-person state. All of these types of mental states seem to not require that the world be a certain way in order for one to be in them. The world may have to be a certain way for one's mental state to have the particular content it has, but one is free to *believe* or *hope* or *desire* whatever it is they believe, hope or desire. Thus we may adhere to a type of externalism about mental content, but still think that one's attitude toward that content is only the result of how things are with the individual subject, not with the way the world is.

Knowledge, on the other hand is different. Knowledge is factive. One can only know that *p*, if *p* is true. Thus, one cannot know that *p* independently of how things are in the world; *p* must be the case for one to know that it is. This seems to imply that if knowing is a state of mind, then one's state of mind, when one knows, somehow involves the world in a unique kind of way, different from the way in which the content of one's mental state involves the world. That is, the attitude one takes to some proposition *p*, is not just a result of how things are with the individual subject, but necessarily depends on how things are in the world. Thus the claim that knowing is a state of mind, is really the claim that knowing is a kind of mental attitude,



just like belief or desire or hope is. Only, the difference here is that if knowing is its own kind of mental attitude, like belief, desire and hope, then there is a mental attitude that necessarily involves the fact or the truth that what is known is the case. But how could there be such an attitude? Is the claim here that when one knows that  $p$ , the fact that  $p$  is the case must in some sense be mental? If this is the right way to think about it, then the thesis is quite counterintuitive. For, that *thing* out there, that *truth* or *fact* about the world, certainly doesn't seem to be mental anymore than the books on my shelf do. So, how exactly are we supposed to make sense of a view about knowing where we are told that knowing is merely a state of mind? What must we take into account to get clear on just how this is supposed to work? How do we understand knowing as a kind of mental attitude? In answering these questions, we ultimately develop a new form of psychological externalism, which I refer to as attitude externalism. This form of externalism has been given articulation by Timothy Williamson, but has not been explored much further by other theorists.

The thesis is divided into two parts of three chapters each. Part one is an attempt to give a more detailed explanation of attitude externalism and what exactly it is about the view that allows one to claim that knowing is a state mind. This part of the thesis explores the metaphysical underpinnings of this form of externalism and proposes a kind of reconceptualization of mental states in general, one which ironically was quite popular in the early part of the last century with the ordinary language school of philosophy. The first three chapters are dedicated to establishing this view and in doing so I cover some metaphysical topics, which might not normally be seen in a thesis about knowing. The purpose of chapter one's discussion on the ontological distinction between mental states and mental events is to provide a

background to the subsequent discussion on attitude externalism. One of the main themes of the chapter is that the distinction between occurrent mental particulars (mental events) and non-occurrent mental universals (mental states) helps us form a clearer picture of the mental and what it means to talk of content bearing mental states, such as those expressed by the propositional attitude verbs like 'believe' and 'know'. Chapter two assumes an externalism about mental content for both mental states and mental events, and is focused on making the case for attitude externalism in light of the criticisms the traditional content externalists have made of it. I argue that the content externalist makes different metaphysical presuppositions from the attitude externalist, and that once the metaphysical picture is made clear for the attitude externalist view the debate between the two dissolves. The attitude externalist is just not working within the same ontological framework as the traditional content externalist. In a sense, the two are talking past one another. In chapter three I present a problem for the traditional form of content externalism, which has in one form or another been around since the beginning, but has not been successfully dealt with, and as a result has been overshadowed by other concerns with the view. This problem has been recently brought out again by Joseph Owens in the form of a dilemma. I will argue that the problem space articulated by Owen's dilemma can be best navigated by acknowledging the differences between mental states and mental events and how they bear content. It is further argued that the role that mental states are meant to play in the explanation of human behaviour is misunderstood by most theorists, and a proper understanding of their explanatory power can only come when mental states and mental events are understood properly — as distinct ontological types.

Part II of the thesis is about the epistemology of factive psychological attitudes. Building on the work in part I, I endorse the attitude externalist picture and examine some paradigmatic factive psychological attitudes from an epistemological perspective. Chapters four and five are concerned with two specific psychological attitudes ‘remembering’ and ‘seeing’, respectively. I have dedicated a chapter to each of these attitudes as their relation to the general state of knowing is particularly revealing of what I take to be an important and fundamental characteristic of propositional knowledge. In doing the epistemology of these attitudes it becomes quite clear that knowing is a disjunctive kind. The term ‘disjunctivism’ has been associated with philosophical theories of perception and recently with theories in epistemology itself. Though the concept of a *disjunctive kind* employed in this thesis is similar to that employed in the perceptual and epistemological disjunctivist theories, it isn’t quite correct to classify the theory discussed here as disjunctivism, unless it is permitted that one could regard it as another kind of epistemological disjunctivism, in which case, it could in a very loose way accept such a label. The disjunctive claim made for knowledge is that knowing is always and only had in some specific way by the knower. That is to say, there is always a way in which a knower has knowledge. The concluding chapter covers this notion of ‘ways of knowing’ and argues for what I take to be a fundamental epistemological principle I call the *multiformity principle*, and simply stated the principle says that when a subject S knows that *p*, there must be some specific way in which S knows that *p*. I suggest a compromise view between that of Williamson’s and Cassam’s views on ‘ways of knowing’ and propose that the multiformity principle might help us to understand some seemingly intractable problems in epistemology.

## Part I

# Psychological Externalism and the Metaphysics of Mental States and Events

# Chapter 1 Mental States and Mental Events

## Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give a background metaphysical picture against which the rest of the thesis can be viewed. At the core of the chapter is this distinction between occurrent and non-occurrent mental phenomena. In introducing this chapter it needs to be made clear that there are some ontological distinctions that are in play in the discussion, which I will briefly cover here, though the intent here is not to give strong arguments for taking such ontological distinctions as being well established by the arguments given herein. On the contrary, I am somewhat relying on the notion that it is pretty safe to assume that such distinctions are legitimate distinctions and that most would not seriously object to me making them. That being said, let me proceed to set the background for this chapter with a discussion about what I simply refer to as the occurrence/non-occurrence distinction.

We might start this discussion by noting that in ordinary language we often differentiate between things that happen or occur in some sense and things that do not. If someone were to say, "I hate the sheriff" a response to such a statement like, "that didn't happen" would not only strike us as completely illogical but would indicate some kind of conceptual failure on the part of the responder. Hating the sheriff just isn't something that happens or occurs. However, if someone were to say, "I shot the sheriff", then such a response is perfectly sensible. The rule here seems to be: It is appropriate to say of some things that they either happened or did not happen, whereas for some other things it is never appropriate to say either. There seems to be a certain quality or feature of certain types of entities that we quite naturally

recognize, which I take as indicating a kind of pre-theoretical ontological distinction, and make use of in ordinary language. And my suggestion is going to be that this is a temporal quality that some types of entities seem to have and some not. In fact, our vocabulary is replete with temporally demarcating terminology, and we know how to use such terminology in everyday contexts, and can recognize when such terminology is used incorrectly. If John were to say of Bob that he shot the sheriff, we might ask when and where such an event occurred because being shot is the type of thing that happens. It happens quite quickly of course, so it doesn't take much time to occur, but 'the shooting of the sheriff' certainly is something that happens at a particular time and in a particular place. Contrast this with the 'hating of the sheriff'. Bob's hate for the sheriff doesn't happen at any particular time or place. If John were to say of Bob that he hates the sheriff, we might inquire as to the reasons for Bob's hatred of the sheriff, but the question as to when and where it happened is practically incoherent. Some things just don't happen. Physical objects, states of objects or systems of objects, dispositions and some conditions are among the types of things we might classify as those things for which it is inappropriate to ask when and where they happened or occurred. On the other hand, changes in objects or systems of objects, events and processes, to name a few, are the types of things of which it seems quite appropriate to think of as occurring or happening in some sense. Whatever it is that gets classified on either side of this distinction, whatever kind of taxonomy suggests itself here is not really the point. The lists are neither meant to be exhaustive or precisely accurate. All that I want to do here is to point out the distinction itself, the distinction between those things that occur or happen in some sense and those things that do not.

This distinction I take as being primarily a kind of temporal distinction, in the sense that at a bare minimum, those things that happen or occur and those things that do not, fundamentally differ in the way in which they relate to time. Events and processes, for example, can be said to occur at a specific time, take a certain amount of time or go on for a period of time. None of these can be said of physical objects. Chairs, rocks and cigarette lighters don't take time to occur, or go on for any period of time. Physical objects don't happen at a particular time or over particular intervals of time, they persist through time. In a similar fashion, we might say that states, like physical objects, do not seem to be things that occur or happen in any sense. My current state of mind, my current state of health, a certain volume of water being in a frozen state or my room's being in a state of disorder are not things that happened or occurred. They may go on for a period of time but only in the sense that they obtain for that period, not in the sense in which anything is happening during that period that is the state's "going on." We might say that they persist over a specific interval of time, but the sense of 'persist' is the sense in which objects persist not the sense in which, say a persistent process is occurring. These states just don't seem to be happening in a kind of way, but have a more static nature to them. We might be tempted to say that my current state of health occurred at a certain point, if that state is a particularly unique state or that the physical state of some volume of water changed from being liquid to solid. But really what we're doing here it seems is pointing out a specific time at which such states can be said to obtain, not that the states themselves are occurring or happening. There may be many things that do happen or occur that cause a particular state to come to be, but this is not to say that the states themselves are the types of things that happen or occur. Compare the current mood I'm in with 'my mood's changing'. What are we referring to in each case if not two

subtly, but importantly different types of things? My mood can change, and often does, but the mood I'm in and 'its changing' seem to be two quite different things. As Davidson once put it, "Things change; but are there such things as changes?" (Davidson, 1970, p. 25). Whether or not we want to countenance the "changes" themselves amongst the rest of the things we think make up our world, we certainly recognize that when something changes, whether it is an object or the state of some object or system of objects, something occurs or happens, and it isn't the object itself nor the state of the object that occurred or happened. The obvious candidate for what type of thing it is that happens or occurs in cases like this is an event or process. The proposal here is that we use the generic term 'event' or 'process' to refer to those types of entities that happen or occur, and contrast these with the generic term 'state' which refers to only those types of entities that are static in the sense that they do not happen or occur in any way.

Now, any discussion of events brings to mind several prominent philosophers and their massively influential views on the topic. Davidson, Kim and Chisholm just to name a few are certainly essential reading for any philosopher interested in the topic of events. To canvass the field of philosophical contributions to this discourse would far exceed the scope of this thesis, and in the interest of keeping exegesis under control and limiting it only to those sections where it is necessary, I will not go into a detailed exploration of the metaphysics of events. It will be necessary to say a few words about some of these views, from a high level, to continue to develop the background against which the view outlined in this thesis is to be considered. In section one I will say a few words on Davidson's and Kim's view of events, as their views are quite prominent in the literature and share



very important similarities for the purposes of our discussion.<sup>1</sup> Much of this chapter is exegetical as it is in essence just a rehearsal of Steward's arguments from her "The Ontology of Mind: Events, Processes and States." Though I do provide some original arguments, the chapter does not expound a particular theory of the mental, nor give a detailed analysis of mental events and mental states, but only a kind of overview of Steward's work. It is her conception of mental states and mental events, as mentioned in the introduction, that is at work here and it will be necessary to sketch out the main points that are relevant to subsequent discussions. There are three main points that we are adopting from her work in this chapter: 1) that mental events meet a certain particularity requirement, 2) that mental states do not meet this requirement and thus lack this type of particularity, 3) that mental states are best thought of as fact-like entities. What these three points do for us will become apparent throughout the following chapters, but we can say at the outset that since mental events, in many cases, can be regarded as mental particulars, they are suitable for playing a certain kind of causal explanatory role in psychological explanation, whereas since mental states lack this kind of particularity, they are not capable of playing the causal explanatory role that particular mental events can play. Furthermore, the conception of mental states offered us from Steward, that mental states are much more akin to facts or states-of-affairs is absolutely critical in developing attitude externalism. It is this conception of mental states that is implied in the formulation of attitude externalism, and as I will show in chapter two recognizing this fact should dissolve any issues between the traditional content externalist and the attitude externalist. For, they are working with two different conceptions of mental states.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other prominent views on events are Chisholm (1970) and (1976); Bennet (1989); Lombard (1986).

Section one deals with the distinction between occurrent mental properties and non-occurrent mental properties. The intent is to show that clarity on some important differences between these mental entities should inform our position on two very important debates. Those debates are about the role mental states are supposed to play in explaining human action or behaviour, and the nature of mental content. In this section I will discuss Steward's temporal strategy. What I want to point out here is that the distinction between occurrents and non-occurrents translates into the realm of the mental. That is to say, there are mental occurrents and mental non-occurrents, and we already have philosophical, if not ordinary language vocabulary for picking out these distinct types of entities. Section two is concerned with mental events and particularity and in this section I will stipulate a definition for the metaphysical notion of particularity. There is a stronger notion of particularity at work in Steward's treatment on the subject, but for our purposes we will adopt a conception of particularity, which is essentially contrastive with the concept of universality. In the last section I will suggest that the right way to think of mental states is strictly as universals. The types of mental states I have specifically in mind are those that are usually picked out by propositional attitude verbs such as 'believe' and 'know'. Thus, the mental states under discussion are those that have some propositional content. It will be argued that such mental states only admit of a kind of universality and that the notion of a token mental state is problematic. I will also very briefly offer a particular way of conceptualizing the notion of a mental state that is suggested by Steward's work and found in the works of some of the ordinary language philosophers like Ryle and Austin.

## 1.1 Steward on the Temporal Strategy

I think it is fair to say that philosophers have typically thought of events in terms of changes. We recognize that changes take place, that substances undergo changes, that objects change their position, that time passes, and so on. Referring to such changes as particular events is nothing too philosophically controversial, and in some ways coincides with our ordinary language use of the terms 'change' and 'event'. In "The Logical Form of Action Sentences" Davidson attempted to give us a way of understanding the logic and semantics of action sentences. He was interested in understanding how quite common and simple sentences such as 'Jones buttered the toast slowly', sentences we very easily grasp the meaning of, could be captured in a purely logical form. Events, for Davidson, served as vehicles for understanding the logic of event and action sentences; their ontological status, at least initially for Davidson, was of secondary concern. He eventually admitted that we must include events as particulars into our ontology, but this was mainly as a result of his larger semantic project. What is relevant to our discussion here from Davidson's view on events is not the semantics or logical structure of action sentences, but what his view committed him to ontologically. Davidson, along with Kim, viewed events essentially as dated particulars. Events are real particulars that have properties, properties which can causally influence other events or objects. For Davidson, since event and action sentences admit of a certain possibility of re-description, a single particular event can be described in multiple ways and the properties associated with that particular event do not necessarily constitute that event on Davidson's view. Contrast this with Kim's view of events. Kim thinks of events as exemplifications of properties by substances at a particular time. On Kim's approach, we can think of events as essentially ordered triples of a substance, a property and a time. The event is that

substance exemplifying that property at that particular time. Thus, whereas a single event under different descriptions on Davidson's view is a possibility, and as Davidson sees it an advantage, on Kim's view such a possibility is severely limited. The 'stabbing of Caesar by Brutus', on Kim's view, is a unique event and is not identical to 'the killing of Caesar by Brutus', whereas on Davidson's view we have the same event under different descriptions. Both views are realist views about events and regard them as dated particulars, which can be located in a spatial framework and which can play central roles in causal explanation. Chisholm, whose view is, in many important ways, significantly different from both, and one which we will not go into here, regarded both Kim and Davidson as advocates of the concrete event theory.<sup>2</sup>

Though both Kim's and Davidson's views of events are substantial and widely regarded as classic treatments on the topic of events, both from metaphysical and semantico-logical perspectives, there is something missing from their accounts, which seems intuitively to be essential to any proper account of events. There is an element that I believe we have a pre-theoretical understanding of about the concept of event that is not found in either of their accounts, or at least not to any degree to which it plays an important role in how we understand what events are. That element is time. Just as it is fair to say that we think of events as correlated with changes, I think we also think of events as essentially temporal phenomena. Events occur. They happen. It is essential to what an event is that it be a thing that happens or goes on in some way. It is strange that this temporal characteristic that seems just as obvious as the notion of change has not found its way to playing a central role in any of the predominant theories of events. This fact has

---

<sup>2</sup> See Chisholm (1976).

recently been pointed out by Helen Steward.<sup>3</sup> Steward offers a unique perspective on events by focusing on just this element – the role that time plays in the structure of events.<sup>4</sup>

Where Kim glosses over the differences between possibly distinct ontological categories like state, condition and event, Steward spends time identifying interesting and arguably important distinctions between the three.

According to Steward it is a mistake to class events and states into a single ontological category. Her view focuses not on the exemplification of properties or change, but on the unique temporal qualities of events as essentially occurrent phenomena. The fact that events are intrinsically temporal phenomena as opposed to states for example, is so often overlooked, or relegated to a mere terminological difference that outside of Steward's work, no substantial view of events has been advanced based on what seems to be an intrinsic property of events. In one of Kim's discussions he says,

[I]t is a philosophical commonplace to use the term 'event' in a broad sense, not only to refer to changes but also to refer to states, conditions, and the like (Kim, 1993, p. 34).

It is clear that he is focusing on the concept of change as the fundamental aspect of events, and that the temporal qualities of events are either downplayed or subsumed by the role that change plays. In the same essay he writes,

Besides events, we also speak of "states". If "events" signal changes, "states" seem to be static things, "unchanges"... (Kim, 1993, p. 33).

---

<sup>3</sup> See Steward (1997).

<sup>4</sup> Davidson does acknowledge that events are inherently temporal phenomena, but his emphasis is not on this characteristic of events. See Davidson (1969).

Despite this overt acknowledgement of states and events as being diametrically opposed to one another, the one being essentially changes and the other being “unchanges” Kim continues on to characterize his view, albeit in a preliminary way, and after downplaying the difference between *static* things like states and events, in the following way.

Just as changes are changes of properties in substances...[S]tates and conditions are states and conditions *of* or *in* substances or systems of substances. Add this to our earlier reasons for underplaying the differences between changes and unchanges, and we naturally arrive at a conception of events and states as *exemplifications by substances of properties at a time* (Kim, 1993, p. 34).

On Kim’s view states and events are grouped together into a single ontological category, and there is no principled way in which one might draw a distinction between the two other than by regarding one as the complement of the other.

This approach to understanding the nature of events and states is directly challenged by Steward. She classes events along with processes according to what she refers to as *temporal shape*. As her goal is to develop an account of events that is suitable for an ontology of mind, the context for Steward’s discussion is that of current theories in the philosophy of mind, such as the token identity theory. Steward argues that insofar as one seeks a correct ontology of the mind, if mental events are to be incorporated into such an ontology, one needs to develop a view where mental events can be thought of as mental particulars. Her criticism of Kim’s view is that it fails to do just this.<sup>5</sup> In fact, according to Steward, most of the prominent views on events fail to fulfil a certain requirement. Any correct application of a theory of

---

<sup>5</sup> She also considers Lombard’s view and Bennett’s view, which are both arguably different from Kim’s, but both are found lacking for separate reasons.

events to current views in the philosophy of mind – and she has in mind here the token identity theory - would need to meet what she refers to as the *secret life requirement*. What she means by this is that if events are going to fulfil a certain role in the philosophy of mind as a sort of entity that we use to describe relations between mental and physical properties or act as causally generative individuals, they must have a kind of particularity to them. So, the secret life requirement (SLR) is essentially a particularity requirement.<sup>6</sup> That is, mental events, if they're going to do the job philosophers often recruit them for in their theories of the mind, need to be mental particulars.

Contra Kim and others, Steward proceeds to give a thin account of events (and processes) based on what she refers to as the “temporal strategy.” The temporal strategy essentially says that any theory of events (and processes) should base itself on how these entities relate to time. The suggestion here is to not identify events (and processes) as either property exemplifications or changes (though they may also be these things), but rather to consider

---

<sup>6</sup> The notion of a secret life is just the idea that there may be some other unique way of identifying a particular, which is not necessarily known to a subject that is already capable of picking out that particular in some already unique way. In the case of a particular mental event, say, the demonstrative thought that ‘this coffee is too hot to drink’ we might say that there are two different perspectives from which one could identify that thought. There is the first-person intentional perspective of thinking the thought ‘this coffee is too hot to drink’, but there is also the possibility of a third-person perspective, say, from a neurobiological perspective, one could take on the same thought. In the latter case, one might identify such a thought as a particular pattern of electrical impulses, or neuronal firings in a certain area of the persons’ brain. In this sense, this particular mental event has a kind of secret life, a side of itself that one wouldn’t know about if one only knew of it from the first-person perspective. There is another possible way of identifying this very thought, which is totally distinct from the first-person intentional perspective. Steward claims that there are three criteria for some thing’s meeting the secret life requirement. She says, “I shall say that an entity satisfies the ‘secret life requirement’ if and only if it is intelligible to suppose that: 1) the entity might be uniquely identified by means of some referring expression which is not known to apply to it by someone who is, nevertheless, in a position to single that entity out in some other way; 2) for some such referring expressions, the subject’s not knowing that they provide an alternative means of uniquely identifying the entity in question is not simply a matter of her being ignorant of an alternative means of uniquely identifying some *other* entity; 3) for some such referring expressions, the subject’s not knowing that they provide an alternative means of uniquely identifying that entity in question is not simply a matter of her not knowing about one of the entity’s relational properties (where spatial and temporal properties are not accounted relational).”

contrasting events (and processes) with another kind of entity, states. To get a good picture of what Steward means by temporal shape it will be helpful to briefly discuss some distinctions she offers us with regards to events and processes.

One of Steward's insights is that important ontological distinctions, such as might exist between events and processes, may depend upon the way in which each of these entities can be said to "fill" an interval of time. She suggests that we can look to the ways in which certain verb usage suggests particular temporal characteristics of some of our everyday talk. So, her approach is twofold: firstly, to give an analysis of the temporal distinctions between processes and events, by identifying the unique way in which each can be said to fill a time interval, and secondly, to examine certain qualities of verbs and nominalizations, in order to substantiate any claim of a real ontological distinction between events and processes. For example, we might think about the difference between a process and an event as a difference in the way these two occurments unfold through an interval of time. Some occurments seem to *go on* for a period of time, but not necessarily *take* any specific amount of time to occur. They might also be said to persist throughout that interval as a kind of on-going homogenous activity. The buzzing of the lights in my room, for example, seems to persist all the while I'm writing this. However, it would just seem strange to ask how long it took for that buzzing to occur. It didn't *take* any definite amount of time. We can talk about how long it when on for, but not how long it took. Some occurments on the other hand seem to be amenable to the above kind of question. We tend to think of some occurments as things that do take a certain amount of time. The "running of a marathon" or the "the opening of a parachute" are possible examples of this type of occurrence. It seems



reasonable to ask of these types of occurrents how long they took. We could ask, and expect a sensible answer to, “How long did it take you to run the marathon?” or “How long did it take for the parachute to open?” It would seem strange to ask how long the “running of the marathon” went on for, though we could ask how long the “running” went on for. There seems to be a kind of structural difference between “the running of a marathon” and “running”, and Steward’s point is that this difference has to do with the way in which each, in a sense, unfolds over time. Both seem to be kinds of “happenings”, in a broad sense, but the way in which they happen seems to be different. Those types of occurrents that go on for a while but don’t seem to take any specific amount of time to occur, we might regard as processes, whereas those that fill their respective interval of time in a more definite manner like ‘the running of a marathon’ we might regard as events.

Steward rightly acknowledges that these points are not strong enough to hang any kind of substantial theory on though we might look at the ways in which certain temporally sensitive adjectives might apply to these specific types of entities to help reinforce the distinction. According to Steward, processes can be said to be ‘continuous’, ‘constant’ or ‘ongoing’, whereas the same cannot be said of events. Processes can be ‘intermittent’, ‘steady’, ‘perpetual’ or ‘sporadic’, but the same just doesn’t seem to be the case for events. The idea here is that these adjectives indicate that processes seem to *go on* for an indefinite period of time but events seem to have a kind of definite time period that, in a sense, draws a boundary around the event. We can ask when the event occurred, and how long it took. We can also ask when it began and/or when it ended. The difference in the way each fills its time interval is what Steward refers to as a difference in their *temporal shape*. She summarizes things thus,

...we can say, roughly, that those features of a temporal entity which determine its temporal shape are those which determine which of the following may be said of it:

Whether it persists, occurs, goes on, continues, happens, obtains.

Whether it takes time, last for a time, goes on for a time, persists for a time, occurs at a time.

Whether certain temporally sensitive adjectives may be applied to it – these include ‘intermittent’, ‘continuous’, ‘persistent’, etc. (Steward, 1997, p. 98)

Essentially both events and processes are kinds of happenings or occurrences, but the way in which whatever happens during the relevant time interval is distributed differently over that interval for both processes and events.<sup>7</sup>

Even though there may be some further distinctions that can be made, for example, between those things that *take time* as opposed to those things that *last for a time*, or even perhaps *go on for a time*, and I think Steward’s notion of temporal shape might be very useful here, for our purposes we’re mainly interested in the broader distinction between those things that occur like events and processes and those things that do not occur like states. We’re particularly interested in how this ontological distinction carries over into

---

<sup>7</sup> Steward concedes the obvious point that not every thing we would want to classify as an event or a process is going to fit this model - she does spend time discussing what she terms non-paradigmatic cases. However, I do believe the temporal distinction between events and processes drawn here is such a subtle one that it is almost impossible to defend any rigid classification based on the above discussion. It seems there are too many cases where we would want to ask of an event, just how long it when on for, something which Steward thinks is indicative of processes. We might ask, “How long did the birthday party go on for”, or “How long did the hostage crisis last”, both of which seem to be pretty good candidates for events. It also seems that even though processes do not necessarily need to take any definite amount of time to occur, in contrast to events which seem to have this characteristic by having a beginning and an ending, it seems reasonable to think of processes as at least starting and stopping. It may seem conversationally inappropriate to talk of how much time the buzzing of my lights took, but that doesn’t mean that it didn’t start at some point and stop at another. Starting and stopping may not be the same as beginning and ending but they are similar enough to put pressure on the weight this distinction can carry.

our discussion of the mental, as we'll see in the following sections, but for now a few remarks on the nature of states will conclude this section's discussion.

Whereas we can speak of the temporal components or parts of events and processes, for example, it makes sense to speak of the point in time at which an event began or ended, or some midpoint of an event or process, there do not seem to be any such components to states. As Steward suggests, "States differ from events most fundamentally...in failing to have temporal parts at all." (Steward, 1997, p. 101) Now, the use of the term 'state' in philosophy is rather chaotic. Philosophers use the term to describe all kinds of phenomena, mental and physical. They range from those that are referred to by a wide variety of abstract nouns like 'solidity', 'marriage', 'knowledge' or 'belief', to more complex nominal phrases like 'being green' or 'having weight'. Philosophers are also quite fond of thinking of states as things that certain nominalized adjectives refer to like 'redness' or 'tablehood'. All of these different kinds of constructions have been thought of as referring to states in some sense or other at some point in the history of philosophy. To wade through this swamp of possible state-like entities is surely a monumental task, and it is not my intention to do so here. Rather, I only want to point out the variegated uses to which the concept of state has been put by philosophers. Indeed, there doesn't seem to be any semblance whatsoever of consensus on what a state is. For instance, Stich takes a state to be simply the instantiation of a property at a time. Of course such a definition hardly does us any good if we have any interest in differentiating states from events or processes, since events (and probably processes) also can instantiate a property at a time. In a similar vein, Kim thinks of states in terms of property exemplifications as he does of events, which still doesn't aid us in making

any distinction between those things that occur and those things that do not, since both could exemplify some property at some time. Steward on the other hand, thinks that states share similar features to that of objects, at least with respect to their temporal qualities, which I'm inclined to agree with, and since we're interested in the distinction between occurrence and non-occurrence something like the temporal qualities of both events/processes and states seems like a reasonable area to focus on. Given the fact that there is quite a bit of variation both on what counts as a state and what the essential characteristics of a state are, any feasible idea seems as good as the next. So, there is no burden upon us here to make use of any particular theory. In fact, the goal here being one of characterizing only a certain type of state, namely, a mental state, only makes the task that much easier. That being said, I do believe that with respect to temporality all states share a similar profile. All this means is that like Steward, I want to suggest that states don't have any essentially temporal components. They have a similar temporal shape to that of objects.<sup>8</sup> They persist through time, as objects do. They don't have beginnings or endings; they don't start and stop. States can be said to obtain, but not occur or happen. Their temporal profile seems to be fundamentally different from those of both processes and events.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> The term 'object' is being used loosely here. Often in these debates the term 'continuant' may be used to refer to what I'm referring to here as an object. Such terms as 'perdurant' and 'endurant' are also used to refer to events or processes on the one hand and things more like physical objects on the other. I am intentionally avoiding the use of these terms, as they will no doubt carry us further into the metaphysical debate about the structural differences between events, processes, states and objects, a debate I do not have space to go into here in any real detail. The distinctions I'm attempting to elucidate are fairly high level and our purposes do not require us to make such fine distinctions as those that might exist between processes and events, or physical objects and states of physical objects. For a more detailed discussion on this topic see Steward (2013) and Stout (1997, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Steward has suggested that states may obtain or persist over time, and provisionally, I'm in agreement on this point, though the notion of persistence is a bit slippery. I agree with her that we can consider a state to obtain over a period of time, but persisting over time is more problematic. For, according to Steward's own view, this might give states a similar temporal shape to that of processes, since processes are also said to persist. If it is the case that both processes and states

In fact, while it is certainly true that states can obtain for a certain period of time it doesn't follow from this that an interval of time is necessary for any state to obtain. If it were, then it wouldn't be possible for a state to obtain over no stretch of time or an infinite amount of time. We wouldn't be able to make sense of states that seem to obtain where time itself is irrelevant. And we can do this. In fact, in certain cosmological models of the universe, physicists talk about the end state of the universe. In such a state there is no time interval to reference as there is no transference of energy since the entropy of the universe has reached a maximal point. But we can still talk about that state as a state of the universe. We certainly can and do talk about states that seem to be independent of any time interval.<sup>10</sup> It seems time is irrelevant in such cases to the obtaining of such states. We can say of a particular state that it obtains at *certain* times, or only for certain *amounts* of time, but that does not imply that time is in any way essential to statehood. Again, it seems we're lead to the idea that states do not have any temporal parts, or at least the idea that any temporal characteristics there might be of any given state are not essential to the general concept of a state, since we

---

persist, then it is difficult to maintain that there is a clean distinction to be made with regard to temporal parts. We might as well consider whether states are not also intermittent or sporadic or ongoing for that matter. Steward, however, does claim, and I agree, that states do not have temporal parts, as events and processes do, and this point of agreement is much more important than this relatively minor point of contention. In fact, there is room here to argue that there are plenty of adjectives that can qualify both states and processes equally well. It might even be argued that there really is no principled distinction to make between the two, and that any process can be thought of as a kind of state. However, I don't think the converse would hold, as I think there is at least one fundamental difference between the two, which is the reason why I would deny that states persist, and that is that states do not seem to *go on* in any sense. That is, processes seem to share a temporal quality with events that states do not seem to have. Whatever the final verdict turns out to be here, it is not essential to any of my arguments. The distinction that is crucial for this paper is the one between states and events, and thus far I don't see that they share any temporal qualities.

<sup>10</sup> Obviously, much will turn on one's conception of time. For example, an anti-realist position about time might be immune to any of these concerns.

can conceive of a state with no temporal qualities or that obtains over no interval of time.<sup>11</sup>

For some states, namely, mental states, there is always a relevant time interval. That is to say, mental states always obtain over a positive interval of time, but this is merely a contingent matter of fact, and has more to do with the obtaining of a fact, than with any temporal quality of the state itself. The suggestion here is that if this notion of temporal shape can be used to differentiate states from events and processes in general, then it seems we can comfortably situate mental states with those mental properties that are non-occurrent and mental events and processes with those mental properties that are occurrent. We are thus left with the view that the domain of mental phenomena may be bisected, broadly speaking, according to whether a given property can be said to have a particular temporal shape. From here on I'll refer to those mental properties that can be said to have a temporal shape similar to either events or processes as occurrent mental properties or mental events/processes and those that do not have such a temporal shape as non-occurrent mental properties or mental states.

In concluding, two final points need to be made. First, mental states like any other state are static and do not go on or unfold over an interval of time like an event or process might. However, they must *obtain* over some period of time. We can say that for any mental state *m*, there must be some positive

---

<sup>11</sup> One possible view—though I do not know of any who holds such a view—is that states are atemporal properties, much like that of mathematical properties. The concept of a property that seems to be “outside” of time is nothing new in philosophy, so it shouldn't seem too objectionable, at least at first glance, to extend this class of properties to include such things as states, especially given that they do not seem to admit of having any kind of temporal parts. I think this conclusion might be rash, especially for certain types of states. Mental states, the kind we're interested in at least, seem to always obtain over some time interval, whereas mathematical properties seem to have a kind of Platonic eternity, something which the contingency of mental states seems to naturally exclude the possibility of.

interval of time  $t_0 - t_n$  during which  $m$  obtains at each instant. Whether or not that state is homogenous over that interval is another question, and one that should be answered, but it isn't relevant for our purposes. All that needs to be noted here is that mental states must obtain over a positive interval of time. We also need to note something about states in general, which will come into play in the next chapter when we look at how attitude externalism can meet some of its criticisms. Steward notes in her discussion on the temporal strategy that states share a similar temporal profile to that of physical objects. However, she also makes a key insight regarding states that, I think, can ultimately serve to substantiate a very central claim of attitude externalism. Thus, this point about states will come into play in an important way in the next chapter. Steward notes,

That states, but not physical objects, can be said to obtain seems to me to be related not to a temporal difference, but rather to the special relation between the obtaining of a state and the holding of certain *truths*; e.g. if the state of my believing that  $p$  'obtains', that is because I believe that  $p$  (Steward, 1997, p. 99).

The point here about the relation between the obtaining of certain truths and the obtaining of a state, I think reveals something unique about certain types of states, namely, mental states. I will emphasize this point, and elaborate on just what this relation might be in the last section. It suffices to say at this point, that both truths or facts and mental states can be characterized as things that obtain over a period of time, and for some states, the fact that obtains might always be coincident with the state that obtains in virtue of that fact.

## 1.2 Mental Events and Particularity

It should be practically an undisputed point that most mental phenomena have temporal characteristics. They either take time, happen at a particular time, persist through time, or obtain for a period of time. It should be equally indisputable that we can, at least broadly, categorize mental properties according to their temporal qualities. We can at least bifurcate the mental realm according to those mental properties that happen or occur and those that do not. Occurrent mental properties might be something like 'noticing that the bus is actually on time', 'considering whether to have the soup or sandwich', 'working out a math problem in one's head' or 'wondering whether the stove was left on'. There are endless examples that can be constructed for this point because this type of mental phenomenon is an everyday experience. In fact, we loosely characterize these types of mental properties in ordinary language as 'thoughts'. That is to say, thoughts are things that occur. We often make use of common expressions that express just this point, as in "a thought just occurred to me", or "I just had a thought". We regularly and in no philosophically complicated way recognize that certain parts of our mental lives have this temporal feature, that they occur or happen. Non-occurrent mental properties, or mental states, might be things like 'the belief that the sun will rise tomorrow', or 'knowing that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland'. These examples are quite common and make the point fairly clearly all by themselves, but I think we can gain a bit more insight into the distinction by looking at the ways in which the behaviour of certain verbs we use to refer to mental properties differ from one another.

The most obvious place to start is with the fact that verbs have tenses. Most verbs have past, present and future tenses. However, some verbs of English



like 'run' for example, can have slightly more complicated tenses such as the continuous or progressive tense. We can say things like, 'She ran a mile last week' and 'She is running a mile' and the idea being conveyed by each employs the difference in possible tenses of 'run', the latter exploiting the progressive tense. The difference here is that 'She [ran/will run] a mile' does not imply that anything is currently going on. In English we use the progressive tense [is running] to imply that something is currently happening. However, not all verbs work so comfortably in the progressive tense. The propositional attitude verbs, are great examples of this. The verbs 'know' and 'believe' typically used to indicate something not particularly dynamic in nature, but rather something more static are rarely used in the progressive tense. If someone believes that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland, we don't think that there is anything going on with the person that is *the believing* that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland. The same is the case with 'know', which also resists use in the progressive tense for similar reasons. Saying that 'Sally is knowing that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland' just obviously sounds like bad English. Verbs like 'know' and 'believe' do not generally take the continuous tense. However, as many theorists have pointed out the reason why certain verbs do not take continuous tenses can be different. Certain verbs don't take continuous tenses because they tend to indicate something that usually happens instantaneously or over a very short time span, such as 'recognize'. That is, we normally wouldn't expect one to say that they were recognizing something for more than just a moment. It wouldn't do to say, 'She is recognizing a friend in the crowd', whereas it is appropriate to say, 'She recognized her friend right away'. Usually, recognition occurs rather briefly and then it is over. The event is short-lived. Certain other verbs however also do not usually take the continuous tense, but not for the reason that they

indicate something that happens in a very short amount of time but because they indicate something that doesn't take up time at all, such as the verb 'know'. As mentioned above it just seems odd to say, 'I'm knowing that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland' and the reason why that sounds odd is that the verb 'know' doesn't usually take a continuous tense. However, the reason why 'know' doesn't usually take the continuous tense is not the same reason why 'recognize' doesn't usually take the continuous tense. The difference here has to do it seems, with the way in which recognizing and knowing both relate to time. I suggest that the difference here is that we use the term 'recognize' to identify a type of mental event or process, whereas we use the term 'know' to identify a type of mental state. This seems a fairly obvious conclusion, since as we've already discussed states differ ontologically from events/processes with respect to time.

Our lexicon of mental verbs has the distinction between occurrent mental properties and non-occurrent mental properties it seems built in to it. That is, the distinction between these two ontological categories is something we regularly work with in ordinary language. Given that we ordinarily pick out by the use of particular mental terms, and by the use of specific tenses of verbs and types of predications those things we can regard as mental events or processes and those things we can regard as mental states, we might inquire into what, if any, characteristic features occurrent and non-occurrent mental properties have. If we hold that there is an important connection between some of our linguistic constructions and the actual structure of the world which they purport to be about, then these subtleties can reasonably be held to indicate a real ontological distinction as some theorists have held. Steward makes a similar point in saying,

The features of human nature and experience which have usually been classified as mental are, on the whole, associated either with verbs, or else with nouns closely related to verbs...This suggests that perhaps there is insight to be gained from an examination of the different behavior of these verbs (Steward, 1997, p. 78).

One reason for focusing on the particular features I'm focusing on instead of what is more traditionally thought of as characterizing mental states is that what we're interested in here are not necessarily the properties that make something mental, but those that make something a mental *state* as opposed to a mental *event* or *process*. The characteristics usually thought of as qualifying something as mental such as 'serving to explain behaviour' or 'tending towards a personal form', etc., surely help characterize something as what we might think of as being mental, but do not necessarily serve to differentiate between those mental properties that are occurrent and those that are non-occurrent, which is what we're interested in identifying.

Many authors have suggested that mental events can have a kind of particularity to them. Davidson and Kim, for example, both regard mental events as dated particulars. So, the idea that there are particular mental events as opposed to there being only universal or generic types of events is fairly common among theorists. So, we might inquire into whether particularity is some kind of differentiating feature of mental events as compared with mental states, and if so, what are some necessary conditions for particularity.<sup>12</sup> Of course whether or not mental events meet any conditions of particularity will depend on our conception of a particular. As this is itself quite a significant metaphysical question — what is a

---

<sup>12</sup> I'm purposely omitting discussion of processes here for simplicity's sake, but what is claimed for events may also apply to processes, though this would require an argument. As I'm chiefly concerned with mental events, what can be said of mental processes, while interesting in its own right, is not of concern here.

particular?—I will only stipulate a working definition for now. Whether what is said here for mental events hangs or falls on this definition will just have to be a consequence we accept, and as I mentioned earlier, Steward offers the SLR as a necessary condition for particularity, which may or may not capture those things we think of as particulars. But I will offer a weaker definition, as I believe it will be sufficient for our purposes. A particular, as I understand it, is contrasted with a universal. While I will not offer a strict definition of a universal, we might say that universals are multiply realizable abstract entities. We can also point to examples of universals and define the concept denotatively. 'Man', 'Whale' and 'Planet' are examples of universals. Many individual things can be a man, none of which can be 'Man' itself. The same goes for 'Whale' and 'Planet'. Thus, we can partially specify what a particular is by saying that particulars are not multiply realizable.

Furthermore, let us say that for all things  $x, y$  it is a necessary condition for both  $x$ 's and  $y$ 's being a particular that they occupy a region of spacetime in such a way that we can isolate or individuate them from another spatiotemporally. That is,  $x$  and  $y$  exclude one another spatially and temporally. Thus, if some thing does not in any way occupy a region of spacetime in the manner stipulated above, or is multiply realizable, then it does not qualify as a particular. At the very least, this definition captures most physical objects. There are of course going to be objections to this definition and borderline cases. Substances and stuffs for example, like water, iron and mud do not clearly fit into this category. I will set aside this point, as the definition is adequate for our purposes.

So, particulars tend to have some kind of location to which some kind of spatial and temporal coordinates can be roughly assigned. Again, contrast this with universals or generic types, which cannot have these characteristics.

There is no sense in which we could give the spatial and temporal coordinates of *whale* or *man*, but we can give such coordinates, to one degree or another to *a whale* and *a man*.<sup>13</sup> I want to suggest that such characteristics can be attributed to mental events, but not to mental states. And this is a crucial point, for this distinction is not made by most theorists. Often what is said for the one (mental events) is assumed to hold for the other (mental states). Thus, if one has a view where particular mental events play a role and there is really no distinction between mental events and mental states, then states can play that same role. I want to suggest caution at this point for it is not clear that what is true for the one is necessarily true of the other.

In a sense, it is possible to localize events to a region of spacetime. Reflect for a moment on a birthday party. We might regard a birthday party as a type of event. Surely it took place over a certain, roughly specifiable interval of time. And presumably it took place at some geographical location. How fine grained we can get is not the question, but whether the event can at least in principle, satisfy the necessary condition for particularity. The same goes for a mental event, like a thought. It occurs at a specific time usually, and roughly at a specific physical location—wherever the subject whose thought it is is located at the time. Though it is a little unusual to talk of the temporal and spatial location of a thought, there is nothing incoherent about it.

Outside of maybe some of the biological sciences there just hasn't been any reason for theorists to discuss thoughts in this manner. We don't need to be very specific to locate a mental event either. We might simply say, "the thought occurred to me while I was driving", or "I had a thought while in the shower". These rather unspecific statements still serve to locate a

---

<sup>13</sup> There is a sense in which we could say that 'Man' is localized to Earth and in doing so be giving the universal 'Man' a rough spatial location. As it stands, this response is not enough to undermine the spatial exclusion principle above and so does not warrant further consideration at this point.

particular mental event temporally at least. If we wanted to—and neurobiologists certainly do—we might even try to localize a specific mental event as it occurs and identify it with a particular neurological event in the brain, in which case it might be possible to give both a quite specific time and spatial coordinate for the event. All of this points up the idea that mental events meet our necessary condition for particularity. What really needs to be shown is that there is nothing preventing us, in principle, from regarding some mental event as being a particular. The literature on events, and mental events specifically, is full of references to events as particulars. Whatever our particularity requirement is, whether it is Steward's SLR or some rigorous spatiotemporal criteria there is no reason, in principle, to object to there being particular mental events. That is to say, insofar as we contrast particulars with universals, and universals are multiply realizable there is no reason to think that there could not be a mental event that is also a particular.

### 1.3 Mental States and Universality

Despite the fact that in the literature references to mental states seem to imply a notion of mental states as particulars, and the fact that most theorists do not find it necessary, at least for theoretical purposes, to distinguish between mental events and mental states, it simply is not a given that what holds for the one necessarily holds for the other. So we must ask whether mental states meet our, or any, particularity requirement. Can we temporally or spatially locate a mental state? Can we do so with a mental state like 'the belief that coffee is bad for one'? Firstly, how exactly do we give any kind of time specification for such a thing, if it doesn't even occur? Mental events are advantaged in this respect because they happen. And *happening* is an inherently temporal category. Thus, the temporal coordinate. But states don't

happen. I suppose we could age them, and in this way specify a temporal region for a particular mental state. We can say that some physical object is so many years old. I suppose we could do the same for the belief that coffee is bad for one. One might say, 'I've held the belief that coffee is bad for one for most of my adult life'. In a sense, we are drawing a temporal boundary within which that belief is held. We might even be inclined to say that this belief is "in the head" of the believer, as it were, and thereby give it a spatial location as well. Occurrence is certainly not a necessary condition for localizability. Rocks and chairs do not occur, but this doesn't mean we can't localize them to a region of spacetime. So why shouldn't we be able to do the same thing with mental states such as belief? A first response to this is that mental states, at the very least, are the types of things that more than one person can be in. They are multiply realizable. More than one individual could have held the belief that coffee is bad for one for most of their entire adult lives. So, this belief certainly does not meet the particularity condition. But neither do many other mental states, like 'the desire to climb Mt. Everest' or 'the hope that UCLA wins the finals'. Any one of these mental states is always a multiply realizable state, one that any individual can be in. Mental states thus look much more like universals than they do particulars. For, at least the bare minimum for a universal is that it is multiply realizable and mental states are multiply realizable. This raises the question of whether or not something like the type-token distinction can be applied here. So, let us turn to considering whether such a distinction might apply to mental states, and whether or not applying this notion allows us to talk of mental states as particulars.

In a case where Sally believes that  $p$  and Johnny believes that  $q$ , how many beliefs are there? This might seem like an odd question, but the term 'belief'

is a count noun and is amenable in principle to this type of question. How about a case where Sally believes that  $p$  and Johnny also believes that  $p$ ? How many beliefs in this case? In the first case, answering seems a fairly straightforward thing. There are two beliefs. It is straightforward compared to the second case because Sally's belief has a different content from Johnny's. Obviously, they are different beliefs. However, in the second case, the question can be interpreted as being ambiguous. That is, one feels that there may be two different ways of answering the question. There is one belief insofar as we consider Sally's and Johnny's belief to be the *same* belief – after all they both believe that  $p$ . On the other hand, we might say there are two beliefs. There is Sally's belief that  $p$  and Johnny's belief that  $p$ . What we're doing here is using a particular way of counting things which employs what we refer to as the type-token distinction. Questions like this invite such a distinction, since it is a fairly regular distinction to make when one is presented with multiple ways in which specific objects or particulars can be grouped. The question is, in the case of belief, can we both group them as types and perform the counting and group them as tokens and perform the counting? On the face of it, this seems like a perfectly acceptable thing to do. After all nouns such as 'chair', 'table' and 'boat' are count-quantifiable nouns. They have plural forms, 'chairs', 'tables', 'boats', and such nouns allow for a type-token distinction. What about 'belief'? It has a plural form, 'beliefs'. It is a count-quantifiable noun. We say things like, 'Tina's beliefs in spirituality are inspiring'. So, it looks like the type-token distinction ought to apply equally well in this case. Insofar as we recognize a genuine type-token distinction in the case of belief we are claiming that mental states like belief admit of such a distinction. Though this distinction has widely been used over the years in philosophy, I am going to argue that the distinction just doesn't apply to mental states, and its use confuses many issues in the



philosophy of mind, specifically for our purposes, it confuses the role mental states are supposed to play in psychological explanation.

However, many theorists hold that it is perfectly sensible to talk of token instances of mental states. What is more, when we do talk of particular instances of mental states we are typically inviting a type-token distinction. Stich's view is a good example of this. According to his view, beliefs can be type individuated and token instances of those types serve in singular causal explanations of action. Stich argued for what he referred to as the principle of psychological autonomy, which says that psychological causal explanations depend only on those internal properties of the individual.<sup>14</sup> That is, the psychological properties that can be said to supervene upon the total internal physical state of the individual are the only properties required in the explanation of behaviour. Stich's purpose in invoking this principle is to shed light on the role that belief and desire play in explaining behaviour. His view doesn't just implicitly endorse the type-token distinction as a valid way of conceiving of mental states like belief, his arguments explicitly rest on this distinction. He writes,

"If a belief token of one subject differs in truth value from a belief token of another subject, then the tokens are not of the same type...if an instantiation of belief property  $p_1$  differs in truth value from an instantiation of belief property  $p_2$ , then  $p_1$  and  $p_2$  are different properties" (Stich, 1978, p. 578).

One problem for the theorist who posits the existence of token mental states such as belief is how they account for the retention of such token states after breaks in consciousness. Presumably, I have all the same beliefs after I wake up in the morning as I had before I went to bed. How do we account for the retention of, say, the belief that Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland when I

---

<sup>14</sup> See Stich (1978). See also Fodor (1980).

wake up in the morning, if I had it the night before? What happens to that token state? What happens to my belief that  $p$  while I sleep? One might be tempted to argue that Stich nor any other theorist ever tied having a belief with the need to be conscious or awake. Fair enough, but the point here is even more drastic for more serious breaks in consciousness. Take a coma patient for example. Let's say prior to entering a coma,  $S$  believes that  $p$ , and let's say the coma last for years, and that there is virtually no brain activity for long stretches of the entire duration of the coma. When  $S$  finally comes out of the coma and still believes that  $p$ , how are we to account for the retention of such a token belief state? Are we to say that  $S$  reacquired the belief somehow? Is this the case for all of  $S$ 's token belief states or only some? How do we explain the fact that  $S$  still believes that  $p$ , let alone attribute the belief to  $S$  while in the coma? Perhaps, theorists like Stich are thinking that there are both occurrent beliefs and non-occurrent beliefs. On such a view a mental state like belief spans the occurrence/non-occurrence divide. I suppose the thinking here is that one acquires many beliefs throughout the day, and at any given time some of those beliefs might be occurrent, that is, those beliefs might be the subject of some occurrent thought process. Those beliefs that one is not currently thinking about are tacit or non-occurrent on such a view. I do not want to spend much time on this type of view as I think it is patently absurd and employs a completely senseless notion of belief, such that on some of these views it might make sense to say that I acquired twenty-five beliefs before breakfast, or worse yet, make sense to use the progressive tense of 'believe' to denote an occurrent mental process or event such that it makes sense to say of Sally that she is believing that  $p$ . What is more to the point is that theorists who employ the notion of token belief states most of the time are not restricting their discussion to only occurrent beliefs. And unless we are equating token belief states with occurrent beliefs

exclusively, we are left with a very puzzling notion of the reacquisition of a very large number of beliefs that must, for mostly everyone, happen every time there is a break in consciousness.

This is not to say that there are no token beliefs in the sense that *S*'s belief that *p* is a particular sort of belief. We might classify an individual's beliefs on reincarnation as constituting a type of belief, say, their spiritual beliefs, and in this sense one's token belief is a token of that type. But here we're using the type-token distinction as a merely relative or logical notion, which is what the distinction is meant for. Tokens are always tokens of a certain type. All this is fine. But none of this implies that there are token belief *states*. To say that Sally has a particular belief is not to say that Sally's belief is a particular, and that is what the theorist who employs the type-token distinction in discussions of mental state tokens is implying. Of course, theorists like Stich could reply in the following way. Why not simply say that some token belief states are non-occurrent? Doesn't this obviate the problem altogether? The reason why the coma patient still believes that *p* when she comes to, is just because that belief, or token mental state is a non-occurrent token mental state. Not every token state need be occurrent. Tokenality does not imply occurrence. And insofar as we're talking about the type of mental state the coma patient is in is a belief that *p* it is a universal and is multiply realizable. But, there is also the token mental state, the non-occurrent mental particular that is *her* belief that *p*, which is not multiply realizable. What explains her retention of this belief is the fact that the mental state is a non-occurrent state. It is a mental particular, but it is a non-occurrent mental particular. So, what is wrong with this view? Why should we not accept that there are non-occurrent mental particulars? We accept that there are occurrent mental particulars (mental events). So, why not non-

occurrent mental particulars? Isn't the type-token distinction as applied to mental states meant to distinguish between these: mental state types (universals), and non-occurrent mental state tokens (particulars)?

My response to this is that insofar as we are talking about a mental state, I agree that it is a non-occurrent mental entity. However, insofar as we are talking about 'the belief that *p*' we are still talking about something multiply realizable. Anyone can have the belief that *p*. What is it that makes this non-occurrent mental state a particular? It would have to be something that naturally excludes the possibility of its being multiply realizable and it would have to meet the spatiotemporal requirements for particularity. The only thing one can point to in this case is that the belief that *p* in question is *her* belief that *p*, as opposed to *his* belief that *p* or anyone else's belief that *p*. But this just looks like all we're doing here is stating the fact that 'she believes that *p*' or that 'he believes that *p*' or that 'someone else believes that *p*' for that matter. What is it that makes the belief that *p* *hers* as opposed to *his*? At this point, the theorist bent on making this argument is going to have to start making some kind of identity claims about the token mental state in question. Usually, the identity that is offered is one between the token mental state and some token brain state. But this move is problematic for a whole host of reasons, which I will not get in to at this point.<sup>15</sup> Suffice it to say that the only way forward for one to argue for the existence of mental state tokens is to adopt a kind of token identity theory of the mind, which many authors who employ the use of this notion of mental state tokens do not endorse.<sup>16</sup> We should note that there is no problem with applying the

---

<sup>15</sup> Steward has excellent arguments against this type of move in philosophy of mind. See Steward (1997, Chps, 4 & 8).

<sup>16</sup> Burge is a good example of this type of theorist. He makes use of the notion of mental state tokens, but explicitly argues against the token identity theory of mind. See Burge (1993).

type-token distinction to mental events. Since, we already acknowledge the existence of mental particulars that are occurrences, there is no problem in speaking of certain types of these particulars. It is not problematic to start with particulars and proceed to group them in to specific types. What is problematic, at least with respect to mental entities, is to start with types of mental entities and then argue that since there are different types of these entities, there must be token instances of these types.

The misapplication of the type-token distinction in discussions of mental states can also be illustrated through examples that include mental states that are not captured through the propositional attitude verbs. Paradigmatic mental states such as pain can reveal this misapplication as well. One might think that even basic examples such as 'pain' invite such a distinction, since we can talk of pain in general and particular instances of pain. Pain is a type of state of which anyone can be in. Certainly, when one is in pain, or has a particular pain we can refer to that particular instance as a token pain. But just because pain is as a type of state and there are instances of pain or token pains, doesn't imply that there need be any particular token pain states. Steward makes just this point and makes it so well, it is worth quoting at length. She argues,

Of course, there is a quite innocuous sense in which pain is a type of state – it is a condition that a human being or other animal can be in. But here 'type' just means 'sort' or 'kind' – and its use does not imply the existence of any set of particular token pain states falling under the type. All it implies is the existence of a range of such conditions – anger, misery, depression, happiness, etc. – of which it is one. These might, indeed, be called token states in a sense, for the count noun 'state' is a noun under which such conditions as these can be brought – but these are not the sorts of things that philosophers usually have in mind when they speak of token states. It is usually supposed that token states are individual

entities, not general conditions like anger that anyone can have or 'be in'. But the claim that pain is a type of state involves no commitment whatever to the existence of any such individual entities (Steward, 1997, p. 128).

The point is a subtle one. Just because we can think of pain or belief as a type of mental state, does not license us to talk of token belief states or token pain states. Such notions, as Steward puts it, "are philosophers' creations" and must not just be assumed. The existence of token mental states, in the manner in which they are meant to serve within the context of identity theories must be argued for, and there are no such arguments for the existence of such entities.

The problems outlined here are symptomatic of attempts to articulate cleanly a type-token distinction applicable to mental states like belief. It is exactly this kind of problem and problems with the role that beliefs are supposed to play in causal explanation, which has led some, like Steward, to argue that mental states just do not admit of such a distinction. They seem to lack a kind of particularity that events can have. Mental states look more like universals or types. We'll see in the next chapter and again in chapter three that these differences can play a very important role in discussions about the nature of mental content and psychological explanation.

I'd like to conclude this chapter by saying a few words about the particular conception of mental states that this chapter is driving at. The metaphysical picture I've been painting in this chapter—with very broad strokes—is, as mentioned at the outset, based on recent work by Helen Steward. And the conception of mental states that I've been trying to draw the reader toward is one where we think of the universal/particular divide as roughly corresponding to the state/event divide when it comes to the mental. I've argued that we can make sense of mental events but not mental states as

being particulars, and that mental states, at least the types of mental states that are of interest here, should strictly be thought of as universals. There is a further important point that needs to be made with regards to our conception of mental states in this thesis, and that is that mental states are fact-like types of entities. That is to say, ontologically speaking the types of thing that philosophers quite often are discussing when discussing mental states such as belief, desire and knowledge are much more closely identified with states-of-affairs or facts than they are with particulars.

This manner of thinking is not entirely new. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the ordinary language philosophers ushered in a new conception of the mental, which for better or for worse was eventually overturned around the midpoint of the century. Works by Ryle and Austin were massively influential and incredibly insightful treatments on the concepts we use in ordinary life to describe the various aspects of our lives we regard as mental, and provided philosophy with an opportunity to redirect our efforts in understanding the mind away from what Ryle called the “para-mechanical hypothesis” and toward something much more in touch with how we normally think of the mind. There was a reconceptualization offered by this school of thought with a specific goal in mind—clarifying our mental concepts. Much of what was offered to us by this movement in philosophy has been overshadowed by works in philosophy of mind by writers such as Davidson, Lewis and Putnam, where the conception of the mental has in fact reverted back to a conception that is precisely what the ordinary language philosophers were arguing is misconceived to begin with. The conception of mental state adopted here is much more in line with what the ordinary language school had in mind, than with what more current fashionable views invoke. And before one thinks of this as a weakness of the overall

view offered here, which I'm sure some are inclined to think, it needs to be understood that the notion of a mental state is really just a philosophers' creation, as Steward suggests. There really is no such notion in ordinary discourse. We do of course use the phrase 'mental state' from time to time, but never in the way in which contemporary philosophers of mind use it. We might say something like, "I'm in a weird state of mind" or "I just can't understand her state of mind", but in these cases we're referring to something more like a person's general mood or disposition not some particular mental entity. We're certainly not referring to, or trying to pick out by this phrase some kind of causally efficacious particular, something which most philosophers who employ the term in their writings are interested in. The notion that most theorists are actually working with is a vacuous notion. There simply are no token particulars that have the properties that such theorists claim for them. What sentences like 'S believes that  $p$ ' express, on the view endorsed here, are more like facts than they are like particulars. Recall Steward's point earlier that the reason why states can be said to obtain is due to, "...the special relation between the obtaining of a state and the holding of certain *truths*; e.g. if the state of my believing that  $p$  'obtains', that is because I believe that  $p$ " (Steward, 1997, p. 99). This point comes very close, on my view, to revealing an identity relation. Like Ryle, I hold that claims such as 'Larry knows French' and 'Susan believes that all snakes are poisonous' are best understood as revealing certain sorts of facts about Larry and Susan, and not as referring to any mental particulars. In fact, they're not referring expressions at all. On the view endorsed here, to claim that S knows that  $p$  is just to express a fact about S—a mental fact. In the next chapter we'll see how this conceptual shift regarding mental states helps us develop a different form of psychological externalism. It makes possible the view I refer to as an attitude externalism.



## Chapter 2 Attitude Externalism and Knowing as a Mental State

### Introduction

In this chapter I will present arguments intended to support a particular version of psychological externalism, which I will refer to as attitude externalism. Though there are significant variations between the views offered in this thesis and Williamson's externalism, which will become apparent as things progress, Williamson's formulation of things is really the dominant view out there as far as attitude externalism goes. So, I will use Williamson's formulation to broadly explain the view. This form of externalism is best understood by contrasting it with what can be thought of as a moderately internalist view about mental states. Externalist views about mental content like the view popularized by Tyler Burge fall under this moderately internalist category, and it is Burge's particular brand of content externalism I'm juxtaposing attitude externalism with. As the debate over the nature of mental content and the role the environment plays in fixing the content of one's beliefs is quite extensive, it is no surprise that there are many variations on Burge's original formulation of "anti-individualism", but I will try to focus my arguments exclusively on Burge's more recent refinements of the view. Burge's content externalism says essentially that the content of a subject's mental state is not always determined by the individualistic properties of the subject. Mental content, in many cases, depends upon factors external to the individual subject. Such factors may include truths about one's physical environment or socio-linguistic environment. Brueckner puts the point as well as anyone, and quite succinctly in saying,

A thinker's individualistic properties are not always sufficient to determine the content of his thoughts (and other intentional states) (Brueckner, 1995, p. 147).

The attitude externalist and the content externalist both agree as far as mental content goes, that in many cases certain external environmental conditions play an essential role in determining one's mental state. That is, insofar as one entertains a certain content, no matter what attitude one takes to that content, that mental state is what it is, at least in part, as a result of what is happening in one's environment. For both the content externalist and the attitude externalist a difference in content entails a difference in state. Thus, believing that  $p$  and believing that  $p^*$ , where  $p$  and  $p^*$  are different propositions, are two distinct mental states according to both views. The same goes for attitude. A difference in mental attitude entails a difference in state. Thus, believing that  $p$  and hoping that  $p$  are two distinct mental states on both views. However, beyond this the two views adopt very different positions with regards to two important points: 1) what exactly, other than mental content, can be determined by environmental conditions, and 2) what exactly is meant by a 'particular mental state'. The externalism being argued for here is one where not only does the environment play a role in determining content but also plays a role in determining the attitude one takes to a given content.

It is critical for our discussion in this chapter that we recognize, as Williamson has, that many content externalists are, in a sense, also moderate internalists, since they hold that in cases where a subject  $S$  has a factive propositional attitude to a proposition  $p$ , there is some internal purely psychological component playing a critical explanatory role. For most content externalists, there is always some non-factive propositional attitude like 'the belief that  $p$ ' involved in every case in which a thinker has some

factive attitude to some propositional content. The attitude externalist denies this. Having a factive attitude like seeing that  $p$  or remembering that  $p$ , does not require any non-factive attitude like belief. Factive attitudes like 'seeing-that' and 'remembering-that' are fully mental in their own right and do not have any core internal components. These factive attitudes are kinds, as Williamson remarks, "...whose essence involves the world" (Williamson, 1995, p. 563).

Simply stated, attitude externalism is the view that factive attitudes are prime mental conditions that are broadly individuated. There are two key points that Williamson's attitude externalism turns on, which can be mentioned here at the outset. Firstly, that some, if not most, propositional attitudes are broad conditions as the content externalist would claim, but in many cases such conditions are also prime conditions, that is, they do not factor into internal and external components. Secondly, conditions like the condition 'S sees that  $p$ ', or 'S remembers that  $p$ ' are fully mental states in the strictest sense of the term. That is to say, they are just as mental as any condition that the content externalist holds as being purely mental like 'S believes that  $p$ '. Williamson suggests that if we are willing to accept an externalism about content, then we ought to be willing to accept an externalism about attitudes as well. His move here is to shift the burden of the debate onto the moderately internalist content externalist by pointing out that it is just as problematic to claim that there is some non-factive core mental component to each case of knowing, as it is to accept that factive attitudes are broad prime mental conditions.

Recall the discussion at the end of the last chapter where we saw that the view being argued for in this thesis is one on which the notion of token mental states, or instances of mental states is dismissed as a kind of category

mistake. Thinking of mental states, as many philosophers tend to think of them – whether as the result of bad linguistic analyses on stative predications employing the propositional attitude verbs or a sloppy metaphysics conflating the notion of event and state for a particular theoretical agenda – is not only not helpful when it comes to deciding the influence one’s environment has on what one is thinking about, but is damaging to the development of a proper view of the extent to which the environment does play such a role. More specifically, as the attitude externalist argues, this mistaken notion of mental states prevents one from seeing the influence the environment has on what attitude one has to a given content. It will be shown that the metaphysical presupposition that mental states admit of a type-token distinction is implicitly, if not explicitly, endorsed by the moderate internalist and that this is a source of tension between the moderate internalist and the attitude externalist. I’ve already shown that there are good reasons to doubt the existence of token instances of mental states, and in the next chapter we’ll see that any moderately internalist view about factive attitudes like a Burgean content externalism, which accepts such a notion, flirts with incoherence. The view argued for in this chapter and the next, I propose, resolves a rather serious problem with current formulations of content externalism. So, the discussion of this chapter is really an attempt to adjudicate the benefits of the moderately internalist view as formulated by Burge and the attitude externalist view as formulated by Williamson. It will be argued in the next chapter that the attitude externalist is better prepared to handle a rather serious problem, which current forms of content externalism face.

The first part of the chapter is somewhat exegetical, but the intent is to give a good explanation of the thesis that factive attitudes are both broad and prime

conditions. I will be focusing on Williamson's arguments for primeness in the first section, and the claim that knowing (and other factive attitudes) is a purely mental condition, in the second section. It is here that much of the criticism of Williamson's view has been focused, and I will discuss some of the major criticisms this thesis has faced by moderate internalists. This particular debate is where our metaphysical treatment of mental states in the last chapter is particularly relevant. It will be argued that the moderate internalist is essentially missing the overall picture that the attitude externalist is painting, since the two are basing their views on different metaphysical suppositions. Once the underlying metaphysical claims are sorted out much of the criticism of attitude externalism can be discounted. I will show that adopting the view on mental states suggested in the last chapter dissolves what I refer to as the "downgrade problem", and is perfectly compatible with the claim that factive attitudes are purely mental. This point is made in passing by Williamson, but is not borne out by any real argumentation. The intent here is to substantiate this point.

## 2.1 Williamson on Broad, Prime Conditions

Williamson, like Burge, develops an externalist view on the nature of the mental. His view exceeds Burge's however in several important ways. For Williamson, as well as Burge, mental content can be and in many cases is externally individuated by one's socio-linguistic environment. So whatever arguments work for the Burgean content externalist work for Williamson's view as well. However, for Williamson, not only is the content of one's belief often individuated externally, but the attitude one takes to that content can also be individuated by environmental conditions. For both the content externalist and the attitude externalist, attitudes like seeing and

remembering cannot be understood just in terms of one's individualistic properties. Considerations of one's environment must be taken into account for most propositional attitudes, and the case is even more obvious for factive attitudes. However, on the Burgean view, attitudes like seeing and remembering would involve some internal component, which would serve as the relevant propositional attitude. The attitude externalist denies this. So, there is a disagreement here about just what can be the result of environmental factors. Burge argues that content certainly can be determined in part by one's environment, but the fact that one sees that *p*, while it certainly requires some environmental truths (*p*'s being the case), is the result of both *S*'s having some internal purely mental state (such as *S*'s seeming to see that *p*) along with the relevant environmental component. The same goes for other factive attitudes like remembering. Thus, on Burge's view, factive attitudes are composite conditions of an internal mental state and an external environmental condition. Elizabeth Fricker also holds a view like this about factive mental attitudes, as she thinks,

There are positive reasons to think that mental content is fixed in part by crucial relations between a person and the referents of some of her content-bearing states – by a broad 'conceptual role' that extends into the thinker's environment. But the fact that content is fixed partly by certain causal-cum-contextual relations, so that mental content is 'broad', does not entail, nor even suggest, that there are other ways in which mental states are environmentally dependent (Fricker, 2009, p. 54).

According to Fricker,

[T]he combination of accepting externalism about content, while regarding factive attitudes as at most weakly mental, is an argumentatively stable position (Fricker, 2009, p. 32).

Williamson on the other hand argues that we should think of attitudes like seeing-*that* as *prime conditions*. That is, they are conditions that do not factor into internal and external components. The reason for this has to do with the nature of composite conditions in general and I will explain this shortly.

What is important here is that Williamson's position treats factive psychological attitudes as both broad *and* prime conditions.

The term 'condition', it needs to be noted, is used strictly as a logical term. Conditions are defined in terms of cases, where cases are something like centred worlds, in which a subject *S* is indexed to a time *t* in a possible world *w*. Conditions are course-grained, which means they are closed under logical conjunction and they are usually indicated in each case by the presence of a *that*-clause. Roughly speaking, conditions are just whatever is true of any given case. So, in a case where a subject *S* sees a tree in the yard, that 'S sees a tree' is a condition of that case, and so is that 'there is a tree in the yard'. As far as conditions in general go, some conditions are composite and some are prime. Williamson distinguishes the two thus:

A condition *C* is composite if and only if it is the conjunction of some narrow condition *D* with some environmental condition *E*.  
*C* is prime if and only if it is not composite (Williamson, 2000, p. 66).

In this context, 'narrow' refers to any condition that is determined exclusively by the internal state of the subject, and 'environmental' refers to any condition that is exclusively determined by one's environment. So, for example the claim that knowledge is a prime condition is just the claim that in any given case  $\alpha$  the condition *C*, 'S knows that *p*' is not composite. That is to say, *C* is not a composite of an internal (narrow) condition of the subject – whatever is going on inside the head – and an external condition of the environment. The basic idea is that knowledge just doesn't factor into strictly

mental (internal) components and strictly non-mental (environmental) components.<sup>17</sup> This is true for all factive attitudes.

Composite conditions are such that components from one case can be recombined with components from another case to yield new cases in which the same composite conditions obtain. This is just the nature of compositeness. The idea here is what Williamson calls the principle of *free recombination*. Composite conditions are such that for every pair of cases  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  where a composite condition C obtains, there exists a third case  $\gamma$  in which components of C from both  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  can be recombined to yield C in  $\gamma$ . If as the moderate internalist contends, knowledge is a composition of internal (mental) and external (non-mental) components, then given free recombination we should be able to construct triples of cases by recombining the components from each such that S knows in each of them. If we cannot, then knowledge is not a composition of such components – it must be prime.<sup>18</sup>

Now, Williamson's notion of composite conditions is completely generalizable. What is crucial for his arguments is that composite conditions are simply those that are truth-functionally related, specifically those that are conjunctively or disjunctively related. What is really doing the work here, what allows for free recombination, is just the associative property of compound conditions. In fact, we can think of compositeness as something like truth-functionally-relatedness, which can be applied to any set of

---

<sup>17</sup> See Williamson (2000) chp. 3 for a detailed discussion on the primeness of knowing. See Brueckner (2002) for a criticism of Williamson's main arguments for primeness.

<sup>18</sup> Obviously, what could also be problematic here is the notion of *free recombination*. Brueckner (2002) offers a criticism of Williamson's primeness arguments that places pressure on this notion. Fricker also raises a similar concern that Williamson's target is a view that regards the hybrid nature of knowing as conjunctive as opposed to involving some other non-conjunctive relation, such as causation or some other nomic relation between the internal states of the individual and the environment. Williamson, actually concedes this point. See Williamson (2000, §3.8).



conditions, mental and non-mental. The idea is that just as the logical rule of association allows one to freely regroup the conjuncts of any set of compound propositions, the components of compound conditions are freely recombinable amongst cases, and despite such recombinations the overall compound condition in each of those cases is preserved.<sup>19</sup>

On Williamson's view, knowing (and other factive attitudes) are prime conditions in the sense that we cannot construct triples of cases where those conditions remain true across all three cases. That is just what it means for a condition to be prime. It is worth noting that composite conditions do not necessarily have to be conjunctions or disjunctions of *narrow* and *environmental* conditions. What they must be at least is a conjunctive or disjunctive condition. In fact, Williamson gives a structural analogy of primeness that has nothing to do with narrow or environmental conditions.

He says,

Suppose that a property P is the conjunction of a color property Co and a shape property Sh, and that both a black sphere and a white cube have P. Then a black cube also has P: it has Co because it is the same color as the black sphere, which has Co, and it has Sh because it is the same shape as the white cube, which has Sh. By contraposition, if a black sphere and a white cube have a property which a black cube lacks, then that property is not the conjunction of a color property and a shape property (Williamson, 2000, p. 68).

In one sense, to claim that factive attitudes are broad is an uncontroversial and rather innocuous claim, since most theorists would agree that factivity necessarily involves the world at some level of description. However, it isn't the broadness of the *content* of factive attitudes that is important here.

Williamson argues for something much stronger than a moderately

---

<sup>19</sup> Think of the replacement rule of association in propositional logic:  $(P \ \& \ Q) \ \& \ R \equiv P \ \& \ (Q \ \& \ R)$ . Free recombination is the application of this rule to the components of composite conditions.

internalist form of content externalism. He argues that the attitudes we take to such content are broad. The moderate internalist view argues that one's mental state depends constitutively upon conditions in one's environment, and clearly this would have to be the case for knowing, since knowing is factive. The world simply has to be a certain way for one to be in some kind of factive state if being in that state entails some truth about the world. So, obviously factive attitudes are broadly individuated by environmental factors as well as by what is going on inside the head. This much a moderate internalist can concede. However, for the attitude externalist this only amounts to the claim that having a factive attitude is a broad condition, not that it is a composite condition. Broadness does not necessarily imply compositeness. The impact of this is substantial for the moderate internalist, since as we'll see in the next section for the moderate internalist, only narrow conditions are purely mental, and for the attitude externalist factive attitudes are purely mental. Thus, the moderate internalist must hold that broadness implies compositeness if they deny that factive attitudes are purely psychological attitudes. The conceptual move the attitude externalist invokes is to think of factive attitudes as examples of broad *but* prime conditions. The remaining question is whether or not we should consider such conditions as purely mental. The moderate internalist denies that such conditions are purely mental, but does so by denying their primeness. That is, they are not purely mental because they are composite conditions. I will not rehearse Williamson's arguments for primeness but will simply take the primeness of factive attitudes as having been established.

## 2.2 Factive Attitudes and Pure Mentality

We saw in the preceding section that attitude externalism holds that factive attitudes like *seeing-that* and *remembering-that* are broad prime conditions. Attitude externalism also holds that these conditions are purely mental. This means that having a factive attitude is a purely psychological property contra what Burge-style content externalism contends. On the Burgean view, knowing is typically thought of as a kind of hybrid state. Most content externalists maintain a moderately internalist view because of this hybridity. Steven Stich captures, I think rather well, the tug of intuitions between the Burgean content externalist on the one hand, and the more radical attitude externalist on the other. He says,

There are many sorts of properties plausibly labelled “psychological” that might be instantiated by a person and not by his replica. Remembering that *p* is one example, knowing that *p* and seeing that *p* are others. These properties have a sort of “hybrid” character. They seem to be analyzable into a “purely psychological” property (like seeming to remember that *p*, or believing that *p*) along with one or more non-psychological properties and relations (like *p* being true, or the memory trace being caused in a certain way by the fact that *p*) ...What is odd about the hybrids, I think, is that we do not expect them to play any role in an explanatory psychological theory. Rather, we expect a psychological theory which aims at explaining behavior to invoke only the “purely psychological” properties which are shared by a subject and its replicas (Stich, 1978, p. 574).

Williamson’s view is essentially a straightforward denial of Stich’s claim. On Williamson’s view, having a factive propositional attitude like ‘seeing that *p*’ or ‘remembering that *p*’ is a purely psychological property, and can play an important explanatory role.

In one sense, it’s uncontroversial to say that factive attitudes like *seeing-that* constitutively depend upon the environment. For, part of what it is to see

that  $p$  is for  $p$  to be the case. But why think that this attitude is fully mental? Surely, ' $p$ 's being the case' is not part of one's mental state? That is a fact about the world. And we don't think of facts as somehow being parts of our mental states. How can a fact, out there in the world, so to speak, be constitutive of one's mental state? Viewing the problem this way, I think, is the source of the apparent counter-intuitiveness of the attitude externalist view. However, as we will see in the next section this is only an apparent dilemma, one which is easily avoidable by the attitude externalist. For now, what is important to note is that the moderate internalist position, holds that factive attitudes are not purely mental because they are composite. Thus, attitudes like seeing-*that* and remembering-*that*, which are necessarily broad, and which for Williamson are paradigm cases of mental states in the fullest sense--that is, purely mental states—are going to be straightforwardly denied as mental in the strictest sense by the moderate internalist. Burge makes precisely this point in saying,

...I do not count among mental states factive states like knowing, or other states like (veridical) seeing or (veridical) remembering...There are reasons to count as mental states in the strictest sense only states whose standard specifications do not entail representational success in each instance. These are states like belief and having a memory or perception as of. By contrast, states like knowing and (veridical) seeing are partly mental or psychological (knowledge involves belief, seeing entails having a perceptual state as of). But they have other aspects as well (Burge, 2010, p. 62).

The point is that a moderately internalist position about factive attitudes allows one to externalize the conditions for determining the content but still adhere to an internalism about any mental component of such an attitude. Anthony Brueckner puts the point this way.

One can be an externalist factorizer. One can, for example, accept content externalism and hold that internal duplicates may differ in their mental states in virtue of thinking thoughts with different contents (for example, S thinks that water is wet but his physical duplicate thinks that twater is wet). One can go on to deny KMS [knowledge as a mental state], which, as Williamson himself indicates, is not a thesis about the contents of propositional attitudes but rather a thesis about the attitudes to those contents (Brueckner, 2002, p. 198).

Fricker puts the shock we might find in the attitude externalist's suggestion like this,

I think that externalism about the mental is counter-intuitive, and that we should buy into it no further than we are forced to. Externalism about mental content is counter-intuitive, because we think of a person's mental states as states of her; thus discovering a covert relationality in the fixation of their content is surprising. Externalism about factive attitudes would be even more so—since when someone knows (or remembers, or perceives) a fact, what is known, and the mental representation of it involved in the knowing, seem to non-philosophically primed common sense clearly to be distinct existences (Fricker, 2009, p. 55).

The point of contention is clearly whether or not to consider factive attitudes as hybrid states, and for the moderate internalist whether they are or not will determine the degree of their mentality. Both Fricker and Sosa have argued that knowing is at best an *impurely* mental state.<sup>20</sup> The claim here is that if we count knowing as a mental state it is only by courtesy of the underlying belief, which is the mental component in any case of knowing. Knowing is not, in this sense, a purely mental state. For it involves necessarily a non-mental component – the truth of the proposition known. As truth is not typically regarded as being something mental, we shouldn't regard knowing that *p* (or any factive attitude for that matter) as a purely mental state of the

---

<sup>20</sup> Sosa's challenge to Williamson's view is arguably different from Fricker's, but both are denials of Williamson's claim that factive attitudes are purely mental. See Sosa (2009)

individual. Fricker is willing to concede that Williamson has made the case that knowing is mental in a weak sense of the term. This concession recognizes that knowing meets at least two marks of the mental. Fricker grants that knowing meets the criteria of privileged access and plays a causal-explanatory role in behaviour, both of which are considered to be standard marks of the mental. Call them mark 1 and mark 2. However, it is contested by Fricker that two further marks are not met by factive mental states. As discussed above, the content externalist position says that mental content is in some cases constitutively dependent upon the environment, and the moderate internalist position is that there is some internal component to mental states which is not environmentally determined. According to Fricker, the third and fourth marks are meant to give substance to the notion of what we can think of as a 'purely' mental state. Fricker articulates these as such:

Mark 3: Internality or 'narrowness'. An internalist about the mental holds that a genuine mental state can have no constitutive dependence on any feature of the person's environment—cannot be 'world-involving': all truly mental states must be 'narrow', not 'broad' (Fricker, 2009, p. 36).

Mark 4: A state is mental in the fullest sense just if it is Purely mental.

She proceeds to stipulate a definition for purely mental states on the basis of these marks. She says,

[A] state-type *ms1* is a *Purely mental* state-type just if *ms1* is Weakly mental and it is not the case that: a person's being in *ms1* consists, in each instance, in her being in some component mental state *ms2* distinct from *ms1*, plus some non-mental condition obtaining (Fricker, 2009, p. 36). (The italics are Fricker's)

Those mental states that only satisfy the first two marks (privileged access and causal-explanatory role in behaviour) are thought of as ‘impurely’ mental. Thus, the problem we have here is that the moderate internalist, while conceding that knowing may be mental in a weak sense, still requires an internal mental component. But let us ask what reason the moderate internalist has for holding such a view. It certainly cannot be simply that this factive attitude necessarily involves the world, because as externalism about content recognizes most states of belief necessarily involve the world. Even though the attitude of believing does not guarantee the truth of the target proposition, according to the content externalist it is simply not the case that one can believe that  $p$  independent of how things are in the world for many propositions  $p$ . We could simply respond to Fricker by asking what reason there is to think that the content of a mental state may be individuated by environmental factors, but not the attitude. The moderate internalist regards this component—the attitude itself—as the purely mental component. But what is the reason for this? Factive attitudes cannot be had independently of how the world is, but neither can many beliefs. So, if knowing cannot be purely mental for this reason, why should we not claim the same thing for many beliefs?<sup>21</sup> A moderate internalist cannot see how factive attitudes can be thought of as purely mental. An attitude externalist cannot see why moderate internalism restricts mentality to only non-factive attitudes. So, is the debate at a stalemate? Perhaps it is, but we can show what motivates the moderate internalist to adopt the view that restricts pure mentality to only those attitudes that are non-factive. In the last section I will address these commitments and argue that such commitments are based on the untenable metaphysical position that there are token mental states. Fricker’s

---

<sup>21</sup> Owen’s makes exactly this point. See Owens (2007)

formulation of a purely mental state type intimates just this point. It should become clear that the attitude externalist position is a perfectly reasonable position to take once we get clear on the metaphysical commitments of both views.

I'd like to conclude this section with what I think quite succinctly summarizes the concerns and objections just discussed by various opponents to the attitude externalist view. The following scenario apparently presents a problem for the attitude externalist, since it forces an explanation of how a change in mental state can be affected by apparently irrelevant distal environmental factors. I refer to this problem as the "downgrade problem" because it is an apparent problem of how one's epistemic condition being downgraded from knowledge to something short of knowledge, at the same time changes one's mental state. I've adapted this problem from a problem pointed out by Jennifer Nagel in a recent paper.<sup>22</sup> The problem is meant to put pressure on the idea that psychological attitudes can be susceptible to distal environmental changes in the way in which they would need to be on the attitude externalist view, since attitude externalism has the peculiar consequence that an epistemic change entails a change in mental state. That is, if one knows, and knowing is a unique type of mental state, then knowing that  $p$  and not knowing that  $p$  are different mental states. This might not seem strange on the surface of things, but this does lead to the possibility of a rather counterintuitive scenario. A simple way to articulate this is through the following example. Let's say a subject  $S$  comes to know that the cat is on the mat by seeing that the cat is on the mat. And let's say that for a moment,  $S$  looks away and the cat jumps off the mat. Once the cat is no longer on the mat,  $S$  no longer knows that the cat is on the mat, since knowing is factive. So

---

<sup>22</sup> See Nagel (2013).



her epistemic condition with respect to the proposition 'the cat is on the mat' has changed, but if knowing is a unique type of state, then it follows that she is no longer in the same mental state. However, it isn't obvious that anything about her, psychologically speaking, is different from a moment before. Nothing internal to the subject has changed in this case, there was just a change in the environment – the cat jumped off the mat. So, what could it mean to claim that her mental state has changed? Are we claiming here that a distal environmental change such as this can affect her psychological state? On one hand we find ourselves looking for a causal explanation for such a change. Where is the mechanism? Clearly, the event of the cat's jumping off the mat is what affected a change in the subject's mental state. But how is this possible? Knowledge can be downgraded like this very easily, but we don't expect that these types of downgrades constitute changes in one's psychological state. Note that for the moderate internalist there is no problem here. The downgrade from knowledge to belief does not entail a change in one's mental state, since the mental component in the subject's knowledge that  $p$  is just the belief that  $p$ , which the subject retains after the cat jumps off the mat. The truth value of the belief may change, but the content and the attitude remain the same. In the next section we'll see that this type of situation can be accounted for by the attitude externalist and the downgrade problem, though perceived as a genuine concern by opponents of the view, is not really a problem for the attitude externalist.

### 2.3 Moderate Internalism vs. Attitude Externalism: Clarifying the Debate

On the attitude externalist account attitudes like 'seeing that  $p$ ', are broad prime and purely mental conditions, and statements of the form 'S sees that

$p'$  attribute a purely mental state to the subject S. For the moderate internalist we are at best attributing an impurely mental state to the subject. Both agree that content is fixed, in part, by environmental conditions. Where they disagree is whether anything other than content is subject to such conditions. The downgrade problem is the problem of accounting for the fact that a distal change in the environment can change one's mental attitude, and thus one's mental state. Now, the internalist could agree that the general type of mental state we attribute to S is a factive mental state, but that any particular instance of that type of state is going to be an impurely mental state at best. Recall Fricker's fourth mark of the mental. However, as discussed earlier, the externalist denies the existence of any such token instances. For the attitude externalist, there are no token mental states, only a range of different types of mental states that a subject can be in, and the fact that there is such a range does not imply that there are any token instances of these types. The type-token distinction does not apply to mental states. For the attitude externalist, the question of how some truth about the environment (e.g. the cat's being on the mat or not being on the mat) can play a role in fixing one's mental attitude is understood not as being about how one's *token* mental state is partly constituted by some truth about the environment. It cannot be about this because there are no token mental states to speak of. However, the *type* of mental state one is in *is* determined, in part, by what truths obtain. Mental states on the attitude externalist view are universals, entities that are more like facts than they are anything else. The claim that knowing is a purely mental state is essentially just a statement about a certain sort of fact or truth. One of the major sources of puzzlement about the downgrade problem is the use of the type-token distinction with respect to mental states by the moderate internalist. It is assumed by many moderate internalists (Burge

included) that we can distinguish between mental state types and mental state tokens, whereas this is not the case for the attitude externalist. The externalist will argue that if we accept the suggestion that there are no token mental states, only a range of types, then the problem of how a fact about the world like 'the cat's being on the mat' can be part of the essence of certain mental states like Sally's knowing that the cat is on the mat dissolves as a real issue. The problem is only a problem if we think of the mental states in question as particular tokens or mental particulars narrowly conceived as the internalist does. There is no problem here for mental state types. For, we're free to type mental states in whatever manner makes sense. The problem the moderate internalist has with regarding factive attitudes as purely mental states is as *token* mental states. In other words, as long as the attitude externalist, when discussing the mentality of mental states, is restricting the discussion to the level of types there is no real disagreement.<sup>23</sup> What the moderate internalist fails to see—and this failure is widespread—is that attitude externalism requires a reconceptualization of mental states, along the lines of Steward's account. The moderate internalist says that factive attitudes cannot be purely mental states because internality or "narrowness" is a mark of the mental. As Fricker sees it a mental state type is purely mental just if it is weakly mental and in every instance one's being in that mental state is not the result of one being in some other component mental state plus some non-mental condition obtaining. The key point here is that the moderate internalist, whether the Fricker type or the Burge type is arguing for the pure mentality of token mental states, something which is completely off the table for the attitude externalist. Thus, Fricker's criteria for pure mentality can be disregarded. The internalist cannot accept a subject's

---

<sup>23</sup> Fricker actually concedes this point in her discussion of Williamson's account. See Fricker (2009)

having a factive attitude as a purely mental state because token instances of that mental state must have some internal or narrow component. This mental particular is what the internalist regards as distinct from the fact that is known. As cited in the quote earlier Fricker regards these as distinct existences. This is what drives the appearance of there being a problem when changes in the environment result in a change in attitude. This is what the downgrade problem highlights. The moderate internalist questions how a purely mental, purely internal mental particular--the attitude one has to a proposition--changes as the result of some distal purely environmental, purely external condition. But of course this is not a problem for the attitude externalist since there is no internality or narrowness requirement for mentality. There is no such requirement because there are no token mental states that depend exclusively upon the individualistic properties of the subject. This is precisely what makes it an externalism – its denial of the internality requirement.

As I stated in chapter one, the idea that mental states are akin to facts or states-of-affairs is absolutely critical in developing attitude externalism, and it is the fact that mental states are and should only be regarded as generic types, and never as token particulars that allows the externalist to claim this kinship. It cannot be stressed enough that for the attitude externalist the type-token distinction simply does not apply to mental states. Williamson actually says as much in several places. He takes a page from Steward in his (2000) when he writes, “The states in question are general: different people can be in them at different times. No claim is made about the essences of their tokens; indeed, the idea of a token state is of doubtful coherence” (Williamson, 2000, p. 40). He reiterates the point in his replies to Jackson and Fricker. He says in response to Fricker,

The thesis that knowing is a mental state says what kind of general state knowing is. It does not say what the metaphysics of instances of that general state is, because it does not even employ the idea of an instance of a general state (Pritchard and Greenough, 2009, p. 295).

And in a reply to Jackson he offers up essentially the same point in saying, "...states are universals...I reject the idea of a token state as of doubtful coherence..." (Pritchard and Greenough, 2009, p. 330) It is clear that the attitude externalist and the moderate internalist are working with different conceptions of mental state. The former restricts discussion of mental states to the level of types, whereas the latter does not. If the attitude externalist view about mental states is correct, then individuating mental states in terms of their factivity should be no more problematic than individuating them in terms of their attitude or content. That is, the attitude externalist is free to regard knowing as a type of mental state, just as believing or hoping or guessing are different types of mental states. And of course, on the attitude externalist view, believing that  $p$  and believing that  $p^*$  are different types of mental states as well. The same goes for knowing that  $p$  and knowing that  $p^*$ .

Talk of token mental states has been acceptable practice for quite some time in both philosophy of mind and in epistemology. So, let us briefly look at what might motivate this acceptance. For Burge, if a propositional attitude like 'seeing-that' or 'remembering-that' is factive, then it cannot be purely mental (recall Fricker's 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> marks of the mental). Burge's denial of attitude externalism is primarily motivated by his adherence to a causal psychological form of explanation. However, his reasons for the denial of states like veridical seeing as constituting a distinct psychological kind can be seen best in his argument against perceptual disjunctivism. The perceptual disjunctivist holds that there is no mental kind (perceptual state)

that characterizes both veridical cases of seeing and non-veridical cases of seeing. Visual experiences are of a disjunctive kind. That is, either one is in the good case, in which the perceptual state of one is veridical, or one is in the bad case, in which the perceptual state of one is non-veridical. For the disjunctivist, there is no common mental (perceptual) state to both the good case (where one is actually perceiving some object or feature of one's environment) and the bad case (where one is under an illusion perhaps, and only seems to see some object or feature of one's environment).<sup>24</sup> Burge holds that perceptual kinds depend exclusively on antecedent psychological states, certain internal conditions and proximal stimuli to the visual system. No reference to distal environmental conditions is required to explain any perceptual state. Perceptual states are psychological only insofar as they are applicable to the science of perceptual psychology, and such a science makes no attempt to incorporate how distal conditions (e.g. *p*'s being the case) might individuate kinds of psychological states. In fact, science in general Burge thinks, is not in the business of discovering the conditions necessary to determine a kind. That, it seems is the business of philosophy. But, there are very mature sciences of perception that seem to completely ignore some of the basic claims made by the perceptual disjunctivist. Burge is keen to point this out. He writes,

On any given occasion, given the total antecedent psychological state of the individual and system, the total proximal input together with the total internal input into the system suffices to produce a given type of perceptual state, assuming no malfunction or interference" (Burge 2005, p 22).

---

<sup>24</sup> The perceptual disjunctivist thesis can arguably be traced back to antiquity, and some have argued that other forms of disjunctivism (epistemic) is anticipated in ancient Hindu philosophy. See Vaidya (2013). Perceptual disjunctivism gets its first rough formulation in the analytic tradition in Hinton (1967). See also Byrne & Logue (2009).

He refers to this principle as the *proximity principle* and argues that this principle is implicit in causal explanations offered by perceptual psychology and the vision sciences. He goes on to argue that,

The import of the principle is that given antecedent psychological states, the formation of perceptual states causally depends on nothing more than proximal input and other contemporaneous internal input into the perceptual system (Burge, 2005, p. 22).

Thus, he concludes,

Causal explanation of the occurrence of types of perceptual states in the science assumes that the effect of distal causes are entirely exhausted by their effects on proximal causes (Burge, 2005, p. 22).

Burge's goal with these arguments is to refute the disjunctivist claim that there is no common core psychological state for cases of both veridical and non-veridical perception. Burge's rejection of the perceptual disjunctivist view is based on the premise that the empirical sciences, whose goal it is to understand the causes of perceptual states within a visual/perceptual system makes no use of a disjunctive concept of perception. As such, we should align our view with what our best empirical science of vision tells us, which is that variations in the distal environment are negligible for doing the science of perception since various distal stimuli can still produce similar proximal effects. It follows that a given perceptual state can be either veridical—accord with distal conditions in the environment—or non-veridical—not accord with distal conditions. So, for Burge, we individuate our psychological (in this case perceptual) states independently of their veridicality conditions out of necessity for scientific practice. We restrict our attribution of mentality to states that necessarily can be both veridical and non-veridical. The same thinking applies to propositional attitudes. 'Seeing that  $p$ ', on Burge's view, is a hybrid of some internal mental state (something

like perception *as of p*) and some external conditions of the environment (*p*'s being the case). On this view we would not refer to factive states as types of mental states for the exact same reason that we would not refer to veridical seeing as a type of mental state.

It seems like Burge is right that if we allow ourselves recourse to conclusions drawn from scientific practice, especially in the science of perceptual psychology, we can effectively disregard the disjunctivist appeals to require type individuation be dependent upon what is going on in the distal environment, to a large extent—at least, as far as veridicality conditions are concerned. The same logic, as Fricker, Brueckner, Burge and many others have argued can successfully be applied to factive attitudes like seeing-*that* or remembering-*that*. However, as the attitude externalist position regards mental states strictly as universals, the motivation Burge finds for denying a disjunctive view of perception, which carries over to his view on the mental in general, is absent for the attitude externalist. For the attitude externalist, mental states are things which are essentially structured in such a way that allows for individuation based on things like truths about the environment. The condition that *p* is true can be said to play a constitutive role in determining the attitude one has to *p*, simply because one's having that mental attitude is not thought of in terms of particular token states. *S*'s belief that *p* is not a thing which would ever be subject to proximal stimuli from the environment. Neither would any mental state for that matter perceptual or otherwise. Mental states, ontologically speaking, are generic types of things, and generic types of things are never things which could be subject to proximal stimuli at all. To think of mental states in the way in which the moderate internalist thinks of them is essentially to commit a kind of category mistake. It is worth noting that even Fricker acknowledges the



relevance of discussing the broader issues here with respect to how we understand mental states. In her criticism of Williamson's account, she footnotes,

One implication of the present discussion is that the final judgment on KMS [knowledge as a mental state] will turn, inter alia, on the stance taken on large general issues in metaphysics about the nature of properties and states (Fricker, 2009, p. 55).

The quote from Fricker in section 2.2. points up the problem between the moderate internalist and the attitude externalist rather well. Ultimately, it boils down to what we count as being fully mental. The internalist thinks, for various reasons, that only that which is narrow and internal should count as purely mental. The externalist simply denies this. Given the arguments of the previous section we are led to one of two conclusions. Since, 'seeing that *p*' and other factive attitudes are prime conditions, either they are mental conditions or they are not mental conditions. On the one hand one feels a sort of reluctance to grant the mentality of such broad conditions given the obvious non-mental character of the relevant environmental facts. On the other hand, denying conditions like 'seeing that *p*' or 'remembering that *p*' any kind of mentality seems too strong. It needs to be recognized that the attitude externalist is not simply conflating as one existence what Fricker regards as two distinct existences. It is just that on the attitude externalist account there is no reason to deny 'knowing that *p*' full mental status as there is on the internalist account. Factive mental states are just as legitimately a *type* of mental state as any other. The claim that factive attitudes are purely mental thus goes through just fine given this restriction to the level of types.

To summarize, both the moderate internalist and the attitude externalist agree that we can regard factive attitudes as at least types of mental states.

The internalist, of course, would argue that the type of mental state they are are hybrid and impurely mental states. But, at least it can be conceded by the internalist that there is nothing objectionable to regarding 'seeing that *p*' or 'remembering that *p*' as at least a type of mental state. The moderate internalist goes one step further than the attitude externalist and claims that internality or narrowness is essential to pure mentality. Only those narrow internal conditions can be regarded as purely mental. The externalist simply denies this. He can deny this for two reasons. Firstly, certain types of mental states do not factor into internal and external components. They are prime conditions. So, in many cases, specifically those concerning factive attitudes, there are no internal or narrow conditions to speak of. Secondly, there can be no narrowness or internality requirement for types of mental states. The internality or narrowness requirement is a requirement for token particulars, not for generic types. Universals do not supervene upon the individualistic properties of the subject, particulars do. On the attitude externalist view, there is nothing for the internality or narrowness requirement to be true of. The debate is not necessarily resolved by either party's arguments, and it seems that what is required is recourse to a particular set of metaphysical suppositions to settle things. The attitude externalist makes those suppositions clear. There are no token mental states. For the attitude externalist there is no issue of how a factive attitude can be a purely mental state, since mental states, by their very nature are already fact-like entities. Attributing a mental state to a subject is just to say of that subject that certain facts are true of her—certain mental facts. As we'll see in the next chapter, adopting the attitude externalist view is advantageous in a very important way, and accepting the underlying metaphysical view allows the attitude externalist to avoid a serious dilemma that a moderate internalist cannot so easily avoid.

## Chapter 3 Mental Causation and Psychological Explanation

### Introduction

The literature on mental causation and psychological explanation, the two topics with which this chapter is concerned is vast. These topics are topics for an entire thesis and cannot be sufficiently explored within the bounds of a single chapter. Thus, my foray into these topics is not for purposes of exploring some new understanding of either of these topics, but only to answer a very particular challenge presented to the content externalist, which I think is uniquely handled by the metaphysical distinctions offered in the first chapter, and which I think help motivate the overall view of attitude externalism.

In chapter one I suggested that there is a significant difference between mental states and mental events with respect to their temporal properties. I argued, along with Steward, that mental events are ontologically distinct types of entities from mental states due to a difference in temporal shape. I further argued that mental states should be thought of strictly as universals and that the type-token distinction, while applicable to events does not come into play in discussions of mental states. The ontological differences between these types of entities should give us some pause when discussing the mental where we feel the temptation to simply lump them together as if what is said about one, might just as easily hold for the other. In this chapter I will continue this line of thinking and suggest that there is a further, and crucially important difference between mental states and mental events with respect to mental content. For Burge, and other externalists a psychological

state like the belief that  $p$  has its content essentially. Since the representational content of a belief that  $p$  is thought to individuate the type of belief, the fact that the belief is a 'belief that  $p$ ' cannot be a contingent matter of fact. As Burge puts it, "...representational psychological states are explanatory kinds that cannot be reduced to any others" (Burge, 2010, p. 63). Content for Burge and many others plays a constitutive role in determining the type of state. The particular content that  $p$  in a subject's belief that  $p$  determines what that belief is essentially.

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, the intent is show that the metaphysical distinction between occurrent mental properties and non-occurrent mental properties provides a solution to a serious problem for the content externalist. In section two I will discuss this problem, which has most recently been articulated by Joseph Owens in the form of a dilemma, for the content externalist. Second, it will be shown that by addressing this dilemma through employing the metaphysical distinctions of chapter one we thereby motivate the attitude externalist view, which Owens concedes is motivated by the dilemma. The argument presented in section one will show that mental states have their content essentially, whereas mental events can have their content contingently. That is, a change in content for a mental event (e.g.  $S$ 's considering whether  $p$  contrasted with  $S$ 's considering whether  $p^*$ ) does not necessarily make for a different event. This difference between necessary and contingent content is at the heart of the problem for the content externalist. I believe that this distinction is most often overlooked by theorists and is the source of serious confusion in discussions about the role that belief and mental states in general play in psychological explanation.

The argument of section three is that mental states do not play the causal explanatory role that the content externalist typically claims for them. This does not mean that there are no mental particulars that do play a causal explanatory role. Mental events are well suited for just this purpose. The ontological differences between occurrent mental entities and non-occurrent mental entities comes into play here. The advice to parties engaged in the debate over the role that mental states play in psychological explanation is that we must be careful with our mentalistic vocabulary. The distinction between events/processes and states is so often overlooked that it is just assumed that what is said of one is true of the other and that nothing substantive turns on making this distinction. Nothing could be further from the truth in this case.

Essentially, it will be argued that mental states are causally relevant to psychological explanations but contra popular opinion should not be thought of as involving reference to causally efficacious particulars. The right way to think of their role in explanation, in causal terms, is as causally relevant, but their explanatory weight in providing reasons for acting must be considered as something more like an explanation of relevant facts of the case. In this sense, the role that mental states play in psychological explanation is much more akin to the traditional Wittgensteinian/Rylean model of psychological explanation. However, this does not jeopardize the causal role of certain mental entities, namely, mental events. Such mental entities can be regarded as causally efficacious particulars and serve in causal-psychological explanation in the manner in which most theorists today believe that all content-bearing mental attitudes do (mental states included). So, in effect the arguments of this chapter are irenic in theme, but

should help clarify the underlying support that the given metaphysical picture of this thesis gives to the overall account of attitude externalism.

### 3.1 Necessary and Contingent Content

Content is always generic.<sup>25</sup> Any discussion of mental content should restrict itself to the level of types. That is to say, that when we individuate a mental state by its content we are doing so at the level of types. This is not to say that this is the only way to individuate mental properties, but only that mental content must be sufficiently generic to be multiply realizable. If we want to allow for the possibility of more than one subject having the belief that water is translucent, then the content of that state must be something sufficiently generic such that more than one individual can be in that type of state. Thus, mental content, and I specifically mean propositional content, must be regarded as typical in any case in which one grasps such content. This is also not to say that propositional content cannot be specific or cannot be quite granular, but regardless of the fine-grainedness or specificity of the propositional content, such content is always going to be typical to allow for the fact that it is multiply realizable.<sup>26</sup> For our purposes we can think of content in the Fregean sense, as being something abstract and in the public domain. That is to say, mental content as discussed here is not a subjective phenomenon. It is not some incorrigible quality of each individual's mental

---

<sup>25</sup> I'm referring exclusively to propositional content. Some subjective content may have a kind of particularity to it, and on some views is essential to any representational content, but for our discussion here the focus is on propositional content.

<sup>26</sup> Obvious exceptions to this include *de se* contents and contents that are inherently indexical. Thus, the belief that I am hungry, though it is, in one sense, typical in that anyone who grasps the relevant concepts can believe that they are hungry, they cannot necessarily have the indexical content, which I have when I believe that I am hungry. There is much to say on this topic, and I will not go in to the complexities of handling indexical content, as it is not necessary for the purposes of this discussion. See Lewis (1979), Kaplan (1977), and Recanati (2016) for a recent treatment of indexical content.

state. Multiple individual minds can share or be in the same mental state with the same mental content. This is part of what it means to say that mental states are universals. This much has been discussed so far, but what hasn't been discussed in much detail is the fact that both mental states and mental events can be said to have some kind of propositional content. The sentence 'S is considering whether  $p$ ' attributes an occurrent mental property to S, which on the view outlined above can be thought of as a kind of mental event. That particular mental occurrence has the content  $p$ . The same content can be captured by a mental state attribution, such as 'S believes that  $p$ '. Let  $p$  be the proposition 'Jane's argument is sound'. So, S's considering whether Jane's argument is sound and S's belief that Jane's argument is sound do not differ in content but differ in attitude: they differ in the way in which that content, that 'Jane's argument is sound' relates to them.<sup>27</sup> Now, it is fairly standard practice to acknowledge that a difference in attitude can be thought of as a difference in the way, in our example, S stands to  $p$ . However, some attitudes can be described as events and some can be described as states depending on whether or not we are attributing an occurrent property to S or a non-occurrent property to S. The suggestion here is that the way in which a mental event and a mental state have their propositional content is not necessarily the same. We can, of course talk about particular mental events, occurrences that happen at particular times or over particular

---

<sup>27</sup> When I speak of the sameness of content, where 'S is considering whether  $p$ ' and 'S believes that  $p$ ' are taken to ascribe the same content but in different ways, I am relying on a fairly standard way of determining a difference in mental content. We can regard the content as different in any case in which in extensionally equivalent expressions some term occurs in oblique position in the content clause. For example, where the sentences 'Diego believes that water is thirst quenching' and 'Diego believes that H<sub>2</sub>O is thirst quenching' ascribe a propositional attitude with a particular content, namely, 'water is thirst quenching' in the former and 'H<sub>2</sub>O is thirst quenching' in the latter, we regard the content of each ascription as different since the terms 'water' and 'H<sub>2</sub>O' occur obliquely in the content clauses. That is, the two terms 'water' and 'H<sub>2</sub>O' are not substitutable *salve veritate*. Obviously, we also regard any difference in extension, that is, any difference in the referent or application of a term of a content clause as indicating a difference in content as well.

stretches of time. These occurrences can be thought of as particulars, because we can, in a sense, isolate them spatio-temporally from other particulars. Thus, in principle we can individuate a particular mental event independently of its propositional content. Consider again the sentence 'S is considering whether  $p$ '. This is a particular mental occurrence, which might be described from a purely physiological perspective. We might describe this as a particular group of neuronal firings, occurring in a specific region of a specific brain at a specific time. We can, in principle, depending on the state of neuroscience, point to the neurological event and say, "That is S considering whether  $p$ ." We might even form an identity statement of the form ' $A = B$ ', where ' $A$ ' is a description of the event from a physiological perspective and ' $B$ ' is a description of the event from an intentional perspective. So, we can individuate some mental properties such as the property of 'considering whether  $p$ ' on a physical basis, as a particular event. In doing so, we neglect the specific content,  $p$ . Obviously, what S is considering is important in understanding what S is doing, at least from the intentional perspective. There is a relevant content here, and that is  $p$ . But from the physiological perspective, the content is irrelevant in identifying the event in question. The question I want to ask here is: could the content of such an event just as easily have been something other than what it is? From a physical perspective could the same event have been the mental property of 'considering whether  $p^*$ '? In other words, is  $p$  essential to the event as being the event that it is? We'll come back to this question. First, let us ask the same question of mental states. Can a mental state be given a completely non-intentional description and still be describing the same state as it is described in intentional language? Or, to put it another way, can a state like the belief that  $p$  be the self-same state but be the belief that  $p^*$ ?



The answer to this question should be fairly obvious given the arguments of chapter one. Mental states do not admit of any particularity and thus cannot be the subject of identity statements like the one above relating a physical description of an event to an intentional description of the same event. Mental states are inherently generic, which means there is no non-intentional way of individuating them. The way in which we individuate mental states is only through their intentional characteristics, such as their content and attitude. The denial of the possibility of token instances of mental states precludes the possibility of there being any non-intentional way of individuating one mental state from another. So, the content and attitude of any given mental state is essential to that state. Thus, the belief that water is translucent, which I hold, could not have had the content that 'water is translucent', which my twin holds, and still be the same mental state. Mental states must have their propositional content essentially if we are to even make sense of such twin scenarios. But the question remains whether the same is true for particular mental events. Why should we maintain that a particular mental event has its content essentially if we can, in theory, give both an intentional and completely non-intentional description of one and the same event? If we have some completely non-intentional description for a particular mental event  $e$ , which describes that event from, say a neurological perspective, and we have the identity statement ' $A = B$ ', where ' $A$ ' is that neurological description of  $e$  and ' $B$ ' is an intentional description of  $e$ , then ' $A$ ' picks out the same event as ' $B$ ', namely,  $e$ . But if  $e$  is that neurological event, then both me and my twin have  $e$ . But if, holding the world fixed, we vary the content for my twin such that the content of  $e$  is not  $p$ , but  $p^*$ , then that content can only be regarded as a contingent property of  $e$ . For, if it were essential for  $e$  that it have the content  $p$ , then it would be common to  $e$  for both me and my twin. In other words, if we want to claim,

as externalists do, that content can vary while all other things are held fixed, and allow for such token identities to hold, then content cannot be essential. If on the other hand we deny that such token identities hold, as we do for mental states, according to the view being developed here, then we can claim that such content is essential. For, a variation in content will be a variation in mental state. And this accords with our intuitions that a belief that  $p$  is a different belief from a belief that  $p^*$ .

### 3.2 Owens' Dilemma

Current formulations of content externalism embody a deep inconsistency. There are many names for the type of theory I'm referring to. I've been using 'content externalism', but 'psychological externalism' is another popular term used and Burge uses 'anti-individualism'. There are subtle variations between the views as formulated by different theorists, but there are some very basic tenets that carry over, and this inconsistency can be found in most variations of the theory. The first major principle of any of these theories is that psychological theorizing appeals to content-individuated states. In particular, the folk-psychological concepts of the propositional attitudes figure in our psychological explanations of human behavior. Of course, there are many theories that have attempted over the years to reduce intentional talk to that of more scientific talk of brain states and functional roles, but the elimination of intentional terminology has not succeeded in any wholesale manner. The second important claim is fairly universal in externalist views and is that psychological explanations are just a species of causal explanations. This is the result of a reversal of what was once philosophically fashionable in the early part of the twentieth century with the ordinary language school. Prior to Davidson, Lewis, Putnam and others ushering in a

new era of philosophy of mind where identity theories and functional accounts of mind were all the rage, there was a very different understanding of just what psychological explanations were, and what they were meant to explain.<sup>28</sup> The Rylean/Wittgensteinian school of thought was dominant then and on this school of thought psychological explanations were thought to be essentially rationalizations of human behavior and actions, and not causal mechanistic explanations invoking mysterious mental entities.<sup>29</sup> To say that Sally brought her umbrella with her because she believed it would rain was to give a rationalization of her actions by citing reasons for such actions, and reasons were not thought of as causes, nor was explaining one's behavior by citing their reason for so acting thought of as explaining things in causal terms. I will not go into the details of the ordinary language approach to rationalizations and psychological explanations here. Suffice it to say, there was a very different picture of just what psychological explanation amounted to prior to a particular turn in the philosophy of mind. Davidson, as much as anyone had quite a lot to do with this turn with his "The Logical Form of Action Sentences" where he argued quite admirably against the Rylean/Wittgensteinian school of thought. Davidson essentially argued that reasons should be thought of as causes, and provided several arguments for this view. This is not the place to do any exegesis of Davidson's view, but it will help to touch on one essential point that played quite an important role in overthrowing the previous school of thought. Rationalizations, Davidson argued, suffer one serious inadequacy, and that is that one could have good reason for X-ing while X-ing but not for those reasons. Thus, if what we're doing in giving a psychological explanation is rationalizing one's behavior by citing the reasons for one's actions, we have to be willing to accept that

---

<sup>28</sup> See Davidson (1963) and (1967); Putnam (1967); Lewis (1970a, 1970b).

<sup>29</sup> See Ryle (1949), (1953) and (1968); Wittgenstein (1958).

one could have acted in the way they acted for any number of reasons, all of which could be good reasons. How, exactly are we explaining anything if we cannot differentiate between what Davidson referred to as 'reasons for' and 'reasons for which'? The difference, Davidson reasons, is that in the case in which the reason explains the action, that reason must be regarded as the cause of the action.<sup>30</sup>

Both of these claims, that psychological theorizing makes reference to content-individuated states and that psychological explanation is a species of causal explanation find a home in most externalist accounts of mental content. However, these two theses have been, ever since the Twin-Earth thought experiments of Burge and Putnam, at the core of an ongoing debate. The debate has mostly focused on whether or not psychological theories should take into account externally dependent content or can survive in all its explanatory power without any recourse to such notions. Fodor and Stich among others have argued that psychological science, in particular cognitive psychology, can and must only consider those individualistic properties that we consider to be causally efficacious. Even if it is conceded that some content is externally individuated, psychology as a science must only concern itself with those kinds that can be type individuated in terms of their causal powers, and such causal powers must supervene upon the individualistic properties of the subject.<sup>31</sup> Others, like Burge, have argued that such "narrow content" theories completely neglect the context-sensitive nature of certain psychological kinds, and that drawing the boundaries of what we consider to be causally relevant psychological features in such a narrow way as to exclude anything that does not supervene upon the

---

<sup>30</sup> See Davidson (1967).

<sup>31</sup> See Fodor (1980), Fodor (1991) and Stich (1978).

internal states of an individual discounts a great many theories in cognitive psychology.<sup>32</sup>

This debate is large and even though the history of it is quite interesting, what concerns us in this section is a particular problem with the two theses above, one that ironically has not been addressed to any adequate degree by either parties. The tension is basically this. Reference to content-individuated mental states requires that one recognize mental states whose content is essential to that state. However, the explanatory practice of appealing to such mental states interpreted as a causal form of explanation is in tension with the very notion of those states as being intentional states. For the internalist about content, the story is quite clear. Causal explanation must make reference in some way to those psychological properties that can be said to supervene on the internal physical properties of the individual. But in this case, we lose the ability to reference intentional states in our explanations. As Owens puts it, "Psychological theory cannot both appeal to content-individuated states *and* satisfy the supervenience requirement" (Owens, 1987, p. 545). For the content externalist, like Burge, the story is equally clear, only the difference is that causal explanations do not need to only make reference to those properties which supervene upon the internal physical properties of the individual. The problem with this approach is that in this case, the causal explanation ceases to be a genuine causal explanation by virtue of making reference to intentional states whose content is essential to the nature of that state. I'll attempt to explain these conclusions by first presenting this problem in the form of a dilemma as formulated by Joseph

---

<sup>32</sup> In particular Burge argues for the vision sciences and perceptual psychology as examples of good scientific practices that take into account much more than just the individualistic properties of the subject. See Burge (1986) and Burge (1995).

Owens. I will then proceed to explain the reasoning behind each horn.

Owens presents the dilemma as such.

For the [intentional] realist, the expressions 'Alf's belief that cans are made of aluminum' and 'Alf\*'s belief that cans are made of twalum' designate states that have contents. The states designated have these contents essentially or non-essentially. If they have them non-essentially then the states designated are simply not psychological states, not beliefs, not desires. If they have such contents essentially then we have reason to think that explanations which cite such states are not causal explanations; we have reason to think that such states cannot play the causal role traditional theory assigns them (Owens, 2007, p. 270).

The argument, roughly put, is that if we accept that a subject S and her twin S\* can be said to be in distinct psychological states and the content of those psychological states is essential to those states, then these states cannot play the causal role in action, which many externalists like Burge assume they do. The idea is that if you're an externalist about content like Burge, who thinks that representational content serves to determine a psychological kind (i.e. content is essential), then you cannot accept that such psychological states are causally efficacious. Let's look at the first horn of the dilemma.

The first horn states that if some psychological state has its content non-essentially, that is, the content of that state is contingent, then they are not psychological states. The idea here is that if the content is not regarded as essential to the state, but is only a contingent property of the state, then we cannot be type individuating the states with respect to content. We must be, as suggested earlier, individuating the state/event non-intentionally. That is to say, the contingent content theorist is committed to claiming that there must be a way of describing one's mental state non-intentionally. For, if we cannot, then the content must be essential to that state. However, if this is the

case we have a problem. Consider the following phrase, adapted from Owens (2007).

- a) 'Alf's belief that cans are made of aluminum'.

If we're contingent content theorists, then we can accept that the state designated by (a) could have had a different content. It could have had the content that 'cans are made of twalum'. This is perfectly acceptable, since we are considering the state in question from a non-intentional perspective, perhaps physiologically. However, it is certainly not acceptable to claim as Owens notes, that "[A]lf's state of believing that cans are made of aluminum could have had the content that cans are made of twalum" (Owens, 2007, p. 261). This is essentially to claim that one's state of believing that p could have been a state of believing that q, which is borderline incoherent. The reason for this, is simply because we recognize that a difference in the content of a belief makes for a different belief. If the state is a psychological state of belief, then we simply cannot accept this kind of claim. The only way in which it makes any sense to say that the state could have had a different content, is to do so from a non-intentional perspective, but this amounts to dismissing the psychological state as psychological. We might as well just talk about such states from a purely physiological or neurological perspective and dismiss talk of the intentional content altogether. As Owens puts it,

Such a theorist may understand psychological expressions such as (a) as designating psychological states...but then that theorist is committed to...the absurd result of thinking that the very state of believing that P could be the state of believing that Q. On the other hand, the contingent content theorist may understand expressions such as (a) as not designating psychological states at all, but rather as designating physiological or some such states. On this second option, the absurd position...is not forced on one, but one is opting for an ontology devoid of mental states (Owens, 2007, p. 264).

Clearly the option that most externalists opt for is the essentialist option, where we can avoid the incoherent talk of claiming that a state of believing that  $p$  could have been a state of believing that  $q$  and be the same psychological state. However, this option has its own problem, which is captured by the second horn of the dilemma. So, let's take a look at that.

Now, the second horn basically says that the causal explanatory route is closed to the essentialist, the externalist that thinks that such psychological states have their content of necessity, and externalists like Burge think that this is the case. Burge has claimed in several places that content plays a role in individuating psychological kinds. However, the line usually taken to talk of psychological explanations as causal, is the one that usually does so using a non-intentional vocabulary. In order to avoid the challenges that the Rylean/Wittgensteinian approach posed to talk of the mental in causal language, we must use a non-intentional vocabulary. But we cannot do this if we're committed to claiming that a subject and her twin's mental states have their content necessarily. For, as Owens points out, once we recognize that we've characterized the state as being a state that has its content essentially, then that state cannot be a state characterized non-intentionally, since it would be common to both a subject  $S$  and her twin. But by the externalist thought experiment the content is not common to  $S$  and her twin. The only thing that is common to both is how things are with them as non-intentionally described. If we were able to describe  $S$ 's state of believing that  $p$  non-intentionally, then that state so described would be applicable to her twin and would also be the state of believing that  $p$ . But ex hypothesi this is not the case. Thus, the content externalist who regards the content as necessary to the state has no way of avoiding using the intentional language of reasons and rationalizations in psychological explanations, since the



causal language, which for most, relies on the possibility of referring to such states as non-intentionally described is not available. On something like a Davidsonian picture the reason why psychological explanations work as causal explanations is because of the fact that we can identify token psychological states with token physical states. But if we have nothing like this available to us, which we do not if we're essentialists about content, then it doesn't look like we have any way of characterizing a psychological explanation as causal at all. Of course, Burge has offered a counter argument to the effect that he accepts the causal explanation view but rejects the token identities of Davidson's view. His reasoning here is that under Davidson's characterization of things, a causal relation between A and B obtains only if that singular causal relation instantiates a law-like generalization.<sup>33</sup>

However, Burge argues that as in many sciences, the psychological sciences employ the use of singular causal explanation in many cases where the generalization of a law-like regularity seems to not directly apply.<sup>34</sup> Thus, for Burge, we can be essentialists about mental content and adopt the causal-psychological view of explanation of action and behavior and not accept the token identity theses of Davidson. I do not want to spend time here arguing for whether or not Burge has successfully defended such a combination of views. There are reasons to suspect he has not successfully defended such a view.<sup>35</sup> The intention here is to point out that this form of externalism is not obviously consistent with the causal-psychological view of explanation. In the next section we'll look at a way of handling this dilemma, one which allows for both notions of necessary and contingent content and one that motivates the attitude externalist view.

---

<sup>33</sup> See Davidson (1980).

<sup>34</sup> See Burge (1993).

<sup>35</sup> Owens (1993) provides several arguments against this combination.

Owens' dilemma is a serious challenge to the externalist. Ultimately Owens argues that we cannot be essentialists and externalists about mental content while holding that belief states are causally efficacious psychological states. He suggests that externalism not only motivates views like Williamson's, where knowledge can be counted as a full-blown mental state, but that externalism about belief states counts against the view that belief is a causally efficacious mental state. I believe that Owens' analysis is correct and that beliefs are not causally efficacious states. Fortunately for us, this accords with attitude externalism.

### 3.3 The Role of Mental States in Psychological Explanation

In this section I want to show that the Rylean/Wittgensteinian view of psychological explanation really turns on the considerations mentioned earlier about the distinction between mental events and mental states. Singular causal statements of the form 'A caused B' refer to particulars as their causal relata. Thus, if a mental state, such as belief, only admits of a type of universality as was argued in chapter one, then how do we make sense of such statements when used to describe a causal relation between a given mental state and a particular action? Davidson offers us a way to do this, but unfortunately it requires us to recognize the existence of token mental states, which we've already seen is a specious concept. The use of the type-token distinction goes hand-in-hand with trying to account for how psychological states can have any kind of causal-explanatory power. To shift our model of what psychological explanation is back to a Rylean/Wittgensteinian interpretation is to question whether in describing one's actions as resulting from the presence of a particular belief we are giving a strictly causal explanation. Do all psychological explanations pick

out a causal relation? Perhaps, we might be inclined to think those explanations that take the form of a singular causal statement necessarily pick out a causal relation, but not all explanations take this form. In fact, the most common form of explanation used in giving a psychological explanation is what Steward refers to as a 'sentential explanation'. They take the form of sentences like 'Mary bolted the door because she was afraid' or 'Sam went to the fridge because he was hungry'. The form of explanation here is not a singular causal form, but a sentential form and it is not obvious that such a form is necessarily picking out a relation between causally efficacious particulars. We may say things like, 'Sally X-ed because she believed that p', but it is not totally clear that we are citing a causal relation between Sally's belief and her action. In fact, on the Rylean/Wittgensteinian model to do this is to commit a kind of category mistake. On something like Davidson's view we certainly are citing a causal relation, but it is critical at this point to note that on the attitude externalist view, the view argued for in this thesis, things are a bit different. The attitude externalist restricts the discussion of mental states to the level of types. This makes reference to the causal efficacy of mental states inherently problematic for the attitude externalist, since causal interaction is not typically thought to occur at the level of types. Types do not causally interact with one another – particulars do. We wouldn't say that the type of A caused the type of B. Types don't seem suited to play the same kind of causal role that particular objects or events might play. Davidson's view led to talk of token identities between mental and physical states. The type-token distinction requires something like Davidson's identity theory to make sense of the causal-psychological form of explanation. This is not to say that there is no way to make sense of sentential form psychological explanations as being causal, it just isn't clear

that they are picking out causally efficacious particulars as singular causal statements of the form 'A caused B' do.

Particulars bear causal relations to one another, that much seems plausible. And types might bear causal relations to particulars or even to other types, but the kind of relation they bear doesn't seem to be one of efficacy, but more one of the relevance of certain sorts of facts. If what we're saying when we say that Sally believes that *p* is that there are certain kinds of facts that are true of Sally, which is what the attitude externalist is saying, then the causal-explanatory role of mental states doesn't quite seem to make sense. For, her belief that *p*, on the view just argued for is just there being certain facts or states-of-affairs applicable to Sally's situation. There is no particular entity—*Sally's belief that p*—which can act as a causal relatum in the way in which a particular event or object might. The fact that she believes that *p* might be relevant in giving a full causal explanation of her actions, but that is not to say that her belief that *p* caused her actions.

If our picture of the mental is the one outlined in chapter one, where we recognize the ontological differences between those mental properties which are occurrent and those which are non-occurrent, we are in a position to allow for both the possibility of contingent content and the possibility of necessary content. It makes sense on the view outlined here that we individuate mental *states* like belief by its content, which means that such content is necessary to those states. But it also makes sense to individuate certain mental *events* non-intentionally, which means that the content of those events can be merely a contingent matter. The attitude externalist is thus uniquely positioned here, in that she can accept both horns of Owens' dilemma. Accepting the fact that mental states do not come into play in causal-psychological explanations of actions because of the fact that their

content is essential is perfectly in line with the attitude externalist view. For the attitude externalist, mental states are universals, something more akin to facts than they are to particulars. Thus, their role in psychological explanation should not be expected to be anything similar to the role that particular events might play. On the other hand, particular mental events are well suited to play a causal-explanatory role due to their particularity. The claim that we must have a way of non-intentionally describing certain mental phenomena in order to describe the causal relations they may have, is a plausible claim for mental events. Thus, on the attitude externalist view, both causal and non-causal types of explanations have their place in psychology. To give an explanation in terms of one's mental states exclusively, we must keep in mind that the appropriate form of explanation is not strictly a causal explanation, but more one of the relevance of certain facts or truths. On the other hand, to give an explanation in terms of particular mental events, which can be non-intentionally described, a causal form of explanation seems perfectly reasonable. What is important here is that we are describing subtly different phenomena in each case, and as such it should not be surprising that what is said for one may not be the case for the other.

Owens' arguments serve to put the Rylean/Wittgensteinian position on psychological explanations back into play as a plausible way of talking about the mental and its relation to human behavior. It needs to be emphasized that to say that 'Sally X-ed because she believed that p' is not strictly a causal explanation, is not to claim that Sally's belief is causally irrelevant to her action, as we might include the fact that she believed that p in a complete description of the cause of her actions. But this is not to say that her belief is acting like a causally efficacious particular. If we invoke the notion of causal

relevance versus causal efficacy, then we can get a bit more purchase on the role these sentential explanations play in the overall picture.

## Part II

### On The Epistemology of Factive Psychological Attitudes and the Disjunctive Nature of Knowing

## Chapter 4 Remembering, Forgetting and Knowing

### Introduction

In this chapter I will consider what are thought by many to be paradigmatic factive mental attitudes, remembering and forgetting. Philosophical accounts of remembering are quite numerous, whereas the literature on forgetting is surprisingly anaemic. I will try to give as thorough a treatment of these topics, as pertains to the general discussion of the thesis, though much more can be said on both than is present here. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will be a brief discussion on two opposing views on the nature of remembering which have a fairly firm foothold on the topic. The first is regarded as the causal view of remembering, the second, the epistemic view of remembering. I will then offer up a distinction that I think plays a critical role in any proper discussion of remembering, and one which as I've argued in a previous chapter plays a critical role in how we understand the mental—the occurrence/non-occurrence distinction. As in previous chapters, it will be argued that this distinction is overlooked by most theorists and as a result the view advanced from both sides is lacking. I will argue that what most theorists take to be the central feature of remembering, the connection condition, is not just a blanket condition that equally applies to all cases of remembering. Insofar as one can be said to remember in the non-occurrent sense, the causal view is found deficient and the epistemic view is much more plausible. However, insofar as one is occurrently remembering something, a causal explanation of the connection between one's current representation and one's past experiences seems perfectly acceptable. However, the acceptance of a causal connection does



not rule out an epistemic connection for the simple fact that occurrent remembering entails non-occurrent remembering; and non-occurrent remembering entails an epistemic relation between one's remembering and previous mental states.

I will offer three counterexamples to what is known as the entailment thesis. I suggest that we are forced to acknowledge a kind of compromise between the competing views on remembering and accept a jointly causal-epistemic view. The ultimate outcome of this approach is that remembering entails knowing, but not in the case in which one remembers, since it only entails having previously come to know. Thus, remembering has an interesting existential implication that other factive attitudes do not. The point can be made as follows. For any case  $\alpha$ , where S remembers that  $p$ , there is another case  $\beta$  in which S knows that  $p$ . Yet, from the fact that S remembers that  $p$  in  $\alpha$  it does not follow that S knows that  $p$  in  $\alpha$ .

#### 4.1 Contrary Psychological Attitudes and Contradictory Epistemic Conditions

To remember that something is the case is to know that it is the case, and to forget that something is the case is to not know that it is the case. At least, if we adopt a very common sense sort of understanding of these mental attitudes, these statements seem true enough, even platitudinous. What also seems a platitude is that one remembers just in case one has not forgotten, and when one has not forgotten one can be said to remember. We use these terms in ordinary language to refer to what seem to be contradictory states of mind. Ryle expressed this point in noting that, "by far the most important and the least discussed use of the verb is that use in which remembering

something means having learned something and not forgotten it” (Ryle, 1949, p. 272). In other words, at least in ordinary usage, there seems to be an important bi-conditional relation between remembering and forgetting—one remembers that *p* if and only if one has not forgotten that *p*.

Our everyday use of these verbs is further meant to indicate a kind of privileged (or lack thereof) epistemic condition. As Ryle further points out ‘remember’ when used to indicate the fact that one has not forgotten, “...is often, though not always, an allowable paraphrase of the verb ‘to know’” (Ryle, 1949, p. 273). That is to say, to remember how to swim is to know how to swim, to remember the way to the church is to know the way to the church, etc. We also regard remembering as a factive propositional attitude—if one remembers that *p*, then *p* must be the case.<sup>36</sup> Like remembering, forgetting is also thought to be a factive attitude. Thus, if one has forgotten that *p*, then it immediately follows that *p* is the case. Remembering and forgetting are also often treated as if they are contradictory states of mind, or at least that they entail contradictory epistemic conditions. The obvious reason for this is that in conjunction with the fact that they are regarded as factive attitudes, they are both regarded as indicating opposing epistemic conditions. If one remembers that *p*, then one knows that *p*. Forgetting, on the other hand, is taken to entail ignorance. If one has forgotten that *p*, then one does not know that *p*. I take these remarks to be in line with our ordinary language understanding of these mental attitudes.

---

<sup>36</sup> It should be noted that throughout this chapter I am referring exclusively to propositional memory, where the content of the memory takes a propositional form and is indicated by a *that*-clause.

What I want to do here is cast a bit of doubt on what I think is an overly simplistic view on the relation between remembering and forgetting. I will try to argue that there is an important logical relation between the condition that one remembers that  $p$  and the condition that one has forgotten that  $p$ , and that despite the fact that the mental attitudes of remembering and forgetting are mutually exclusive, viz. one cannot have both attitudes to the same content at the same time, that is not the whole story when it comes to the epistemic relation both these attitudes bear to knowledge. One question that will be quite important is whether we should think of remembering and forgetting primarily in terms of one another, or in terms of their relation to knowledge. There may be sacrifices to make either way to our ordinary conception of both attitudes.

I will adopt the conventional stance here and assume that remembering and forgetting are both factive propositional attitudes and it will be, at least, provisionally assumed that remembering entails knowing and that forgetting entails ignorance. With that, I think common usage of the verbs warrant, at least to begin with, the following. Where  $p$  is a true proposition,

1.  $S$  remembers that  $p$ , if and only if,  $S$  has not forgotten that  $p$ .

This bi-conditional is certainly consistent with the idea that remembering entails knowing and forgetting entails ignorance, since we hold that knowledge and ignorance are exclusive of one another. Thus, we can say,

2. If  $S$  remembers that  $p$ , then  $S$  knows that  $p$ .
3. If  $S$  has forgotten that  $p$ , then  $S$  does not know that  $p$ .

Starting with our everyday conception captured in (1), let us ask whether this is strictly true. As the reader might have suspected, this bi-conditional is, of course, false. Let us break the bi-conditional in (1) into its components:

4. If S remembers that p, then S has not forgotten that p.
5. If S has not forgotten that p, then S remembers that p.

Looking at the components of (4) we have,

6. S remembers that p, and
7. S has not forgotten that p.

Now, remembering is factive, which means that p must be true for S to remember that p. Thus, (6) is false if p is false. Forgetting is also factive, which means that (8) is false if p is false.

8. S has forgotten that p.

But, what about (7), the consequent of (4)? Is (7) false if p is false? If (8) is false just in case p is false, then (7) must be true, since it says that it is not the case that S has forgotten that p, which is a denial of (8), which is true just in case p is false.

Now, (4) is true given that remembering entails knowing and forgetting entails ignorance. That is, if (2) and (3) are true, then (4) must be true. But what about the converse, (5)? Is (5) true on the condition that (2) and (3) are true? A moments thought reveals that there is a sense in which (5) doesn't quite get things right. Both remembering and forgetting are factive, which means the truth of the target proposition is a necessary condition for both. It is perfectly consistent with the fact that one has not forgotten that p, that p is false, since to claim that one has not forgotten that p is equivalent to saying that it is not the case that one has forgotten that p. And even though remembering that p implies not having forgotten that p, not having forgotten that p does not imply remembering that p, since it could be the case that one has not forgotten that p simply because p is false. It sounds quite odd to say

that I have not forgotten that Glasgow is the capital of Scotland, but in fact it is a true statement. It is not possible for me to have forgotten such a fact, since it is false. This is just a consequence of the factivity of forgetting. Obviously, just as I cannot have forgotten that Glasgow is the capital of Scotland, neither can I remember that it is. So, trivially, not having forgotten that  $p$  does not imply that I remember that  $p$ .

Breaking (5) into its component propositions we have,

9.  $S$  has not forgotten that  $p$ .

10.  $S$  remembers that  $p$ .

If  $p$  is false, then (10) is false, but (9) is true just in case  $p$  is false. For (9) says that it is not the case that  $S$  has forgotten that  $p$ , which is true if  $p$  is false, since forgetting is factive. But if (10) is false when (9) is true, then the conditional (5) is false.

By the same token, not remembering that  $p$ , does not imply having forgotten that  $p$ . For one can fail to remember that  $p$  simply because  $p$  is false, which means that a failure to remember that  $p$  does not necessarily imply that  $S$  has forgotten that  $p$ . Thus, the contraposition of (5) is also false. Since, (5) is false and its contraposition is false it looks like the following compound condition is possible.

$\sim (S \text{ remembers that } p) \text{ and } \sim (S \text{ has forgotten that } p)$

Again, trivially, this just says that there is a compound condition in which neither attitude obtains for a subject. Obviously, such a condition is possible if the target proposition is false, as has been shown above. However, more importantly, this condition also may obtain even if  $p$  is true even though in both cases the epistemic status of such a condition seems to be one of

ignorance. On one interpretation, S fails to know in the case where p is true simply because S never knew that p to begin with. This interpretation intimates the fact that remembering that p, as a way of knowing that p, implies a way of coming to know. This is an important fact about remembering, which I will come back to shortly. For now, I'd like to point out that there is a sense of 'remember' and 'forget' that is quite common in ordinary language, the use of which seems to suggest that this compound condition might also be consistent with knowing.<sup>37</sup> Take the following scenario for example.

Jim is walking down the street and bumps into his neighbor, Julia. The two greet each other. Julia says, "Oh, hi Jim". "How are you?" Jim knows her name, he's called her by it several times, but cannot recall it at the moment. In such a case it is quite common and a seemingly appropriate use of the term 'remember' to say that Jim knows her name but just cannot remember it. He has not forgotten her name, in the sense that forgetting entails ignorance, he just can't recall it for whatever reason. In this case, Jim knows that her name is Julia; he hasn't forgotten it, he just can't remember it. He neither remembers, nor has he forgotten, yet I submit that we still would be inclined to say that he knows her name. He may even say to himself, "I know that I know her name...why can't I think of it?" Let's say that after the awkward encounter is over several minutes later Jim exclaims, "Julia, that's her name." "I knew I knew it!" Again, in such a case I feel we are typically inclined to attribute knowledge to Jim, but to simply say that there was a temporary failure in his ability to recall the relevant information. What is

---

<sup>37</sup> Obviously, this compound condition is consistent with knowing that p in another way. One can, of course know that p by seeing that p which is consistent with not remembering that p and not having forgotten that p. In such a situation the compound condition above is irrelevant and not interesting. Even though this is true, this fact has no bearing on the arguments given forthwith.

more, if we think of remembering not as a way of *coming to know* something but merely as a way one retains knowledge one already possesses - which seems a plausible view – it would seem quite strange to claim that Jim didn't know her name at the time he failed to recall it, but later upon successfully recalling it, did. How is it that he now knows that her name is Julia? How did he come to know this? Surely, we wouldn't want to say that he came to know that her name is Julia by remembering that it is. It seems much more reasonable to claim that he came to know that her name is Julia on a previous occasion in some other way, and his remembering that her name is Julia is just a way in which he retains this knowledge.

This type of situation demonstrates two important facts about remembering. First, that there is a distinction that can be made between different senses of the verb 'to remember' which corresponds, I think, to two ways in which one can be said to remember. These senses can be thought of as an occurrent way of remembering, where remembering is a kind of mental event, and a non-occurrent way of remembering where remembering is a kind of mental state. Second, remembering (in either sense) that  $p$  in any given case seems to carry with it an existential commitment to a second case, one in which the subject necessarily has knowledge that  $p$ . We can formulate this in the following way. Let  $C$  be the condition 'S remembers that  $p$ ' and  $D$  be the condition 'S knows that  $p$ '. We can say that if in a case  $\alpha$  where  $C$  obtains, there is another case  $\beta$  where  $D$  obtains.<sup>38</sup> Now, the question that will be addressed in the next section is precisely the question of whether or not  $S$  also knows in  $\alpha$ .

---

<sup>38</sup> Normally, we regard this as citing a temporal relation between one's remembering and one's previously having come to know. I've formulated the relation in this way to purposely omit any temporal implications, as I do not think they are essential here. It may be physically impossible to travel backwards in time, but there is nothing inconceivable about the possibility of a subject travelling back in time and remembering things that for them would be future events. Even if it were argued that such a thing is impossible the formulation above is at least compatible with either outcome.

That is, does remembering that  $p$  entail knowing that  $p$ , in the case in which one remembers that  $p$ ? The answer to this depends on us getting clear about the first distinction.

## 4.2 The Entailment Thesis

The arguments in the previous section show that though remembering and forgetting seem to display a kind of symmetry insofar as they are factive attitudes, that is, they are contrary attitudes, their relation to knowledge, another essential fact about them, doesn't seem to display the same kind of symmetry. There seem to be cases in which one fails to remember but has not forgotten yet still retains the knowledge that remembering is supposed to be responsible for. It remains to be shown whether the opposite case is true, whether there are cases in which one does in fact remember that  $p$  but fails to know. For our purposes, we'll refer to the claim that remembering entails knowing as *the entailment thesis*. Schematically, the thesis looks like,

Where  $S$  denotes a subject and  $p$  is any true proposition, then

(ET) If  $S$  remembers that  $p$ , then  $S$  knows that  $p$ .

Broadly speaking we can classify philosophical views on remembering as either epistemic or causal, where the crucial difference is supposed to turn on whether (ET) is true. Those who opt for the epistemic account argue that (ET) is true and those who opt for the causal view argue that it is false. The epistemic theorist is apt to claim that one remembers that  $p$  if and only if one knows that  $p$  because one previously knew that  $p$ . Whereas, the causal theorist will claim that remembering generally only requires a certain causal relation between past representations and current ones, and such a causal relation does not entail current knowledge or previous knowledge.



In what follows, I am going to argue that the competing views on remembering, the causal and epistemic views, are not mutually exclusive. There is a sense in which both are correct and both are incorrect. The debate here turns on what is known as the *connection condition* and just what we hold the nature of this connection to be, causal or epistemic. I will argue along with the casual theorist, that remembering, in one sense is causally related to past experiences, but in another important sense is also epistemically related to one's prior mental state. It is one thing to claim that one only remembers that  $p$  on the basis of previously coming to know that  $p$ , it is another thing to claim that remembering entails knowing, something the epistemic theorist endorses but the causal theorist denies. The view I'm proposing is that one only remembers that which one has previously come to know, but that remembering does not entail knowing, at least not in the case in which one remembers. That is, one can remember that  $p$ , but fail to know that  $p$ , even if one's remembering that  $p$  implies that one has come to know that  $p$ . We might ask whether there is any reason to question the entailment thesis over the factivity thesis. I'm inclined to think that there is less reason, and it is less common in practice, to question whether or not remembering and forgetting are factive than it is to question whether or not they entail contradictory epistemic conditions. In fact, the factivity of these attitudes is almost universally assumed by theorists on this subject, yet there is quite a fair amount of dissent as to whether, for example, remembering entails knowing or not.<sup>39</sup> I think there is also some linguistic evidence that lends support to this bias. Consider the sentences 'Madison forgot that sharks are mammals' and 'Louise remembers that a dog once spoke to her in French.' Both are quite unhappy sentences and seemingly much more so than

---

<sup>39</sup> Interestingly, there is not nearly as much on whether forgetting entails ignorance.

something like 'Nichole remembers that she put her keys in her bag though she isn't sure that they are there'. I think we're more inclined to accept this last statement as capturing a real state of mind, but that the first two are the result of a kind of conceptual failure. We would respond to the person who asserted either of the first two with a correction of their understanding of the terms 'forget' and 'remember' not with any kind of acceptance of the plausibility of the claims, as we probably would with an assertion of the last sentence.

Looking at ET, the first thing to note is that we can reject ET on several different grounds. For example, we might reject it based on certain modal conditions claimed for knowledge, such as safety. In the following case it looks like one can fail to have knowledge yet remember due to a failure in such a modal condition.

**(JANET)** Janet is sitting at a coffee shop reading and has just placed her mobile phone in her handbag, which is hanging on her chair.<sup>40</sup> While she is drinking her coffee a thief comes along and lifts her phone from her handbag without her noticing. She is completely unaware that her phone has been stolen. As Janet placed the phone in the bag herself we can say that she knows that the phone is in the handbag prior to the theft. However, after the phone has been stolen, since knowing is factive, she fails to know that the phone is in the bag. For brevity, we'll let 'p' stand for the proposition 'the phone is in the handbag'. So, Janet knows that p prior to the theft, and after the theft she fails to know that p. Now, let's say the thief is making off with the phone, but is suddenly struck with terrible guilt. Realizing that he shouldn't have stolen the phone he immediately seeks to return it. However, he does not want to get caught, so he slips it back into her handbag without her noticing.

---

<sup>40</sup> This example is adopted from an example given by Nagel (2013).

We note that Janet's belief that  $p$ , as a result of the phone's return to the handbag is true again. And there is every reason to hold that Janet's belief is justified just as it was prior to the theft. So, it looks like Janet has a justified true belief after the thief returns the phone. Obviously, her belief is true simply by luck in this case and we have a garden variety Gettier case of justified true belief that does not amount to knowledge. On a safety account of knowledge, Janet certainly fails to know that  $p$ . Once  $p$  is made false, her belief that  $p$  is unsafe, since there are close possible worlds in which Janet would have believed that  $p$  even if  $p$  were false.<sup>41</sup> However, it seems reasonable to claim that Janet still *remembers* that  $p$ . For, she at least seems to remember that  $p$ , and we can stipulate that nothing is wrong with Janet's memory. If someone were to ask her if she remembers where her phone is, she would answer correctly that it is in the handbag. It seems at least initially plausible to claim that Janet does in fact remember that  $p$ , despite the fact that her belief is unsafe. Alternatively, we can say that despite that fact that Janet seems to be remembering things correctly, her belief in  $p$  is unsafe, and thus, does not know that  $p$ .

Similarly, let's say that you're told on Monday that the party is scheduled for Saturday. Assume that it's true and that you hear this from a reliable source, and that you thereby come to know via reliable testimony that the party is scheduled for Saturday. Let 'p' be the proposition 'the party is scheduled for Saturday'.<sup>42</sup> So on Monday you know that p. The next day, however, unbeknownst to you, the day of the party has been switched to Friday. So,

---

<sup>41</sup> If one prefers a sensitivity condition on knowledge, the same result applies. Janet's belief is not sensitive, since if it were false she would still believe it. See Nozick (1981) for some early formulations of the sensitivity principle and Pritchard (2008) for a good overview of both safety and sensitivity principles.

<sup>42</sup> It doesn't matter that your knowledge is via testimony in this case. We can construct the example using other ways of knowing just as easily.

on Tuesday you fail to know that  $p$ , since knowing is factive and the party is not scheduled for Saturday now, but Friday. Wednesday rolls along and due to scheduling conflicts, the party organizer needs to switch the day of the party back to Saturday. Again, you are not aware of this fact. No one has informed you of either of the switchings. Suppose someone were to ask you now, whether or not you remember which day the party is scheduled for. You correctly answer that the party is on Saturday, since the party is now again scheduled for Saturday. You seem to remember that the party is scheduled for Saturday, and you're right, it is scheduled for Saturday. Again, it seems at least initially plausible to claim that you do in fact remember that  $p$ , yet your belief that  $p$  is unsafe. You could have easily got this wrong. In fact, just yesterday, you were wrong. So, despite the fact that you seem to be remembering things correctly, your belief in  $p$  is unsafe and thus, you don't know that  $p$ .

The intuition here is simply that you actually do remember that  $p$ , but fail to know that  $p$  because your belief that  $p$  is unsafe. Remember that we're not questioning the factivity condition, only (ET). Thus, we would not be inclined to agree that you remember that the party is scheduled for Saturday if it were not. It is only because the party is scheduled for Saturday that we can claim that you remember that it is. At the time that the party was scheduled for Friday, we could simply say that you do not remember that  $p$ . The same would apply in the Janet case. Janet fails to remember that  $p$  just when  $p$  is false, but does remember that  $p$  just when  $p$  is true.

While modal considerations are theoretically important on some views, others consider whether or not a subject knows in a given case to be dependent upon certain relevant pragmatic factors. Such pragmatic encroachment theories argue that if the stakes of the situation are quite high

as to whether or not a subject knows, then the standards for knowledge in such a situation are higher than it would be had the stakes been much lower. For those who hold such a view, in the following case one might reject ET on pragmatic grounds.

**(BANK)** Tom needs to pull money from the bank to make a payment. The bank is closed today, but Tom has an ATM card and can pull money from the bank machine. Let's say he just recently got this card and only just yesterday created a new PIN for it. Now, it is absolutely crucial that Tom make this payment today. Let's say that if he doesn't he'll get evicted. The stakes are high. Let's also say that if Tom enters an incorrect number for his PIN his account will be locked and he will not be able to withdraw funds until the bank reopens in two days. Now, since Tom has only recently got this new card and just set the PIN for it yesterday, he has not yet had an opportunity, let's say, to use it nor has he written down the PIN anywhere. And let's further stipulate that there is no way for him to confirm with the bank what his PIN is. Since, in this case, Tom has only one try to get the PIN right, does not have it written down anywhere, and if he gets it wrong he will not get his money in time to prevent being evicted, the stakes are so high the question as to whether or not Tom knows his PIN is quite important. Tom goes to the machine, and despite his almost completely overwhelming anxiety enters the correct PIN and gets his money.

Clearly, the stakes are quite high in this case, and as such one who holds that pragmatic factors encroach upon knowledge attributions might be reluctant to attribute knowledge to Tom. The pragmatic encroachment theorist might be inclined to say in this case that Tom doesn't actually know his PIN. The standards for knowledge in this case are just too high and he doesn't meet them. But does this fact at the same time mean that Tom doesn't remember his PIN? It seems somewhat incorrect to flatly deny that Tom remembers his PIN. It certainly isn't a matter of luck that Tom typed in the right sequence of numbers. Surely, the probability of entering the right sequence of 4 or 5

numbers out of an extremely large number of possible sequences precludes the possibility that Tom just got lucky. As in our previous example cases, it is at least plausible to claim that Tom remembers his PIN, but if one is inclined to accept a pragmatic encroachment view on knowledge, it seems quite implausible that Tom knows his PIN.

Lastly, an orthodox view is that remembering entails believing. Another way of rejecting ET is by simply denying this. The idea that belief is a necessary condition for remembering, is said to go back, at least to Russell, and perhaps back to Locke, though it is questionable that Russell actually held such a position, and the textual evidence for the claim for Locke is curiously thin.<sup>43</sup> Several contemporary theorists, however have argued that the belief condition is not necessary. Steup (1992) seems to hold that this is a real possibility, and more recently Bernecker has offered several arguments to the effect that one can remember that *p* but fail altogether to believe that *p*. For Bernecker remembering implies neither belief nor justification.<sup>44</sup> The intuition I'm trying to elicit with these examples is that it is quite reasonable to allow that the subject actually does remember that *p* despite the fact that we may hesitate in attributing to the subject knowledge that *p* for whatever reason. If this intuition is correct and remembering and knowing can come apart, then the entailment thesis looks false. The above counterexamples are meant to illustrate how questionable ET is in its current form. There may be an entailment from remembering to knowledge, but it isn't clear that ET

---

<sup>43</sup> See Russell (1921). Martin and Deutscher argue that the belief condition was held by both Russell and Locke, but it is questionable that Russell held the exact position that Martin and Deutscher claim for him, and it is even more of a stretch to attribute such a view to Locke. See Martin and Deutscher (1966).

<sup>44</sup> See Bernecker (2010). Also see Saunders (1965) and Martin & Deutscher (1966).

captures such an entailment. We'll see in the next section that the entailment between remembering and knowledge is not so straightforward.

### 4.3 The Connection Condition

I will use Ryle's notion that there are two distinct senses of remembering to draw attention to what I think is problematic about most treatments of the connection condition. So, we'll start by recognizing that there is more than one sense in which we commonly use the verb 'to remember'. As mentioned earlier we say that someone remembers something, in one sense of the word, just when they have learned it and not forgotten it. Some refer to this as the ability sense of remembering.<sup>45</sup> To say that one remembers something in this sense is to say that one *can* or is *able* to do something, but not necessarily that one is currently doing anything. There need not be any occurrent thought about the matter for one to remember in this sense. Call this the non-occurrent sense of remembering.

There is another sense in which one is said to remember and that is the sense in which one is currently doing something, like recalling some fact or reminiscing about some past experience. In these cases, there is some mental event that is the remembering. Continuing with Ryle's discussion we can say that, in this sense, remembering, "...is an occurrence; it is something which a person may try successfully, or in vain to do..." (Ryle, 1949, p. 273). Call this the occurrent sense of remembering. Note that occurrent remembering implies non-occurrent remembering. However, the converse is not true. Ryle puts the point thus,

---

<sup>45</sup> See Martin and Deutscher (1966).

There is an important connection between the notion of not-forgetting and the notion of recollecting. To say that a person either actually is recalling something, or can recall, or be reminded of it, implies that he has not forgotten it; whereas to say that he has not forgotten something does not entail that he ever does or could recall it (Ryle, 1949, p. 273).

So, there is an asymmetrical relation between the two, such that non-occurrent remembering is a necessary condition for occurrent remembering, but not the other way round. This seems fairly straightforward and obvious, since all this really means is that if one actually recalls something, then it follows immediately that one has not forgotten it.

The occurrent sense of remembering can be understood as something like having a thought that  $p$ , where this thinking-that- $p$  is either a recalling, recollecting, reminiscing, dwelling, reviewing, reliving or any other mental “happening” or event that we would normally regard as a case of remembering. We should understand the non-occurrent sense of remembering as something like having-learned-and-not-forgotten-that- $p$ , where we’re referring to a kind of state or dispositional attribute of the subject such that there need be no occurrent thought that  $p$  for a subject to be in such a state or have such an attribute. We might inquire, given our previous discussion on the occurrent/non-occurrent distinction, whether the conditions for one are the same as those for the other.

Most theorists, if not all agree that there is some kind of connection requirement for remembering, connecting a subject’s current remembering that  $p$  (whether it is a state/disposition or an event) to some past experience or representation. Steup suggests exactly this. He notes that,

For  $S$ ’s belief that  $P$  to be a case of remembering that  $P$ , the belief must be connected in the right way with the original input. Call this the connection condition (Steup, 1992, p. 277).



Virtually every theorist agrees that something along these lines must be true of memory. What is debated is whether or not this connection needs to be causal. Some, like Ginet, Malcolm and Audi seem to think the connection is epistemic in nature.<sup>46</sup> Malcolm, for instance, holds that S remembers that *p* if and only if S knows that *p* because S knew that *p* (Malcolm, 1963). Others hold that there must be some kind of uninterrupted causal chain connecting the original input or state of affairs to the current state or event of remembering (Martin and Deutscher, 1966, Bernecker, 2010). Whatever the nature of the connection, it is thought that there must be some kind of suitable connection between the original input or state of affairs that caused the belief and the present state of remembering. Complicating this connection criterion is the fact that if one isn't related to their environment in an appropriate manner, then one cannot be said to remember certain facts about that environment. Whether this relation is supposed to be epistemic or causal is far from perspicuous, for it seems we can remember facts that we could not have possibly experienced. Someone might ask you, for instance, who won the battle of Gettysburg. To which you might reply, "I don't remember, I've forgotten who won that battle." This is a perfectly normal way of speaking and the answer does not imply that you were actually at the battle of Gettysburg, or even alive during the time, but simply that you've learned that fact, namely, who the victor was, but have since forgotten. Clearly, there are many of these types of facts that we claim to remember and sometimes forget. So, any connection condition must not only account for remembering things directly experienced but also remembering facts like this as well.

---

<sup>46</sup> In fact, the list of those who hold the epistemic theory of remembering is substantial. See Bernecker (2010) for such a list.

The debate over whether the connection condition is causal or epistemic often overlooks the distinction between occurrent and non-occurrent remembering. I believe this to be an oversight and a source of some confusion. Most causal theorists focus exclusively on occurrent remembering. Martin and Deutscher's set of criteria, which they hold as constituting necessary and sufficient conditions for remembering, are an example of this. To paraphrase Martin and Deutscher, S remembers just in case,

Within certain limits of accuracy S represents that past thing;

If the thing was "public," then S observed what she now represents and if the thing was "private," then it was hers;

S's past experience of the thing was operative in producing a state or successive states in her finally operative in producing her representation (Martin and Deutscher, 1966).

Bernecker, another causal theorist, has advanced arguments against the epistemic view, specifically the entailment thesis, on several fronts. For Bernecker, remembering neither implies belief or justification and hence not knowledge.<sup>47</sup> On Bernecker's view, S remembers that  $p$  only if, "S's representation at  $t_2$  that  $p$  is suitably causally connected to S's representation at  $t_1$  of  $p^*$ ", where the "suitable" causal connection is of the appropriate type, and  $p$  is identical or sufficiently similar to  $p^*$  (Bernecker, 2010). Bernecker goes to some length to spell out just what kind of causal connection qualifies as appropriate here, but the gist is that the causal connection needs to be

---

<sup>47</sup> Bernecker has also developed arguments similar to the ones presented here in that one remembers that  $p$  while only having an accidentally justified true belief that  $p$ . With regards to the possibility of such cases, obviously I am in agreement with Bernecker's view. I do not however agree with the further claim that one can remember that which one has merely had a justified true belief about. Both Adams (2011) and Moon (2013) have responded to Bernecker's arguments against the entailment thesis though I think the presentation of the cases here are sufficiently different from Bernecker's such that I do not think either Adams' or Moon's objections would go through here.

non-deviant in a way that rules out both the possibility of S not actually having retained the memory, and the possibility of S re-learning that particular content. While I agree with Martin and Deutscher's and Bernecker's views, the essential problem with the causal approach is that it leaves open the question as to what the connection is between one's non-occurrent state of remembering, that is, the state of having-learned-and-not-forgotten-that-*p*, and one's past experience (or past states). The causal explanation is meant to explain how one's occurrent thought that *p* can be said to be a remembering that *p*, but says nothing about one's non-occurrent remembering that *p*. How do we explain, on either Bernecker's or Martin and Deutscher's view, or any causal view for that matter, how I can be said to remember anything that I'm not currently thinking about? If the only explanation of the connection condition we offer is in terms of how one's current representation is suitably causally connected to one's past experiences, then it seems we're fated to leave unexplained quite a large portion of one's total propositional memory; and we're committing ourselves to a kind of presentism about remembering, and this just seems false. There are a great many things, for which it is true to say of me that I remember such things, though I am not currently representing any of them, nor is it necessary that I ever call any of them to mind. Regardless of whether or not I actually represent any one of a vast number of possible propositional contents it is true that I do remember such things, if as was suggested earlier I have learned such things and have not forgotten them.

As we saw in a previous chapter the connection between one's mental states are not causal, though there may be a causal connection between one's occurrent thoughts and one's past experiences, the chain of which may meander and loop things in from the environment, as long as it is non-

deviant, in a sense similar to Bernecker's sense of non-deviance. So, one's non-occurrent remembering that  $p$ , one's having-learned-and-not-forgotten, is not *causally* determined by one's past experiences or mental states. It is better to think of the connection condition in such cases as epistemic and constitutive rather than causal. In other words, the relation between the type of mental state attributable to a subject that has learned and not forgotten that  $p$  and a previous state of that subject is just that—an epistemic relation. We can think of one's having-learned-and-not-forgotten as previously-having-come-to-know.

Insofar as the connection to a previous state is non-causal but rather epistemic, it looks like the epistemic view must be true, but the epistemic view traditionally holds the following bi-conditional claim. S remembers that  $p$  if and only if S knows that  $p$  because S knew that  $p$ . However, all that follows from what has been said is that one remembers that  $p$  only if one has previously come to know that  $p$ . Call this the simplified epistemic view. At this point the causal view is compatible with the simplified epistemic view, since rejecting ET does not mean that remembering does not imply previously knowing. It is perfectly consistent to deny the entailment thesis as it is formulated in the previous section and claim that 'S remembers that  $p$ ' implies 'S knew that  $p$ '—it just doesn't entail that 'S knows that  $p$ '. Let me elaborate this point a bit further.

I've argued that it is at least initially plausible that the subjects in our previous examples remember but fail to know. For a causal theorist, our subjects would remember if there were some representation that  $p$  that is suitably causally connected to their past experiences that  $p$ . Thus, if the causal theorist's criteria are met in each case, then the subjects remember. The causal view can handle the Janet case quite easily by claiming that if

Janet is prompted in some way and comes to represent that  $p$ , then she must be remembering that  $p$ . The reason for this is that there is nothing other than her past experience that could possibly be operative in producing such a representation. According to the casual account, Janet only needs to meet criteria similar to Martin and Deutscher's or Bernecker's in order to occurrently remember that  $p$ , which it seems she would if prompted. The same goes for each of the other cases. If you are prompted by a question as to which day the party is scheduled for, it is quite plausible that you will call to mind the fact that  $p$  and provide an answer based on this fact. Absent any other source for such a representation, there is nothing we can point to to explain why your thought has that particular content and not some other content. The point here is that it is quite reasonable that in each case the subject could call to mind the particular content that  $p$ , and this particular occurrent event (that calling-to-mind that  $p$ ) meets the criteria for remembering that  $p$  in the occurrent sense.

The standard epistemic view (one that maintains ET) would argue that in the examples of section two the event that changes the target proposition from false back to true again is what undermines the fact that the subject remembers in such cases. Presumably, at that point the subject's mental state couldn't be one of remembering, since the subject lacks the appropriate connection to the initial state. It was clearly stated in the first case that Janet is not aware of the fact that the phone has been returned. Thus, unlike when she saw that the phone was in the handbag, she lacks that connection to the initial state of affairs after the phone has been returned and as a result no state of remembering can arise for her. Once the phone has been returned, she continues to believe, but cannot be said to remember, since we would only attribute remembering if that connection to the initial state of affairs

were in place as it was when Janet saw that the phone was in the handbag. Once it has been stolen, that connection is no longer viable. For, how could Janet remember that  $p$  once the phone has been returned if only moments before she did not remember that  $p$  (since  $p$  was false) and any such mental state must come about for Janet as a result of coming to know that  $p$ , as it did for her when she saw that the phone was in the bag? Similarly, with the other two examples, there is no connection in place between the subject's putative state of remembering that  $p$  and the fact that  $p$  such that there is a coming to know that  $p$  after  $p$  is made true again.

Our response to this problem draws on the points made earlier about the relation between remembering and forgetting. We noted there that even though remembering that  $p$  implies not having forgotten that  $p$ , not remembering that  $p$  does not imply having forgotten that  $p$ , and not having forgotten that  $p$  does not imply remembering that  $p$ . One can fail to remember that  $p$  simply because  $p$  is false, but this does not imply that one has forgotten that  $p$ . For, in that case  $p$  is not something that could be remembered, let alone forgotten. In our example cases, even though there is a time at which  $S$  does not remember that  $p$ , namely, the time at which  $p$  is false, the reason that  $S$  doesn't remember that  $p$  is not because  $S$  has forgotten that  $p$ , but merely because  $p$  at that time is false. In other words, at that time it is both true of our subjects that they have not forgotten that  $p$  and do not remember that  $p$  (remember the compound condition from section one). In other words, at that point we *would* be inclined to attribute remembering in the non-occurrent sense to  $S$ , since they have learned that  $p$  and have not forgotten it, but since  $p$  is false at that point, it is not true that they remember, since remembering is factive. However, even though they fail to remember when  $p$  is false, this does not imply that they have not learned that  $p$  nor does

it imply that they have forgotten that  $p$ . There is an epistemic connection between the two conditions, namely,  $S$ 's having-come-to-know-that- $p$  and  $S$ 's not-having-forgotten-that- $p$ , such that despite the fact that  $p$  is false at a particular time, at such a time, despite the fact that  $S$  fails to remember we cannot say that  $S$  has forgotten.

The story that the causal theorist tells explains how our subjects can be said to remember that  $p$  provided there is a certain prompting. However, since any occurrent remembering entails non-occurrent remembering, and our notion of non-occurrent remembering is best understood in terms of an epistemic connection between mental states, the full story is both an epistemic and a causal story.<sup>48</sup> The connection condition is therefore causal insofar as we are trying to explain how any occurrent thought that  $p$  counts as a remembering that  $p$ . The connection condition is epistemic insofar as it is true that any time one occurrently remembers that  $p$  they thereby must be in a type of mental state such that that state is just a previously-having-come-to-know-that- $p$ . The connection condition is thus not a general condition in either its causal or epistemic interpretation but must be thought of either as a relation that explains in causal terms what it is to be occurrently remembering a fact or a relation that explains, in epistemic terms, what it is for one to be in a specific type of mental state. In each example above the subject fulfills the criteria for remembering in the occurrent sense, if

---

<sup>48</sup> Compare Pollock (1970). Pollock has a similar idea, but his view is importantly different from mine. He holds that, "S occurrently remembers-that- $p$  if and only if (i) S believes-that- $p$  on the basis of recalling-that- $p$ , (ii) S implicitly knew that  $p$  and (iii)  $S$ 's recalling-that- $p$  is caused by his having implicitly known that  $p$ " (Pollock, 1970). As Bernecker points out, what Pollock refers to as implicit knowledge here is quite plausibly understood as dispositional knowledge, or what I am referring to here as a non-occurrent state. I think Pollock gets the causal relation the wrong way round, as it isn't obvious, at least, how one's dispositional state of knowing that  $p$  causes their occurrent remembering that  $p$ . It is much more plausible that there is causal relation at the level of particular events, and that one's mental state (at least the type of state) is non-causally determined by a particular event or series of events. The mental state type may be epistemically related to previous mental states, but not casually related to them.

prompted. However, they also fulfil the criteria for remembering in the non-occurrent sense since they have learned that  $p$  and have not forgotten it.

It might be thought that in recalling a fact, we do not recall that which is the case, but only that which *was* the case; when we recall we necessarily are recalling something that occurred in the past. That is, strictly speaking one does not recall that something is currently the case, since 'recalling' is reserved for an act of bringing the past before the present mind. So, it is incorrect to say that Janet recalls the fact that the phone *is* in the handbag. She may recall that the phone *was* in the handbag, or that she placed the phone in the handbag, but not that it is presently in the handbag, since that is a fact about the present and thus, is not something that one can recall, or so goes the objection. The same goes for the other two examples. You may recall having been informed that the party is scheduled for Saturday, or you may recall that the party *was* scheduled for Saturday, but you do not recall that the party *is* scheduled for Saturday.

This concern seems to pick up on how we typically use the term 'recall' to refer to some kind of mental event of bringing before the mind some past fact or event. So, can we recall anything that is currently true? Would it be *recalling* strictly speaking, or is it incorrect to claim that one can recall that  $p$  is the case? The response to this objection is that we can easily substitute 'recall' with 'remember' and the objection seems to disappear. If we need to use a more tense-neutral term, like 'remember' to address the apparent awkwardness of the use of 'recall' the same point is still conveyed. If the substitution didn't work, then the same charge could be levied against all cases of remembering that some fact is presently true. And we do remember facts that are presently true. Take for example the claim that 'I remember what the capital of Quebec is'. In the non-occurrent sense of remembering,



this simply means that I have learned which city is the capital and have not forgotten this fact. In the occurrent sense of remembering, however, this must mean that there is some occurrent representing of that fact, but it need not be a remembering of the fact that Quebec City *was* the capital of Quebec. For, that carries with it the implication that it no longer is, or that I no longer believe that it is, both of which are false. It is true that I can remember having been told that Quebec City is the capital of Quebec, but I need not recall ever actually learning this fact to remember that it is a fact. Likewise, I remember that Nietzsche once wrote that, "Poets treat their experiences shamelessly: they exploit them", though I do not remember where I read it. There's a substantial difference between remembering the learning of a fact and remembering the fact. Many theorists distinguish between what is known as episodic or experiential memory and dispositional memory for just this reason. The difference is roughly one of remembering doing or undergoing something and remembering the fact that you did it or underwent it, and the latter does not entail the former.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, I could remember what the Pythagorean Theorem is by remembering that the equation ' $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ ' is the standard way of formulating it. But I'm certainly not remembering that this *was* the Pythagorean Theorem, nor am I remembering, necessarily, that I learned it from so-and-so at such-and-such a time. I remember that ' $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ ' is the Pythagorean Theorem by remembering that that is the standard way of formulating it.

Now, it could be said that what I remember in these cases is simply 'what the Pythagorean theorem is' and 'what the capital of Quebec is', which is not strictly propositional remembering, since the content is not in propositional form. In our example cases it could be argued that Janet remembers 'where

---

<sup>49</sup> Martin and Deutscher have a nice example of this. See Martin and Deutscher (1966:162).

her phone is' and you remember 'what day the party is scheduled for'. So, we do have a kind of remembering, a remembering-wh, viz., remembering – who, -what, -which, -where, etc., but not a remembering-*that*. There are two ways to use this kind of response. One is to defend ET by claiming that Janet remembers where she put her phone or that she remembers that she put her phone in the bag, or something like this, but doesn't necessarily remember that her phone is in her bag. On this line of reasoning we can retain ET, since we have not shown the target proposition 'The phone is in the handbag' to be what is actually remembered and not known. The other is to claim that Janet does remember and still retains knowledge in such cases, but only a kind of non-propositional knowledge. The subject knows-wh in these cases, but does not know-*that*. Both of these seem like plausible redescriptions of the cases and as such not incompatible with ET. The first problem is that for many, knowledge-wh reduces to knowledge-that.<sup>50</sup> Correspondingly, we could argue that remembering-wh is just another form of propositional remembering.<sup>51</sup> So, if Janet remembers where her phone is, then she remembers some true proposition about its current location. If you remember which day the party is scheduled for, then you remember that it is scheduled for that day. In other words, we cannot deny that our subjects know that *p* but only retain a kind of knowledge-wh in these cases, since we would be admitting ultimately that they do have some propositional knowledge either by admitting that remembering-wh reduces to remembering-that or that knowing-wh reduces to knowing-that.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> See Stanley and Williamson (2001) and Kallestrup (2009).

<sup>51</sup> Bernecker seems to hold just this, when he claims, "S remembers-wh' is truth-conditionally equivalent to 'there is a proposition *p* such that S remembers *p*, and *p* answers the indirect question of the wh-clause'" (Bernecker, 2010: 20).

<sup>52</sup> It should be noted that since Bernecker denies the entailment thesis, his reductionism of remembering-wh does not imply reductionism about knowledge-wh.

Lastly, it might be suggested that the epistemic condition that one remembers that  $p$  only if one previously knew that  $p$  is too strong. A causal theorist like Bernecker would make this objection, since the casual view only requires that one be able to call up a previous representation under certain conditions. That is, it is sufficient for remembering that  $p$  that one have some representation that one previously had and being in this representational state, at either time need not amount to knowing. The idea is that if we can have accidentally justified true beliefs that count as remembering, then it is feasible that what we remember is not something that we once knew, but another accidentally justified true belief, or simply just a true belief without justification. The casual view only requires that there be a suitable connection between the two representational states, and that there be some degree of accuracy in the representation. Thus, if we accept the casual connection, the epistemic connection seems quite unnecessary.

I think this is problematic for two reasons. First, as I've argued above, the causal thesis falls short of explaining a large part of one's total propositional memory. So, we need to explain non-occurrent remembering in non-causal terms. Second, and more importantly, if one can remember that which they merely came to believe, but not know, even in cases where the belief is a justified true belief, but only accidentally so, then it is possible that one remembers all sorts of truths accidentally. I may remember  $p, q, r$ , etc., all of which are only accidentally justified true beliefs. In these cases, I only come to believe such propositions, but never come to know them. It is just sheer accident that I got them all right. If our conception of remembering is that it can simply be a matter of luck that I get what I'm remembering right each time I remember it, then why impose the factivity condition in the first place? What difference does it really make that what I remember actually be

true, if the truth can always be a matter of sheer luck? In other words, on what basis are we denying that one can remember a falsehood? Even the causal theorist denies that false memories are genuine cases of remembering on the grounds that remembering is factive. But why impose such a condition on the theory, if remembering is not essentially a case of getting it right, but can be a case of merely happening to get it right? The factivity condition seems completely arbitrary if we allow that we can remember Gettierized beliefs. On the contrary, if we hold that one must have come to know that which they remember, then we can at least appeal to that fact in explaining why remembering is factive. Remembering that  $p$  entails  $p$  because it is a result of previously coming to know that  $p$ , and knowing is factive.

## Chapter 5 Seeing and Knowing

### Introduction

Linguists have identified more than fifteen different senses for the English verb ‘see’. We use it to describe our direct visual perception of objects as in, “I see a deer” or to describe cases of more indirect perception as in, “I see a way through”. We also say things like, “Do you see what I mean?” or “I see your point”, where the sense is one of understanding and not perceptual at all. As a verb indicating some kind of activity, we might say things like, “Are you still seeing that girl from accounting?” or “My assistant will see you to the door”, where the former is a sense in which ‘seeing’ means ‘to date’ and the latter is a sense in which ‘seeing’ means to escort.<sup>53</sup> As Gisborne puts it, “...the verb is massively polysemous.” (Gisborne 2010) While its prototypical sense is as a perceptual verb another common use of the verb is in a factive sense, where the function is to convey a kind of understanding. To complicate things even further, both in the perceptual sense and in the factive sense the verb can be said to be polysemous. That is, there are multiple perceptual senses, and multiple factive senses of the verb. Despite its variegated uses, epistemologists are generally concerned with only one or two of its uses, and for our purposes here the sense in which ‘see’ is used in propositional contexts will be of chief importance. We’re interested in cases where ‘see’ occurs within perceptual and propositional contexts, but more specifically in sentence structures where the verb is followed by a *that*-clause.

---

<sup>53</sup> There are many other uses of the verb, but the two that are relevant for our discussion here are the perceptual and propositional senses. See Alm-Arvius (1993) and Gisborne (2010) for extensive treatments on the polysemy of ‘see’.

In other words, we're interested in factive verb phrases constructed with 'see' such as 'Sally sees that a barn is nearby'.

Many hold that seeing is a way of knowing, or at least, that seeing that  $p$  entails knowing that  $p$ . Now, even though we may cite the fact that we can see that  $p$  as a way of explaining how we know that  $p$ , the claim that seeing that  $p$  entails knowing that  $p$  is much stronger than this. Even if we conceded that some kind of knowledge or understanding is built into the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions, and that pointing out the fact that one's seeing that  $p$  adequately explains how one knows that  $p$ , all that follows from these considerations is that there is a strong relation between seeing and knowing, not necessarily that seeing entails knowing. In the last chapter we discussed an entailment thesis between remembering and knowing, and many hold a similar thesis for seeing and knowing. For seeing to entail knowing there cannot be any possible cases in which a subject sees that  $p$  but fails to know that  $p$ . Such cases have been proposed by a few authors, and the entailment thesis for seeing is usually supported by an argument about the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions, though a few other arguments have been advanced. I argued that the entailment thesis for remembering as it is currently formulated by many authors does not necessarily hold in all cases. In this chapter I will argue not against the entailment thesis—as I believe it does hold for seeing—but will offer an argument to the effect that seeing that  $p$  is not strictly a stative attitude. As the goal for this part of the thesis is to explore the epistemology of factive psychological attitudes in light of what has been said about attitude externalism, the arguments offered in this chapter and the last both serve to differentiate the view offered in the thesis about propositional knowledge from two other prominent views in the literature with which this thesis, in most other respects, is aligned very

closely. These other two views are Williamson's factive attitude view of knowing and Cassam's explanatory theory of knowing.

Section one discusses what is known in the literature as propositional (or epistemic) seeing, and a particular contemporary view on the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions offered by Craig French. French's view closely follows that of a previous theory developed by Dretske, so we'll begin by briefly discussing a few of Dretske's important conclusions about seeing.

Ultimately, both views draw the same conclusion that seeing that  $p$  is knowing that  $p$  on the basis of visual perception. While I agree with both Dretske and French about the relation between seeing and knowing it will be argued here that there seems to be a general conflation of an epistemic condition (the epistemic condition associated with seeing-that) with the underlying psychological/perceptual states. Some accounts of perceptual knowledge like McDowell's and views that regard knowing as a mental state, like Williamson's, are particularly subject to such conflation.

Williamson's view is especially subject to this problem due to the obvious fact that factive attitudes like 'seeing that' just are psychological (mental) states. In section two we'll take a look at the entailment thesis as it is advanced in the literature today and consider some objections to it. The purpose of the discussion here will be to get clear on what the recent challenges to the thesis are and to assess whether or not they are plausible objections to the thesis. In section three I turn to a general discussion on the nature of perceptual success terms like 'see', 'recognize' and 'notice' and argue that such terms do not denote mental states of an individual, but rather to particular events or perhaps merely changes in epistemic conditions. The arguments in section three along with arguments from section one are meant to put serious pressure on the idea that epistemic

(propositional) seeing is a kind of mental state. The ultimate goal of the chapter is to show that the factive propositional attitude seeing-*that*, while entailing knowing, is not necessarily a mental state, and thus cannot serve as an example of a factive mental state, but is best thought of as a kind of factive mental event. This calls in to question a central claim of Williamson's view, namely, that knowing is the most general factive stative attitude.

## 5.1 Propositional Seeing

Seeing that  $p$  as a paradigm case of knowing that  $p$  is complicated by the fact that there are multiple senses of the term 'see', even when we narrow the context down to only propositional contexts. Gisborne has argued that even within propositional contexts the verb is subject to conflation and seems to take on a jointly perceptual propositional sense (Gisborne, 2010). Thus, if seeing that  $p$  is knowing that  $p$ , as many authors have argued, then we need to be clear to begin with, on just what kind of propositional seeing we're talking about. It may be obvious from the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions that in one sense, seeing is knowing, but there is more than one sense that is relevant here. Dretske argued for two distinct kinds of seeing, which he referred to as epistemic and non-epistemic seeing. Non-epistemic seeing, which is sometimes referred to as objectual seeing, is the seeing of objects or particulars in one's environment. It is essentially a sensory function and occurs in any animal with a visual sensory system. This kind of seeing is regarded as being non-epistemic since it is belief independent. Any animal equipped with a visual sensory system can objectually see and doing so does not entail the formation of any belief about what is seen. Dretske likens non-epistemic seeing to that of stepping on a bug. Such an act does not entail that a person has any particular belief at all. When a person sees non-



epistemically, there is nothing about that fact that entails that the person who sees some object or feature of their environment has any particular belief. More formally, "...there is a way of seeing such that of any proposition, P, the statement "S sees D" does not logically entail the statement 'S believes P'" (Dretske, 1969, p. 6). Non-epistemic seeing is thus belief independent, or as Dretske puts it, has zero belief content. Epistemic seeing on the other hand, is a more complex kind of seeing, one that involves, necessarily, non-epistemic (objectual) seeing but the occurrence of which entails some kind of belief. On Dretske's view, one cannot see anything in an epistemic sense and fail to form some belief about that which is seen. In this sense, epistemic seeing is not devoid of positive belief content.<sup>54</sup> One sees epistemically only if one believes that *p*. Moreover, one sees that *p* only if *p*. The difference between the two kinds of seeing is borne out by the sentences used to express each. Sentences used to convey epistemic seeing can take a propositional clause as its object, whereas sentences expressing non-epistemic seeing never take a propositional clause as an object. This propositional object is usually indicated by a *that*-clause in sentences expressing epistemic seeing. Thus, seeing epistemically is essentially seeing-*that*. It is seeing that such-and-such is the case, which implies some kind of propositional attitude. Hence, the fact that this kind of seeing is not belief independent. Dretske's account is much more complicated than this of course, and I will not go into further detail here, since all we need to note is that there are two fundamentally different ways of seeing on Dretske's view, one that involves a propositional attitude, since the object of the seeing is a proposition, and one, which does not involve any propositional attitude since its object is not a proposition but

---

<sup>54</sup> Dretske does distinguish between positive and negative belief content, but argues that nothing in his overall picture hangs on this distinction. For Dretske, non-epistemic seeing is devoid of both positive and negative belief content. S's seeing D, non-epistemically, neither entails that S believes that *p* or that S does not believe that *p* for any proposition *p*.

some feature or particular of the environment. Lastly, we also need to note that on Dretske's view, to epistemically see that  $p$  is to be in an advantaged epistemic condition with respect to  $p$ . One doesn't simply believe that  $p$  when one sees that  $p$ . For Dretske, if one sees that  $p$ , then one knows that  $p$ . Thus, Dretske's account gives us a thesis about the relation between seeing and knowing. This thesis is often referred to as the seeing entails knowing thesis (SET).

When 'see' functions in propositional contexts the relevant sense is something like Dretske's epistemic seeing and the verb becomes a factive verb. Consider the sentence, 'I see the point you're making'. The object of this sentence is not an actual object, but is 'the point you are making', and whatever the point is, it can be expressed by some proposition  $p$ . So, essentially what is being *seen* in cases like this is that  $p$  is the case. Now, in this particular example the sense of 'see' is not perceptual. It is however, necessarily a propositional use of the verb. Despite the fact that the sentence, 'I see the point you're making' lacks a *that*-clause it is not difficult to see that it is operating in a propositional context here. When 'see' operates in a strictly propositional context there is no sense in which one would perceptually see the object of the sentence. We wouldn't claim that one is visually seeing 'the point you are making'. This fact is revealed rather simply by the fact that a blind person could just as easily see the point you're making as a person who is not visually impaired. When 'see' operates in a strictly propositional context, I'll refer to this sense of the verb as its *propositional awareness* sense. Sentences like, 'I see what you are saying', 'I now see your side of the issue', etc., are all employing the propositional awareness sense of 'see'. Its use does not rely on the perceptual sense of 'see' to convey the awareness of the fact that such-and-such is the case.

There is a further, more nuanced sense of 'see' that conflates both the perceptual and the propositional senses when operating in some propositional contexts. Dretske's notion of epistemic seeing is an example of this. In such cases the possibility of a blind person seeing that p would be necessarily ruled out. Consider the following examples from Gisborne (2010).

1. Peter saw through the window that Mary had crossed the road.
2. Peter saw through the window that Mary was right.

We can check for a conflated sense of 'see' by using certain selection restrictions such as the prepositional phrase 'through the window'. Gisborne argues that the reason why (2) is infelicitous is due to the fact that the two sentences employ different senses of 'see'. The phrase 'through the window' works only when 'see' indicates what Gisborne refers to as a kind of *perceptual gaze*, something that the strictly propositional awareness sense of 'see' does not indicate at all. Gisborne's point is that perceptual verbs indicate a kind of directedness, for which it makes sense to use such embellishing phrases, as 'through the window'. Thus, the sense of (1) even though it works perfectly well in a propositional context, nevertheless has a perceptual element to it, since it works with 'through the window' which works only in perceptual contexts. Thus, the sense of 'see' in (1) is both perceptual and propositional, whereas the sense in (2) is strictly propositional.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> I think Gisborne is largely correct on this point, though there do seem to be cases where the notion of directedness or the presence of a kind of "gaze" is questionable. For example, Peter could be tracking Mary's movements on his mobile phone via a GPS locator on Mary's phone. In this case Peter could see that Mary crossed the road by seeing that the position on the map has changed, but this doesn't seem to involve any kind of perceptual gaze or sense of perceptual directedness at all. The sense of 'see' here is perceptual in that it involves Peter's looking at the phone to see that her

So, there is a sense of 'see', which in propositional contexts indicates an awareness of some fact, but also carries with it a perceptual component. Recently, Craig French has adopted a view very similar to this and argues that seeing in the epistemic sense, to be more specific, the perceptual propositional sense, is a way of knowing on the basis of visual perception.<sup>56</sup> This is essentially what Dretske argued for as well. Dretske writes,

For I am attempting (both in the present schema and in later schemata) to specify a type of situation which is *both* epistemic in character *and* essentially visual in nature, a type of situation which represents *the acquisition of knowledge by visual means*, a type of situation which is frequently, but certainly not always, described by the 'seeing that' construction (Dretske, 1969, p. 80).

For both Dretske and French, seeing that  $p$  is knowing that  $p$  on the basis of visual perception. French's idea is that some visual sensation  $q$  serves to indicate the source of the knowledge when one epistemically sees that  $p$ , and thus plays an evidential role in  $S$ 's knowledge that  $p$ . For French and Dretske,  $q$  can be any kind of objectual (non-epistemic) seeing, the idea being that, "[I]t is not part of the semantics of [perceptual propositional seeing ascriptions] that it ascribes a *specific* type of state or episode of visual perception..." (French, 2012, p. 122).<sup>57</sup> One could see that it is raining by seeing the rain fall, seeing puddles on the deck fill, seeing someone soaked after stepping in from just being outside, etc. What is essential for this type of seeing is that one knows that it is raining on the basis of some non-epistemic

---

position on the map has changed, but the sense in which perception is involved is not quite the same as it is in the sense in which he could see through the window that Mary had crossed the road.

<sup>56</sup> It's worth noting that Gisborne argues that in propositional contexts where 'see' is used in an evidential sense we cannot use 'know', since the sense of 'see' in these cases is an instance of a sense of 'understanding'.

<sup>57</sup> A similar idea can be found in Dretske's original notion of primary epistemic seeing. There the idea is that seeing functions in what Dretske refers to as justificatory contexts, which it can be argued is sufficiently different from French's notion of seeing as playing an evidential role. However, for both, the specifics of the visual experience do not necessarily come into play when playing either a justificatory or evidential role.

seeing. French refers to this view as the visuo-epistemic model, and according to this model to see that  $p$  is to know that  $p$  on the basis of vision.

At this point it is worth noting that often theorists engaged in debates about the epistemic import of the use of such locutions seem to make the assumption that we are referring to, with the use of such expressions, is some kind of mental state of the individual. Even though our epistemic vocabulary includes locutions like 'sees that', which indicate a kind of epistemic-visual condition, this is not a reason to think that there is any kind of sui generis psychological (mental) state which corresponds to a subject's 'seeing that'. I think, following Dretske and French, we can accept the notion of epistemic seeing and that there is a sense of 'see' when taken in propositional contexts that is both perceptual and epistemic. We can also concede that this sense of the verb indicates a privileged epistemic condition of the individual insofar as one's 'seeing that' often serves as an answer to the question of how one knows. However, despite the fact that there is a sense of the verb 'see' that is both epistemic and perceptual, and that seeing in this perceptual propositional sense can be thought of as a single privileged epistemic condition, it does not follow, nor is it likely I would argue, that there is any kind of single psychological state that is both perceptual and propositional. That is, there is no mental state being in which is sufficient for seeing that  $p$ , when seeing is taken to be both perceptual and propositional. The expression 'sees that' does serve to indicate a single epistemic condition, but one which is consistent with there being more than one state of the individual, perhaps one that is perceptual and one that is cognitive/propositional. Perhaps even a series of perceptual states (or events) and a standing propositional attitude. It is a mistake to think that since we recognize this perceptual propositional sense of 'see' and the privileged

epistemic position of 'seeing that' that there must be a hybrid mental state of the individual, which is both perceptual and propositional.

The assumption on French's view seems to be that when we make ascriptions of the form 'S sees that  $p$ ' – where the sense of 'see' is the perceptual propositional sense – we are referring to a specific *state* of that subject (Williamson makes the same assumption). For example, in arguing for what he refers to as an explanatory challenge that some non-propositional theorists of perceptual experience face, French states that, "States of seeing that  $p$  seem to be (A) *perceptual*, and (B) *propositional*... the challenge is to explain how states of seeing that  $p$  can be perceptual and propositional" (French, 2013, p. 2). However, at this point I think we should allow ourselves the distinction between psychological states of the individual and epistemic conditions predicable to that individual. That is, even though the condition of 'seeing that  $p$ ' can be regarded as involving both perception and some propositional attitude, it doesn't necessarily follow that every time a subject  $S$  sees that  $p$ , in the perceptual propositional sense, there must be some particular state such that being in that state is sufficient for  $S$ 's seeing that  $p$ , which is implied by reference to any *state* of seeing that  $p$ . We can make the distinction between epistemic conditions and psychological (mental) states, which may or may not be identical with or equivalent to such conditions. I'll maintain that there is a single epistemic condition that corresponds to a subject's seeing-*that* but it is not obvious that such a condition is equivalent to a sui generis mental state. It is certainly plausible that the epistemic condition is a supervenient property the base of which may be a mix of several states and events. Some, like Williamson, maintain that epistemic conditions such as 'seeing that' just are mental states. The point here is that there may be any number of relevant cognitive and/or

perceptual events involved in determining such a privileged epistemic condition, none of which are equivalent to one another.

The claim here is that it is not obvious that when S sees that  $p$ , there must be some kind of perceptual propositional mental state for S, even though we are referring to a kind of epistemic condition of the subject such that S's knowing that  $p$  is explained by the fact that S sees that  $p$ . In fact, this is precisely what Dretske's notion of epistemic seeing is meant to convey. Dretske's intention was to show that seeing that  $p$  is an epistemically advantaged position. He makes the point thus,

Seeing something in a primary epistemic way represents a particularly favored position in which we sometimes find ourselves for answering the question 'How do you know that  $b$  is  $P$ ?' The position is favored, epistemologically speaking because we have available the reply 'I can see that it is  $P$ ', not *by* the newspapers, not *by* the gauge, not *by* seeing that something else is  $Q$ , but *by* seeing  $b$  itself (Dretske, 1969, p. 157).

It seems perfectly consistent to accept the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions and agree with Dretske that epistemic (propositional) seeing is a unique epistemic condition, different in kind from objectual (non-propositional) seeing, but still deny that there is some mental state, which is both perceptual and propositional. I suggest that it is perfectly reasonable to claim that in cases of perceptual propositional seeing there is a 'seeing  $X$ ', where ' $X$ ' denotes some object or event such that seeing  $X$  is merely perceptual and non-epistemic, and that there is also a ' $\Phi$ -ing that  $p$ ', where ' $\Phi$ ' denotes a propositional attitude to  $p$ , which is propositional and not perceptual. It is also reasonable to hold that the two can be thought to constitute a single advantaged epistemic condition such that this condition entails knowing, but there need be no single state of seeing-*that* for such an epistemic condition to obtain. Not much turns on this point for Dretske. It isn't relevant to Dretske's

view whether or not there is a single mental state or a group of states or events associated with seeing-*that*. However, for French and Williamson there is an important consequence here. French holds that there is an explanatory challenge for those who hold a non-propositional view of perceptual experience.<sup>58</sup> However, this is only a problem if we think there is a state of seeing-*that*. The problem this raises for Williamson's view is much more obvious, since for Williamson seeing-*that* is just a mental state. We can of course regard seeing-*that* as a factive propositional attitude and according to the attitude externalist view such an attitude would be regarded as being purely mental. Where we might draw attention is to the claim of stativity. Williamson regards this factive attitude as being stative. I think this is a highly debatable point, and one that has not really been challenged in the literature. Just as we challenged the widely held assumption that talk of token mental states is metaphysically acceptable in chapter one, here we need to challenge another widely held assumption, that seeing-*that* is a stative factive attitude.

The underlying assumption in this debate seems to be that since there is a locution that seems to bridge the two together (perception and propositional awareness), there must be some hybrid state that corresponds to the locution. But this is a completely unwarranted assumption. The conflated sense of 'see' may just fail altogether to pick out any unique type of state. It is perfectly reasonable to hold that the expression is used in this conflated sense to simultaneously report a visual experience and ascribe a propositional attitude, and that the conjunction of the two constitutes a

---

<sup>58</sup> The debate over whether or not perceptual experience has propositional content is of course a big one, and there are many contributing authors to this debate. See McDowell (1996) and Peacocke (1983) for propositional views of perceptual experience. Brewer has written quite a bit on this topic going the other way. See Brewer (2011) for arguments against the propositional view of perceptual experience. See also Crane (2006).



single epistemic condition, but that there is no single psychological state that corresponds to such a condition. Everything we accept about the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions and the epistemological considerations about the relation between seeing and knowing are perfectly consistent with there being no such state at all. In fact, in section three I will argue that the factive psychological attitude seeing-*that* is best thought of, not as a kind of mental state at all but as a special kind of mental event. For now, let us turn to the entailment thesis.

## 5.2 The Entailment Thesis

Recent literature has seen a few objections raised against SET. One such objection comes from John Turri. Turri's goal with this objection is to undermine Williamson's factive attitude account of knowing, and he offers three putative counterexamples to the thesis, one of which will suffice to convey the gist of his argument.

**(BARN)** Henry and his son are driving through the country. Henry pulls over to stretch his legs and while doing so regales his son with a list of currently visible roadside items. "That's a tractor. That's a combine. That's a horse. That's a silo. And that's fine barn," Henry added, pointing to the nearby roadside barn. And indeed Henry saw that a barn stood nearby. But unbeknownst to them the locals recently secretly replaced nearly every barn in the county with papier-mâché fake barns. Henry happened to see the one real barn in the whole county. But had he instead set eyes on any of the numerous nearby fakes, he would have falsely believed it was a barn. (Adapted from Goldman 1976, pps. 172-3, who credits Carl Ginet)

Turri claims that in this case, Henry sees that there is a barn nearby but fails to know as much. Thus, SET must be false. In a response to Turri, French argues that Turri has misunderstood the sense of 'see' employed in the

example. For French, seeing, in the perceptual propositional sense, and knowing do not come apart, and for French and many others, that means that SET must be true. French agrees with Turri's conclusion that Henry does not know that a barn is nearby, but of course denies that Henry sees that there is a barn nearby. According to French, Henry sees a barn, but doesn't see that there is a barn, since the sense in which we are using 'see' here is a perceptual propositional sense, and the visuo-epistemic model holds that the perceptual propositional sense of 'see' should be understood as *knowing on the basis of visual perception*. French's criticism of this argument is essentially that Turri fails to recognize that the kind of seeing relevant to this case is perceptual propositional seeing, which is just knowing on the basis of visual perception. French offers the following as an example of how this sense of 'see' is supposed to function.

**(JACK)** Jack is driving through the country. He knows there is just one barn in the area, and he has to deliver a package to it. He comes up to a point where he sees some rutted tracks which are of the kind (he knows) that inevitably terminate in a barn. At this point, Jack can't see the barn itself (as it is hidden behind the bushes), but he sees the rutted tracks, and thereby sees that there is a barn there (French, 2012, p. 124).

The claim is that in this example we have an utterance of,

1. Jack can see that there is a barn there.

French contrasts this with Turri's example where we have a similar utterance of,

2. Henry could see that a barn stood nearby.

The argument is that in JACK (1) is true, but in HENRY (2) is false. French claims that, "It is clear in the context that the means by which Jack knows that there is a barn there is his visual perception of the rutted tracks"

(French, 2012). And if (2) employs the same sense of 'see' as (1), then Henry would know by the sense of sight that a barn stood nearby. However, ex hypothesi Henry does not know this. The conclusion is that (2) must not be a case of seeing-*that* in the visuo-epistemic or perceptual propositional sense. French's claim here is that (2) is false not because Henry fails to see, but rather that, "...what Henry sees does not enable him to know that there is a barn nearby – because he is, unknowingly, in a county populated with fake barns" (French, 2012). On the visuo-epistemic model, perceptual propositional seeing is just knowing on the basis of visual perception.

Now, to be fair, French is not offering us an account on what makes SET true, but merely pointing out the flaw in Turri's arguments. We could say that our evidence is always subject to defeat and is defeated in cases where the modal environment is hostile to knowledge, as it is in HENRY. Essentially, this is what French is pointing out between the two examples, and that this does not undermine SET, since on a correct reading of the examples, 'see' is being used in the perceptual propositional sense, which is the sense in which a subject knows based on visual perception. The response from French is really just trying to offer us a way of understanding the fact that we do just mean by the phrase 'sees that' that a subject has a kind of knowledge or understanding in such cases. This is obvious in the propositional awareness sense of 'see'. Where explicating this notion becomes complicated is in the attempt to describe the relation between the perceptual element and the propositional element of this conflated sense. The difficulty is showing that when the verb 'see' is taken in this conflated sense the verb phrase 'sees that' not only conveys a kind of knowledge or understanding, but it also serves to simultaneously pick out the evidential or justificatory grounds of that knowledge as being some visual sensation, and

this is epistemologically problematic. How exactly is this supposed to work? I think French is correct about the fact that we mean to convey that there is a visual sensation that plays a kind of justificatory or evidential role in our knowing in such cases. I don't think that Turri's arguments succeed as they stand, and I think French's assessment of them is essentially correct.

However, I suggest that if we interpret the challenge as a question of what makes SET true, then it still needs to be met, despite the fact that we may have a semantic account of 'sees that' ascriptions on which such ascriptions are used to express an epistemically advantaged condition.<sup>59</sup> That being said, Turri's arguments fail to recognize the proper sense of 'see' used in the example cases and thus do not succeed.

Pritchard has also raised a challenge to SET. His angle is a bit different from Turri's, but he essentially draws the same conclusion as Turri, that not all cases of seeing-*that* necessarily are cases of knowing. On Pritchard's view the entailment thesis is false because there are cases in which one can see that  $p$  but fail to believe that  $p$ , and since belief is a necessary condition for knowledge one thereby fails to know. His motivation for denying the entailment thesis stems from what he calls the *basis problem*. Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist view wants to acknowledge the intimate epistemic connection between epistemic seeing and knowing, but at the same time needs to allow for the possibility that one's knowledge that  $p$  be based on one's seeing that  $p$ . For Pritchard, this cannot be the case if seeing that  $p$  is just a way of knowing that  $p$ . He argues,

---

<sup>59</sup> It could be argued that this problem is a central and perennial problem for both epistemology and philosophy of mind, and has been at the heart of many debates from Sellars' concerns about Foundationalism to Bonjour's defense of it and the debate McDowell's conceptualism engenders with Evans' singular thoughts and Russellian content. Indeed, how exactly perception can be a source of knowledge while at the same time provide us with the justificatory/evidential basis for such knowledge is a very complicated subject.

The problem...is that if this is indeed the right way to think about the relationship between seeing that  $p$  and knowing that  $p$ , then it is hard to understand how seeing that  $p$  could constitute one's epistemic *basis* for knowing that  $p$ . After all, on this view seeing that  $p$  already presupposes knowledge that  $p$  on account of how it is just a way of knowing that  $p$ . But how then could seeing that  $p$  constitute one's epistemic basis for knowing that  $p$ ? Call this the *basis problem* for epistemological disjunctivism (Pritchard, 2012).

Pritchard uses the barn façade case altered slightly to demonstrate this point as well. So, we'll continue to refer to Henry as our subject to illustrate his point. In Pritchard's case, Henry forms the belief that a barn is nearby based on seeing a barn while driving through the country. In this case, Henry does see a barn and there are no fake barns nearby. However, let's say that Henry is given false testimony from an otherwise reliable source that the countryside is populated with barn facades. Henry, Pritchard argues, is thus obliged to withhold his belief that there is a barn nearby based on this testimony. In this case, as in Turri's example, there is an undefeated defeater to Henry's knowledge, which in this case is the fact that he is being deceived by the testifier – there are in fact no barn facades, only real barns. Pritchard argues, I think plausibly that later on when Henry is told the truth that he was being deceived, he would be inclined to say that he did in fact see that a barn was nearby despite the fact that he did not believe that a barn was nearby. He says,

Wouldn't one now retrospectively treat oneself as having earlier *seen that* there was a barn? Think, for example, about how one would describe one's situation in this regard were one to be asked about it. Wouldn't it be most natural to say that one did see that there was a barn in the field, rather than to 'hedge' one's assertion by saying, for example, that one merely thought that one saw a barn? (Pritchard, 2012)

For Pritchard, propositional seeing merely guarantees that one is in a good position to gain knowledge, not that one has knowledge, as it does for French and Dretske. Thus, seeing-*that* need not entail knowing, but merely be robustly epistemic enough to serve as a basis for knowledge. I think it is somewhat tricky to both defend this argument and to object to it. Pritchard does raise a worry for the entailment thesis and the support for this concern comes from a major epistemological view of Pritchard's, epistemological disjunctivism, a view which has been gaining popularity for some time now. In other words, we don't just have an ad hoc attempt at denying the entailment thesis, we have a full blown epistemological theory which, according to Pritchard, requires that the concepts of propositional seeing and knowing come apart, even though they remain intimately connected. As Pritchard puts it, "...seeing that p is factive and robustly epistemic...[and] can properly be thought of as providing an epistemic basis for [knowing]" (Pritchard, 2012) However, it isn't clear how one should gauge just how popular Pritchard's intuition is in this case. One might be inclined to initially say that they did see a barn, but if pressed to answer the more direct question, "Did you see *that* there was a barn?" they might be reluctant to grant the seeing-*that* but deny the knowing. I can imagine a popular response being, "Well if you mean by 'seeing *that* there was a barn' did I know that there was a barn, the yes, I did." Maybe, what is lacking in this case is just the second order knowledge that one knew that they knew that there was a barn. It is a reasonable response to say that once I was told that there were no barns, I no longer believed that what I saw was a barn, but prior to that I believed that what I saw was indeed a barn. Pritchard's argument is quite provocative but requires us to stretch our intuitions in such cases fairly thin and as such do not seem compelling enough to counter

the much stronger intuition that seeing that  $p$  is just knowing on the basis of visual perception.

The arguments presented in this section are examples of ways in which some authors have challenged SET in the recent literature. As provocative as these arguments are, as challenges to SET, they can be met. Most of the attacks on the entailment thesis come from challenges to views like Williamson's not specifically because there seems to be a problem with propositional seeing, but that there seems to be a problem with Williamson's attitude externalism, or they come from views like Pritchard's where SET poses a specific problem for the epistemological theory being developed. Ultimately, I think both Turri's and Pritchard's objections fail. French's reply to Turri is I think fairly decisive, the error in Turri's argument is failure to recognize the semantics of 'sees that' ascriptions and that in the sense in which his use of such ascriptions is applicable they are knowledge ascriptions. Pritchard's argument, I think requires a bit of finessing to make it really convincing. There is a certain degree of plausibility to such a case as outlined by Pritchard, but there is also a sense in which the timeline of the events in that case forces us to construe our epistemic attributions in an unclear way. That is, if one were inclined to retroactively attribute seeing-*that* to the subject, then one might also be inclined to attribute knowledge on that very basis.

### 5.3 Perceptual Success Terms and Factive Verb Phrases

There is a rather uncontroversial thesis about seeing, which we may credit to Ryle, who in turn credits Aristotle, and that is that as soon as one sees that  $p$

it immediately follows that one *has seen* that *p*.<sup>60</sup> If I see that the cup is on the table, then I have seen that the cup is on the table. My having seen that the cup is on the table is true at the same time that I actually see that it is. In a sense, my seeing-*that* is just my having-seen-*that*.<sup>61</sup> Terms like 'see', 'recognize' and 'notice' have a success component to them. Ryle argued that there is an important difference between verbs of perceptual exploration like 'look' and 'search' and verbs of perceptual detection like 'see' and 'notice'. They serve different purposes in describing different aspects of perception, and only the latter imply a kind of terminus. He says,

In some respects, though certainly not in very many, the verbs 'see' and 'hear' function like the verb 'win'. They do not stand for bodily or psychological states, processes or conditions. They do not stand for anything that goes on, i.e. has a beginning, a middle and an end (Ryle, 1954, p. 106).

Such successes might very well be the result of previous processes or events that did unfold over time, but it seems fairly accurate to say that any seeing, recognizing or noticing occurs only at the point of success. Linguists sometimes regard this quality of certain verbs as having a positive telicity. These verbs have some kind of implied endpoint built in to their semantics. Vendler, following Ryle referred to this "spotting" sense of the verb 'see' as a type of achievement. Vendler's analysis of verb types was meant to have philosophical import. He regarded the differences in the sense of 'see', for example, as indicating distinct ontological categories. For Vendler, as well as other linguists, 'see' in many cases denotes a kind of punctual occurrence, similar to Ryle's notion of success.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> See Ryle (1954, Chp 7). The reference to Aristotle is to his (Metaphysics, Book 9, vi. 7-10)

<sup>61</sup> This is not to state an equivalence between the two conditions 'seeing that *p*' and 'having seen that *p*', but only to state that any case in which one sees that *p* is also a case in which one has seen that *p*.

<sup>62</sup> See Vendler (1967). Also see Kenny (2003).



On the other hand, recent authors such as Gisborne have argued that 'see' in its physical perception sense is underspecified in multiple ways. In its prototypical sense 'see' is underspecified with respect to its telicity, durativity and dynamicity (Gisborne, 2013). If we look at certain tests we use for determining these qualities of verbs, we can see very easily, Gisborne thinks, that 'see' is underspecified with respect to each of these characteristics. As regards its duration, Gisborne offers the following examples:

1. She saw him hit the dog.
2. She saw him make supper.

As Gisborne points out, in both cases the percept is a type of event. The event in (1) the 'hitting of the dog' is a punctual occurrence (i.e. is instantaneous or of very brief duration), which implies that the seeing itself was of equally short duration. However, the event in (2) takes time to unfold, and correspondingly the seeing of that event must have also occurred over an extended period of time. The conclusion here is that 'seeing' is neither inherently durative or punctual but has its duration determined by the percept. Similar arguments are made for the telicity and dynamicity of 'see'. Again, Gisborne argues that the telicity and dynamicity of 'see', at least in its prototypical sense is conditioned by the percept and has no inherently dynamic, telic or durative structure. Over the last fifty years or so the linguistic analysis of perception verbs has been an important topic for both philosophers and linguists, and yet there doesn't seem to be any strong consensus on the inherent characteristics of perceptual success terms. In fact, some like Gisborne, question whether 'see' is even always a success term.

As our interest here is primarily in the perceptual propositional sense of 'see' our focus will mainly be on the factive verb phrase constructions that can be made with such verbs, since these phrases seem to have special epistemic import. And whether or not perceptual success verbs in their prototypical senses are not inherently telic, durative or dynamic, I will argue, their use in factive verb phrase constructions always seem to employ a very specific profile of these characteristics. Now, one point that seems to be widely accepted is that the verb phrase 'sees that' is in its typical use a stative predication. It is this presupposition that works in the background of views like Williamson's. Gisborne, along with many others holds that when 'see' is used in a propositional context, such predications as 'sees that  $p$ ' are always stative. However, I want to suggest here that such predications, even though they share some commonalities with other stative predications, are not themselves typically stative. For, it seems the perceptual component of 'see' in the perceptual propositional sense is always telic, non-dynamic *and* non-durative in factive verb phrases like 'sees that'. To see this, let us note first that states are typically atelic and durative, but in its perceptual propositional sense 'see' seems to be telic and non-durative. Consider again the example from Gisborne, 'She saw him make supper', which on a typical reading is taken to be a stative predication. What about this use of 'see' makes us think that the predication is stative? Certainly the sense of 'see' here is telic, that is, if he failed to make supper, then the statement would be false. And stative predications are almost never telic. So, that certainly isn't the reason. If anything it is a reason to think it is non-stative. Perhaps the idea that since the percept is an event with some duration the seeing itself must have similar duration is driving the intuition here that the predication is stative. But this is a false equivalence. Just because an event that is seen has duration doesn't imply that the seeing of that event has a similar duration.

Consider the statement ‘S sees that the plane is landing’. This seems to indicate that what S is *doing* is seeing that the plane is landing, or that S is in a state of seeing the plane landing. Certainly in this context there is something going on over a period of time, namely, a plane is landing. Obviously, it takes time for a plane to land, and if S sees that it is landing, then it stands to reason that S’s seeing that the plane is landing must occupy an equal amount of time. Unfortunately, this argument is fallacious. It does not follow from the fact that the event which I see has temporal extension that the event of ‘my seeing it’ is also temporally extended. It is entirely possible that my seeing that the plane is landing is still just a punctual success, in that once I saw *that* the plane was landing, I had seen that it was indeed landing. This is not to say that we cannot give expression to a perceptual event which does correspond in temporal duration to the event which it is of. *Watching* the plane land seems to be an apt way of describing such a perceptual event. Here we are specifically mentioning the fact that the perceptual event (or process) continued along with the event of which it was a perceptual event. The same is not so for ‘seeing that the plane is landing’.<sup>63</sup> We might note that in Gisborne’s example ‘She saw him make supper’ the direct object is an event, whereas in my example the object is a proposition. But even here there is an objection to be made against the claim of durativity. Vendler offered along with what he called a “spotting” sense of ‘see’ where

---

<sup>63</sup> One might still be inclined to object here and insist that seeing the plane landing must have some temporal duration, since we could ask whether or not one actually saw the plane land. S could claim to have seen the plane landing, but an interlocutor could inquire as to whether or not S actually saw the plane land, the answer to which seems to imply some kind of temporal duration attributable to the perceptual event, since it would have taken time for the plane to land. However, this objection is based on a slight equivocation. There is a difference in asking whether one has seen that the plane was landing and whether one has seen that the plane landed. Landing and having landed are two different events—in fact, the former is more like a process. The difference is moot however, since seeing one does not necessarily imply seeing the other. S could have seen that the plane landed, but not have seen it landing and vice versa. In both cases though it would still be true that S’s seeing that p did not necessarily take any time at all.

the verb denotes a kind of achievement, an analysis similar to Gisborne's.

Vendler essentially argued that in the sentence 'I saw him cross the street' the sense of 'see' cannot be dynamic, and thus must refer to a state.

However, as Mourelatos carefully pointed out, the paraphrase data for this sentence does not bear this out. Mourelatos contends,

This diagnosis hardly accords with our intuitions. There is no difficulty in paraphrasing "He was running" as "He was engaged in the activity of running." But would we really be tempted to paraphrase "I saw him run" as "I was in a state of visual awareness of him running? ...the force of "I saw" in these two sentences ['I saw him running' and 'I saw him cross the street'] is not to convey the state of the subject but to record a *sighting* or a *seeing*, however protracted, as an occurrence, as an individuated something that took place. The correct category for the "saw" of Vendler's sentence is *event* (Mourelatos, 1978, p. 422).

The same point can very easily be made for Gisborne's example 'She saw him make supper'. We wouldn't normally paraphrase this as 'She was in a state of visual awareness of him making supper'. The fact that she saw him make supper, since the direct object in this case is an event of some duration, may imply that there must have also been some visual episode of some duration that corresponds to the event perceived. We might think that 'She saw him make supper' implies 'She watched him make supper', whereas 'She saw him making supper' does not. The latter being consistent with her just briefly seeing him while he was making supper, but not watching or observing him for any real stretch of time. This is all perfectly acceptable, but should not force us to read "saw" as indicating some kind of state. On a typical reading, perception verbs like 'see' are success terms, and typically lack duration, which is inconsistent with stativity, and they also tend to exhibit a positive telicity—hence the success component—which is not commonly associated with stative verbs. We might also look at the

dynamism of perceptual success verbs to further the point. As Vendler and Steward have pointed out some verbs do not take the continuous tense—something which would indicate a dynamic verb—simply because we typically use them to indicate something that happens almost instantaneously.<sup>64</sup> Now, both dynamic and stative verbs can be durative, so the fact that perceptual success terms often lack duration, might be thought to be a result of their positive telicity. Achievements or successes are not drawn out processes or activities if Ryle and Mourelatos are right, and typically, only dynamic verbs display a kind of positive telicity, whereas stative verbs tend to be atelic.

What we're specifically interested in are when verbs like 'see' are used in factive verb phrase constructions. Despite its underspecified nature in its prototypical sense, the verb 'see' takes on a different profile of characteristics when taken in perceptual propositional contexts, that is, when used in factive verb phrase constructions. 'Sees that' employs the telic, non-dynamic and non-durative qualities of the verb, all of which should raise an eyebrow as to why we should be inclined to think of such predications as stative. The fairly common view that such predications are stative, I think is dubious at best. Verbs that indicate a kind of perceptual success like 'see' or 'notice', when used in propositional contexts certainly denote a factive propositional attitude. That being said, the question remains as to just what type of condition holds in a case where one sees or notices or recognizes that *p*. I think it is safe to regard these as epistemic conditions, but are they stative or dynamic conditions? For, the notion of condition is sufficiently general to range over both states and events. If we look at the verb 'see' along three

---

<sup>64</sup> Though the term is not as popular with philosophers, some linguists refer to such non-durative events as 'eventualities'. See Gisborne (2012).

axes (durativity, telicity, dynamicity) we get a pretty good picture of things and whether or not we should regard such predications as 'sees that  $p$ ' as typically stative is definitely called in to question. Given the telic, non-durative qualities of these verbs when used to express a propositional attitude, it is not obvious that we should regard 'sees that  $p$ ' as a stative predication.

Just looking at the linguistic evidence it seems there is equally good reason to think that we're talking about events or punctualities with perceptual success verbs as there is to think that we are talking about states. I think the case can be made either way, though I believe the evidence is skewed slightly more in favor of the event/punctuality interpretation, despite the nearly ubiquitous presumption that we are referring to a type of state with such predications. There is also a kind of compromise position here.

Gisborne ultimately suggests that we regard such verbs as not necessarily indicating an event or a state, but something more like *changes in state*. On this view, perceptual success verbs are neither strictly dynamic nor strictly stative. Compare these verbs to the strictly stative propositional attitude verbs, like 'believe' and 'know'. For some propositional attitude verbs, it seems quite plausible to say that such verbs and verb phrases cannot be picking out anything like an event or a process. One certainly wouldn't answer the question, "What have you been doing for the past twenty minutes?" with, "I was believing." Believing just doesn't seem like something one can be occupied doing for any amount of time. One believes *for* a time, but it doesn't follow that one was *believing* at any point during that time. We wouldn't say that any kind of believing was going on or taking place. Yet, from the fact that a verb does not seem to clearly indicate an event or a process, it does not follow, as we've already seen, that it must then

indicate some kind of state. So, even if one is not convinced that the proper ontological category for what expressions like 'sees that' denote is event, claiming statehood for it is not an obvious conclusion either. In fact, it is even more problematic given the conception of mental states argued for earlier. Since, any mental state must obtain over some interval of time, *S*'s seeing that *p*, if it is a state, must obtain over some positive interval of time.<sup>65</sup> The case is peculiar with success terms in a way that it is not with verbs like 'believe' in that the notion of success gives the verb a telic quality. On the one hand, we might be inclined to say that they refer to a unique type of event since what they refer to happens, or occurs in the sense that events happen or occur, only these types of events do not take any time to happen. That is to say, seeing, thought of as an event, though it does occur, does not take any time to occur. There is no interval of time over which or during which a 'seeing' might have occurred. It might take time for one *to* see that *p*, but once one has seen that *p*, then even though we may think of that seeing as having occurred, the seeing itself did not unfold over any interval. It may have punctuated a specific interval of time, at the end of which one could be said to have seen that *p*, but we typically would not use the verb in the continuous tense to refer to an event or process that unfolds over time. It would just sound strange to say that *S* is seeing that *p*. The same goes for other perceptual success terms like 'recognize' or 'notice'. Things start to sound odd when we use the term 'recognize' to refer to something that occurs over a stretch of time. Consider the sentence 'She is recognizing her family members.' Here we are referring to something that is going on over an interval of time, but whether or not she is actually recognizing will certainly depend upon whether she does recognize. If she fails to recognize

---

<sup>65</sup> Recall that one of the necessary conditions for mental states is if a mental state *M* obtains, then there is some interval of time with a positive value such that *M* obtains at every time in that interval.

her family members, then she did not recognize them, and whatever we were referring to with this statement could not have been a recognizing. In such a case it would be better to say that she is trying to recognize. The lack of any duration may make it difficult to see these terms as referring to a kind of mental event, but it is even more so for them to be referring to a mental state.

If we want to adopt the view that factive verb phrases employing perceptual success terms refer to mental states, then we must accept the notion of telic states that do not obtain over any interval of time. This is obviously problematic. If on the other hand we adopt the view that such terms denote events, then we must acknowledge that some events have no duration. With this option, I believe we gain ground in accounting for their positive telicity. The compromise view here is that perceptual success verbs and their corresponding factive verb phrases, rather than denoting a concrete event of no duration, or a state that obtains over no interval of time, indicate a kind of temporal demarcation between different epistemic conditions. That is, their function is primarily epistemic. Perceptual success terms delineate conditions that have different epistemic properties. One way to think about this is to think of seeing, as an example, as just the earliest point in time at which a certain epistemic condition obtains for a subject. Prior to that time, the condition did not obtain. The term serves as a kind of temporal epistemic marker. The verb phrase 'sees that' while used to express a factive propositional attitude toward some proposition  $p$ , thus does not necessarily indicate a mental state, but rather a change in a subject's epistemic position with respect to  $p$ ; and it does this while simultaneously indicating the way in which that epistemic position (knowing) is achieved. If this analysis is right, then there are two important points to consider. First, 'seeing that  $p$ ' is a



non-stative factive psychological attitude that entails knowing. Second, that at least some factive psychological attitudes can serve as a way of knowing, even though they are not mental states. In the last chapter we will pick up on this notion of a 'way of knowing' and compare the view being developed here with two prominent views in the literature, both of which employ the notion of a 'way of knowing'.

## Chapter 6 The Disjunctive Structure of Propositional Knowledge

### Introduction

The arguments of the last two chapters discussed two factive attitudes thought by many to be paradigmatic ways of knowing—remembering and seeing. It was argued that the entailment thesis for remembering, as construed by most in the literature is not strictly true, and that seeing-*that*, though it does entail knowing, should be thought of as a kind of mental event rather than a mental state. Both of these conclusions serve to undermine Williamson's view, where knowing is thought to be the most general factive stative attitude. The first two sections of this chapter are focused on situating the overall view outlined in the thesis between two prominent contemporary views, Williamson's factive attitude account of knowing and Cassam's explanatory theory of knowing. To a certain extent the shortcomings of the one compensate for the shortcomings of the other, and in this sense the two are not only compatible but complimentary views.<sup>66</sup> However, if the arguments of this thesis are right and the attitude externalism account offered here gets the metaphysical picture right there is more to be said.

In the first section I will take up this notion of 'ways of knowing', which is found in both Williamson's and Cassam's theories. I will discuss both of their conceptions of 'ways of knowing' and how they differ from one another in important ways, and offer my own conciliatory remarks on both. The

---

<sup>66</sup> French has argued recently that both Cassam's and Williamson's view, while unique in many ways, can be thought to not necessarily conflict with one another, but compliment each other. See French (2014).

discussion of the first section precipitates the discussion of the next in that we are left with the question of what the relation is between knowing and the ways in which one knows—whatever kinds of things they may turn out to be. I will briefly survey three types of relations that are potential candidates: determination, realization and explanation. My argument at the end of this discussion will be that the way in which we should think of how knowing relates to specific factive attitudes is not along the lines of determinable property types and their more specific determinates, as Williamson conceives of it, but along the lines of explanation—something closer to Cassam’s approach, though I will go further than Cassam and argue that the explanatory relation just is the metaphysical relation that specific factive psychological attitudes have to knowing. That is to say, since mental states, ontologically speaking, are more akin to facts, the kind of metaphysical relation that plays between certain particular mental occurrences or events and general mental state types is one of an explanation of certain facts.

The last section of the chapter sketches out what I take to be a fundamental epistemological principle I call the *multiformity principle*. At the surface level it says that propositional knowledge is always had in some particular way, that is, if a subject has propositional knowledge at all, then there is a specific way in which that subject has that knowledge. At a deeper level, it will be suggested that the multiformity principle reveals what I see as an inherently disjunctive nature to propositional knowledge. The principle is endorsed by both Cassam and Williamson to one degree or another, though it is not articulated as a fundamental principle, and the deeper consequence is not, at least explicitly, endorsed by either. I will suggest at the end of this section that the multiformity principle has some very interesting implications and as

such has application to several important problems in epistemology. The Gettier problem is one such problem, and I will briefly sketch out a way of interpreting the Gettier problem in terms of the multiformity principle.

## 6.1 Ways of Knowing

In his discussion about the logic of dispositional statements, Ryle makes a crucial insight for our purposes here. While Ryle's motivations for his discussion on this topic were quite different from ours—he was mainly concerned with the mind-body problem, or rather the dissolution of it—his discussion is both incredibly insightful and germane to our purposes. Ryle recognized that our mental talk falls into two broad categories—dispositional statements and episodic statements. We often describe our mental lives in terms of dispositions to act and behave in certain ways, but also quite often report on specific episodes of our mental lives which seem to denote something very different from a disposition. They seem to be more like mental occurrences. Much of his criticism of philosophy of mind stems from what he considers to be a confusion about the logic of these types of statements. He noticed that when it comes to dispositions, not all are created equal. That is, some dispositions can be described in very nuanced ways that help to characterize them more specifically. Thus, Ryle makes an even finer grained distinction among dispositions, recognizing that some of the dispositional attitudes one might have reflect *tendencies* of the individual, whereas others reflect certain *capacities*. For Ryle, knowing and believing characterize this distinction quite aptly. Both are dispositional terms, but function differently according to Ryle. He suggested that one difference between these two types of dispositions lies in the fact that believing relies

upon reasons and knowing typically utilizes methods.<sup>67</sup> That is, our tendency to believe things is the result of having certain reasons for believing them, but our capacity to know things is the result of having certain methods of gaining that knowledge. Superficially, this looks a bit like an internalist/externalist conception of each, but this is too simplistic. This difference is subtly revealed if one considers the relevant interrogatives for inquiring into one's states of belief and knowledge respectively. We typically ask of a person, *how* they know that such-and-such is the case, and *why* they believe that such-and-such is the case.<sup>68</sup> The difference in the interrogatives alludes to the fact that what we're inquiring after is subtly different in each case. In the case of belief, we want to know what reasons one has for believing something, but in the case of knowledge we want to know the method by which one came to know.

Recent work in epistemology has seen a kind of revival of some of these distinctions that philosophers like Ryle and Austin were working with in discussions about the ways in which subjects have knowledge. The idea that we often look for methods or *ways* in which a subject has knowledge is of particular interest to us. That we can give expression to different ways of knowing has played a key role in both Williamson's and Cassam's views and is fast becoming an important area of research, and the idea that we might look at the specific ways in which a subject has knowledge is more than just fashionable but, according to the view developed here, critical to our success in

---

<sup>67</sup> Myers-Schulz & Schwitzgebel have recently put forward an argument presenting the Rylean distinction between the two types of dispositions as a possible alternative view on the relation between knowledge and belief, as opposed to the traditional view that knowledge entails belief. See Myers-Schulz & Schwitzgebel (2013). John Hyman has recently defended an account of knowing which can be interpreted as a kind of dispositional account of knowing. Hyman even puts the central thesis in ability terms. For Hyman, knowing is the ability to be guided by reason. See Hyman (2006)

<sup>68</sup> J. L. Austin was one of the first to point this out. See Austin (1946).

epistemological inquiry. Understanding what it is to have propositional knowledge, will ultimately depend on understanding how propositional knowledge is had. Let me illustrate this point. Consider the following scenario. Sally passes by Ted in the hallway and sees that he is wearing a red jumper. They briefly exchange pleasantries and go their own way. Sally knows that Ted is wearing a red jumper today, as she just saw that he was. If Alice were to ask her, "What color jumper is Ted wearing today?" she would answer, "Red." Later on that day, Alice does, in fact ask Sally what color jumper Ted is wearing. But Sally has forgotten what color his jumper is. It's been a long stressful day, and the color of Ted's jumper is just not that high on her list of concerns. So, Sally says to Alice, "I forget what color his jumper is." Now, assuming that forgetting entails not knowing, we can say that Sally no longer knows what color Ted's jumper is. But let's say that later on she runs in to Ted again. She sees (again) that he's wearing a red jumper. Here's where our epistemological worries surface. Since seeing that  $p$  entails knowing that  $p$ , Sally now knows (again) that Ted is wearing a red jumper. And if we think of knowing in terms of cases, where a subject is indexed to a time we might put things in the following way, where  $p$  is the proposition 'Ted is wearing a red jumper'. At time  $t_0$  Sally sees that  $p$  and therefore knows that  $p$ . At time  $t_1$  (Alice queries Sally) Sally has forgotten that  $p$  and therefore does not know that  $p$ . At time  $t_2$  Sally sees that  $p$  and therefore knows that  $p$ . This is all fine except for the fact that at  $t_2$  it is still true that Sally has forgotten that  $p$  and therefore does not know that  $p$ . Seeing that  $p$  does not entail that one has not forgotten that  $p$ . It entails that one knows that  $p$ . However, having forgotten that  $p$  entails that one does not know that  $p$ . Thus, at  $t_2$  Sally both knows and does not know that  $p$ . What are we to say about this? Obviously, Sally's epistemic condition is not going to be one of both knowing and not knowing that  $p$ . She either knows or she does not. But

how do we decide? I think the stronger intuition is to claim that she knows that *p* because she sees that *p* even though up to that point she had forgotten that *p*. And this is the right decision to make—Sally knows that *p*. What, I think, this scenario illustrates is the very intuitive point that in order to substantiate the claim that Sally knows we must be able to point to the specific way in which she knows. The important claim here is not *that* she knows, but that she knows *by seeing*. We cannot simply claim that she knows that *p* and leave it at that. For that doesn't resolve the problem of her both knowing and not knowing.<sup>69</sup> What is needed is an explanation of the *way* in which Sally has knowledge.

Along with Williamson I think that attitude externalism is correct. That is, factive psychological attitudes, like seeing-*that* are broad but also prime conditions and are purely mental. However, there is significant enough variation amongst the factive psychological attitudes such that there are problems with some of Williamson's claims, specifically the claim that knowing is the most general factive stative attitude. Firstly, not all factive attitudes that entail knowing are stative. As we saw in chapter five, seeing-*that* is best thought of as a kind mental event or change in epistemic conditions. There is no mental state corresponding to one's 'seeing that *p*'. Secondly, not all factive stative attitudes entail knowledge. As we saw in chapter four non-occurrent remembering, though it is a factive mental state only entails that one previously came to know, not that one currently knows. The divergence between the view developed here and Williamson's is significant to the point that what constitutes a way of knowing for

---

<sup>69</sup> It is tempting to think of this argument as showing that forgetting does not entail not knowing, or even that seeing does not entail knowing. There are cases to be made for both interpretations of the situation, though I believe they are substantially weaker than the interpretation taken here. I'm grateful for Martin Smith's and Craig French's help here.

Williamson will not necessarily work if the arguments of the previous chapters are correct. For even though seeing that  $p$  entails knowing that  $p$ , 'seeing that  $p$ ' is not a state of mind. And even though 'remembering that  $p$ ' is a factive state of mind, it doesn't follow that if one remembers that  $p$  that one knows that  $p$ . Thus, it is not sufficient for knowing that one be in a factive mental state, nor is it necessary. That being said I believe we can claim one necessary condition for knowledge that is in line with the attitude externalist view, which is that if one knows that  $p$ , then there is some factive psychological attitude which is purely mental and which serves as the way in which one knows that  $p$ . On this view, both 'seeing that  $p$ ' and 'remembering that  $p$ ' count as ways of knowing that  $p$ , though their relation to knowing differs in quite important ways.

Despite this difference, there is an important claim made by Williamson that we can accept. For, it is a very plausible claim about propositional knowledge in general. The claim is that, if  $S$  knows that  $p$ , then there must be a specific way in which  $S$  knows. Williamson formulates the idea thus, "...knowing is the most general factive stative attitude, that which one has to a proposition if one has any factive stative attitude to it at all" (Williamson, 2000). Knowing, on Williamson's account, is a general factive state of which there are multiple possible more specific factive states such as, perceiving and remembering. Now, even though this way of formulating things won't work for our purposes this does not mean that Williamson's claim about ways of knowing is false. 'Seeing that  $p$ ' and 'remembering that  $p$ ' can still be regarded as ways of knowing. Williamson's view requires the sufficiency condition, 'If  $S$  sees that  $p$ , then  $S$  knows that  $p$ ', but it also states that having a factive stative attitude is a necessary condition for knowing. Thus, if one knows that  $p$ , then one either sees that  $p$  or remembers that  $p$ , etc. For



Williamson, having any factive stative attitude is a way of knowing. We can agree with Williamson that having a factive attitude (and on the view endorsed here, this includes non-stative attitudes) is necessary for knowing. But we must deny the sufficiency claim, that having any factive attitude (stative or non-stative) entails knowing. We of course cannot accept just any factive attitude. Forgetting, for example, surely will not work, as it entails not knowing. However, if we simply hold that in any case in which a subject knows that  $p$  the fact that the subject knows entails a disjunction of possible factive psychological attitudes, some of which are stative, some non-stative, we can construe such factive psychological attitudes as the possible ways in which the subject knows that  $p$ . Thus, we can account for the multiformity claim by saying that knowing entails an open-ended but finite disjunction of possible factive psychological attitudes any one of which can serve as a way of knowing.<sup>70</sup>

Cassam has also argued for the multiformity principle. His approach is slightly different, in that on Cassam's view seeing that  $p$  is a way of knowing that  $p$ , since it offers a satisfactory explanation for how one knows that  $p$ . That is, it answers the "how do you know?" question. Cassam's explanatory theory of knowing says that  $\Phi$ -ing that  $p$  is a way of knowing that  $p$  just in

---

<sup>70</sup> This is not meant to be an analysis of knowing, but an articulation of how factive psychological attitudes relate to knowing. Obviously, for a complete picture we would need some way of eliminating factive attitudes that entail ignorance, like forgetting. Williamson's approach to this problem seems to be to regard forgetting as a kind of process, which on his view would rule it out, since only stative factive attitudes count as ways of knowing. The view argued for here includes non-stative attitudes like seeing-*that*, so cannot rule out forgetting based on its non-stative quality. One way of handling this is to deny that forgetting is a factive psychological attitude, but perhaps the absence of a factive attitude, like remembering in certain contexts. Another possible way of eliminating forgetting is by restricting those factive attitudes that are entailed by knowing to only those that entail belief in the target proposition. Forgetting that  $p$  does not entail that one believes that  $p$ , so this is a possible criterion for isolating only those factive attitudes that will work as ways of knowing. Neither of these options is explored here, as a proper treatment of this topic would be substantial and the goal here is merely to contrast Williamson's notion of ways of knowing with that of Cassam's.

case we can explain how one knows that  $p$ , by citing the fact that they  $\Phi$  that  $p$ . For Cassam, 'seeing that  $p$ ' is a way of knowing, since it explains how what is known, is known. The same goes for remembering. On Cassam's view a way of knowing is identified by the fact that it explains how one knows, not by being a factive stative attitude.

Though the two agree on the fact that seeing and remembering are both ways of knowing along with others, the reason why they count as ways of knowing is fundamentally different on each view. Cassam's view differs from Williamson's view in three important ways. On Cassam's account, even if some factive stative attitude entails knowledge, it doesn't follow from this fact alone that having such an attitude is a way of knowing. He uses the case of regret as an example. 'S regrets that  $p$ ' is a factive stative attitude, since the inference from 'S regrets that  $p$ ' to ' $p$ ' is deductively valid, and 'regret' can be read in a stative way. However, as Cassam points out, we normally wouldn't regard regretting that  $p$  as a way of knowing that  $p$ , and it's questionable whether it would fit Cassam's criterion of providing a satisfactory answer to how one knows that  $p$  to claim that one regrets it. So, the entailment doesn't necessarily give us any reason to regard such an attitude as a way of knowing. That being said, this argument isn't completely convincing, since it is possible to conceive of a case in which one might use a sense of regret in this way. If someone asks you, "How do you know that Albert had help with the test?" and you reply with "Because I regret helping him", feeling bad for being an accomplice of Albert's in helping him cheat on the test, you are in sense asserting your knowledge that Albert had help with the test.

Williamson could also respond by noting that there is also the fact that regretting that  $p$  entails remembering that  $p$ , and on Cassam's view remembering that  $p$ , for appropriate substitutions of  $p$ , would count as a way

of knowing that  $p$ .<sup>71</sup> Thus, even though regretting may not be a way itself of knowing that  $p$ , it is parasitic on a way of knowing, namely, remembering that  $p$ .

The second difference to note on Cassam's view is that if  $\Phi$  is a way of knowing, then the sentence 'S  $\Phi$ 's that  $p$ ' need not entail 'S knows that  $p$ '.

Explanations for how one knows need not be entailing explanations.

Cassam's reasoning on this is that the explanatory view of knowing is much less restrictive than Williamson's account and allows for common examples of knowledge explanations since they can satisfactorily explain how one knows. He offers the example of having read in the newspaper that Quine was born in Akron, Ohio. Having read that Quine was born in Akron, according to Cassam is a way of knowing that Quine was born in Akron, since saying, "I read it in the newspaper" is a perfectly acceptable answer to the question, "How do you know that Quine was born in Akron?"

Admittedly, this is a much looser view than Williamson's, since 'I read in the paper that Quine was born in Akron' certainly does not entail 'I know that Quine was born in Akron'. That factive attitudes like 'seeing that  $p$ ' are ways of knowing even if it is not generally true that 'S  $\Phi$ 's that  $p$ ' entails 'S knows that  $p$ ' where  $\Phi$  is a way of knowing, I'm in agreement with Cassam.

However, our reasons differ slightly as will be made much clearer in the last section. For now, it will suffice to say that it is not necessary that any particular factive attitude entail knowing in order for a subject's having that factive attitude to explain the way in which that subject knows. On Cassam's account, a way of knowing need only provide a satisfactory explanation of how one knows.

---

<sup>71</sup> Unger (1972) holds that regretting entails knowing, and Ryle argued that regretting entails remembering. See Ryle (1949).

Lastly, Cassam argues that if  $\Phi$  is a way of knowing, then  $\Phi$  need not be a propositional attitude. On Cassam's account non-propositional seeing can suffice for knowing. As he says,

Ways of knowing needn't be propositional attitudes. I can know that there is a bittern at the bottom of the garden by seeing it but this kind of seeing isn't propositional (Cassam, 2009, p. 114).

It is important to note here that the type of knowledge that Cassam is concerned with is propositional knowledge. He is not making reference to knowledge by acquaintance or any kind of knowledge-wh, the expression of which in ordinary language might not strictly take a propositional form, though these other kinds of knowledge are not excluded in principle by Cassam's account. His examples of knowledge are all examples of propositional knowledge, which makes this last claim somewhat more difficult to accept. In fact, on this point I'm inclined to disagree with Cassam for the following reasons. First, it isn't clear to me just how one can acquire propositional knowledge without there being such a propositional attitude. The presence of propositional content seems to require a propositional attitude appropriate for grasping such content, and it isn't clear just how that is done in the absence of any propositional attitude. There are views out there that attempt to articulate a way in which one's non-epistemic seeing can "build-up" as it were, to one's propositional knowledge but it isn't argued in such views, as far as I know, that when one does have propositional knowledge that  $p$ , there need be no corresponding propositional attitude to  $p$ . Cassam could reply that he is not claiming that there is no relevant propositional attitude, only that the non-propositional (objectual) seeing of a particular can count as a way of knowing. However, if I say, "I know there is a bittern at the bottom of the garden," I may know this because I can see it, but surely it follows that I can see that there is a bittern

at the bottom of the garden. For this particular claim of the explanatory view to carry the weight it is meant to carry, we might require that one's knowing by seeing to suffice as an explanation of how one knows where there is no propositional attitude that can also do the explaining. And it seems that in any case where simple objectual seeing suffices for an explanation of knowing, there is always a propositional attitude there to do the same work. Another reason to reject this last claim of Cassam's is that if one holds that knowledge entails belief – and this is practically universally held to be true – then we have a problem of how one's belief is formed in such cases. As Dretske pointed out, non-epistemic seeing – the kind of seeing Cassam is using in his example – has zero belief content. My seeing object *o* does not entail my belief that *p*, for any proposition *p*. Thus, one could see object *o* and not believe that there is an *o*. If seeing *o* is a way of knowing, say, that there is an *o*, then the belief that there is an *o* (if there is one), in such a case could be completely anomalous. The problem here is explaining where the belief that there is an *o* comes from. At least, if we hold that in order for one to claim that one knows by perception, they must be epistemically seeing that something is the case, which implies some kind of non-epistemic seeing of course, then we are safe in terms of how one acquired the belief. This might only be a special problem for perceptual knowledge, and there may be recourse to other ways of knowing that do not require one to have a factive attitude to some proposition that Cassam can exploit, but I'm inclined to think there will be problems with those as well.

In summary, Cassam's view differs in important ways from Williamson's view in terms of what counts as a way of knowing. For Williamson, what exactly constitutes a way of knowing is not totally clear, but there are exemplars such as seeing and remembering, and having a factive stative

attitude is a necessary condition for knowing. The agreement between the view outlined here and Williamson's is that having a factive attitude (stative or non-stative) is necessary for knowing. For Cassam, a way of knowing is identified by giving a satisfactory answer to the question of how one knows. We saw that on Williamson's view, if  $\Phi$  is a way of knowing that  $p$ , then it must entail knowledge. This view was found too stringent, since there are factive attitudes that seem to be perfectly acceptable ways of knowing that  $p$ , but do not entail knowing, like remembering. However, this does not rule against the view that having a factive attitude is a way of knowing or that having a factive attitude is a necessary condition for knowing. We saw that Cassam's view though much more flexible than Williamson's in what it will count as a way of knowing, has two claims that seem to be problematic, the one only slightly, the other much more so. The first was that even if some factive attitude does entail knowledge, it does not follow that it necessarily figures as a way of knowing. I think this is problematic for particular cases, but doesn't pose any real general problem for the view. It will ultimately depend on how we are to understand what a way of knowing is. The other problem is the idea that knowing that  $p$  does not require having a factive propositional attitude. That is, one can know that  $p$ , and the way in which one knows that  $p$  does not entail that one has a factive propositional attitude to  $p$ . This seems much more problematic. In fact, as I will argue in the last section, having a factive attitude to  $p$ , is a necessary condition for knowledge, and this goes hand-in-hand with the specific way in which one knows in any given case. I agree with Cassam that our explanations for how we know do not need to entail our knowing, but need only be one of a number of possible ways in which we can know. These ways of knowing are entailed by the fact that one knows in any case in which one has knowledge. We'll see in the

final section that this fact reveals something about the nature of propositional knowledge in general.

## 6.2 Explanation as Metaphysical Relation

On the Rylean view 'know' is a generic term for the capacity a subject has to get things right. The fact that the verb is a "highly determinable" dispositional term alludes to the fact that there are various ways in which that capacity can be exercised. The question Ryle was attempting to answer and which is pertinent to our discussion is about the logical relation between the two types of statements: episodic reports and dispositional statements. Now, one who holds the entailment theses discussed in the preceding chapters on remembering and seeing, like Williamson, will claim that the logical relation between these types of statements is one of entailment. Sentences of the form 'S sees that  $p$ ' or 'S remembers that  $p$ ' entail 'S knows that  $p$ ' and even 'S believes that  $p$ '. If it were the case that sentences like 'S sees that  $p$ ' are about mental states and not particular cognitive events, then we might think that this indicates a specific type of metaphysical relation between the two. On the other hand, if sentences like 'S sees that  $p$ ' are not about states but particular occurrences, that is, they act much more like episodic reports of the individual rather than dispositional statements, then the metaphysical relation between what these types of statements refer to might be thought to be something different. So, there are two issues here. One is the question of the logical relation between these types of sentences and the other is the question of the metaphysical relation between the types of mental entities these sentences are about. It is tempting to think that if both types of sentences 'S sees that  $p$ ' and 'S knows that  $p$ ' are about types of mental states, then the relation here is one of determination. That is, the

generic factive attitude of knowing is just a highly determinable mental state of which there are more determinate types—specific types of states like ‘seeing that’ and ‘remembering that’. If the logical relation between the two types of sentences is one of entailment, then one might expect the parallel metaphysical relation between the two types of states to be one of determination. This would be a natural fit. There is a necessary connection between a determinable property type and any determinate of that type. However, in light of the discussions of the previous chapters, and as other authors have pointed out (Cassam being one of them) it should be pretty obvious at this point, that this way of thinking about the relation between knowing and specific factive attitudes cannot be right. Williamson seems to take just this line though. Given the analogies he uses to illuminate the relation between specific factive attitudes and knowledge, like the relation of ‘being colored’ to ‘being red’, it is clear that this view is meant to be thought of in terms of something like the determination relation. Even Ryle’s use of the phrase “highly determinable” seems to push in this direction. However, I want to suggest caution here. The question is whether the determination relation is appropriate given the fact that the logical relation between the two types of sentences is not necessarily one of entailment.

Consider the example Williamson gives of the properties ‘being colored’ and ‘being red’. The argument here is that knowing and specific factive attitudes like ‘seeing that’ stand to one another in the same way the properties ‘being colored’ and ‘being red’ stand to one another. The relation between the property types ‘being colored’ and ‘being red’ is one of determination. Being red is a specific way of being colored. That is, an object’s being red determines its property of being colored. Williamson’s suggestion through the use of this analogy is that factive attitudes like ‘seeing that’ are



determinates of knowing. So, the condition that 'S sees that  $p$ ' determines the condition that 'S knows that  $p$ '. Thus, we can say that 'seeing that' is a more specific way of knowing. The problem is that there is a necessary connection between determinable property types and their determinates.<sup>72</sup> An object cannot be red without being colored. That is to say, sentences of the form 'O is red' entail sentences of the form 'O is colored'. But we've seen that this is not the case with remembering and knowing. If the arguments in the preceding chapters are correct, then sentences of the form 'S  $\Phi$ 's that  $p$ ' where  $\Phi$  is a factive mental state operator do not necessarily entail sentences of the form 'S knows that  $p$ '. Thus, remembering and knowing cannot stand in such a relation. On the other hand, seeing that  $p$  does entail knowing that  $p$ , but in this case we have two different types of statements, one of which refers to a mental occurrence, while the other expresses a type of fact. The logical relation between the two sentences 'S sees that  $p$ ' and 'S knows that  $p$ ' may be entailment but it certainly isn't clear that the metaphysical relation between seeing and knowing is one of determination. Determination cannot be the right type of relation that in general obtains between knowing and the specific factive psychological attitudes that count as ways of knowing.

Given that determination fails, one might opt for another type of relation such as the realization relation. It might be argued that specific factive attitudes like 'seeing that  $p$ ' realize the general factive mental state of knowing.<sup>73</sup> However, it is hard to see given the attitude externalist's metaphysical commitments how this can work. The realization relation is typically employed in discussions about the relation that might hold

---

<sup>72</sup> Funkhouser has a great discussion of this relation in his (2006).

<sup>73</sup> French actually suggests in a recent paper that this might be one way to construe Williamson's view, but the arguments here weigh heavily against this interpretation in my opinion. See French (2014)

between mental and physical properties, though it is not exclusively used in such contexts. However, there is a general understanding of the relation that seems to be the following. Realizers, whatever their nature, tend to realize general property types, of which they are particular instances. For example, we might think of the general property type 'being a liquid' or 'being brown'. These are generic properties that can be instantiated in several ways, but one way in which they might be instantiated is by being realized by some physical substance or object. We could think of the coffee in my cup as realizing both property types 'being a liquid' and 'being brown'. But in this case, the realizer is a particular substance, in this case the coffee in my cup. And in most cases, where the realization relation is recognized, what does the realizing is considered to be a kind of particular, a token or an instance of something.<sup>74</sup> However, the attitude externalist view cannot make this concession when it comes to mental states. Mental states are generic in nature, and do not admit of token instances. Thus, if knowing is a mental state, then it is difficult to see how that state is realized, if the realizer is supposed to be a token instance of that state. Realization seems to carry with it some metaphysical implications that do not necessarily seem consistent with what has been said about the attitude externalist view.

So, where does this leave us? What is the right relation between the state of knowing and specific factive attitudes? One point here is fairly obvious, and is that the logic of statements like 'S sees that p' and 'S knows that p' or 'S believes that p' at least stand in an explanatory relation to one another. This is Cassam's point. I want to suggest here that the explanatory relation that

---

<sup>74</sup> Obviously, there is much room to debate here. Metaphysical discussions of realization are much more complicated than the example given here, but there is a general tendency to think of realizers as particulars or tokens of that which they realize. Some have argued that types can realize other types, but this view, I think, is not the standard view and has its own problems. See Audi (2012) for an argument that considers this latter option.

the types of sentences have to one another *is* the metaphysical relation that the specific occurrences/states have to one another. Fact-like entities can stand in an explanatory relation to one another. And this is all there is as regards any relation between these types of mental state types. The fact that one explains the other can be thought of as a metaphysical relation that obtains between them. The same type of relation exists between specific mental events and mental states. 'Know' is a highly determinable dispositional verb, but the state itself does not stand in a determinable-determinate relation with other states, nor is it realized by other states. Determination and realization are not quite the right types of relations to obtain between the state of knowing and specific factive attitudes. The suggestion that we consider explanation as a metaphysical relation might seem like a poor substitution for determination and realization, or perhaps a weaker relation, but in many ways makes much more sense given the overall dialectic of the thesis. The relation that obtains between the general mental state of knowing and any specific factive attitude just is an explanatory relation. Mental states, like knowing, are in essence just certain sorts of facts that are true of an individual in any given case, and there is nothing shocking about saying that specific events, that is, specific concrete events, play an explanatory role in describing certain facts of any specific case. That is a natural function of concrete events – they explain the facts. What explains the fact that there is water all over the kitchen floor? Someone dropped a glass of water. The same goes with mental states like knowing and cognitive events like seeing. How is it that S knows that *p*? S saw that *p*. The logical relation between these types of statements is not all that puzzling. It is one of explanation. The trick here is to realize that the explanatory relation between sentences like 'S sees that *p*' and 'S knows that

$p'$  is the metaphysical relation that obtains between the mental occurrence described by *sees-that* and the mental state described by *knows-that*.

### 6.3 Knowing as a Disjunctive Kind: The Multiformity Principle

We saw earlier that knowing that  $p$  entails an open-ended disjunction of possible factive attitudes. That is, the claim 'S knows that  $p$  by seeing that  $p$ ' only commits us to the general claim 'If S knows that  $p$ , then S either sees that  $p$ , or remembers that  $p$ , or...', where the disjunction is open-ended but not infinite. This is entirely consistent with what has been said up to this point, and I think this is right. We now need to focus on this point, since I take this fact to indicate something fundamental about propositional knowledge in general. This fact, I think, reveals a fundamental epistemological principle, I call the *multiformity principle*, and it states that knowing always comes in specific ways, that there is no bare knowledge.<sup>75</sup> We could equally as well state the principle in the negative and refer to it as *the principle of no bare knowledge*, but the positive description, I think, conveys the point in precisely the right light. In a colloquial manner, we might just say that if one knows that such-and-such is the case, then there must be a specific way in which they know. We can formally state the principle by taking a look at one of Williamson's central claims, call it (WC).

(WC) There is a mental state being in which is both necessary and sufficient for knowing.

We can understand this claim as involving two constituent claims.

Schematically, we might represent this in the following way.

---

<sup>75</sup> The notion here is adapted from Kallestrup (2013) and here, I'm specifically talking about propositional knowledge.

Let,  $p$  stand for a true proposition.

Let,  $K$  be the standard modal operator, understood as 'it is known that', and

Let, the Greek letters ( $\Phi, X, \Psi \dots$ ) stand for ways of knowing that  $p$ , where we might understand ways of knowing as having specific factive attitudes like seeing-*that* or remembering-*that*. (WC) is then equivalent to the conjunction of (1) and (2).

- 1)  $Kp$  entails ( $\Phi p$  or  $Xp$  or...), where the disjunction is open-ended but not infinite.
- 2) [ $(\Phi p$  entails  $Kp$ ) and ( $Xp$  entails  $Kp$ ) and...]

The arguments of this thesis have attempted to show that (2) is false.

However, no such attempt has been made for (1). In fact, (1) is the formal expression of this principle. The principle, in effect says that if  $S$  knows that  $p$ , then there is some specific way in which  $S$  knows. There is no knowledge simpliciter. Knowledge is always had in some specific way by a subject. (1) simply states that in any case in which a subject knows, such knowledge entails the disjunction of all possible ways in which that subject can know.

Many theorists treat the question of how (or, the way in which) a subject knows as theoretically independent of the question of whether the subject knows. I submit that this is in large part the very reason why defining knowledge has proven to be so difficult. It is deceptively simple to ask, "What is knowledge?" and our attempts to answer it have traditionally taken the form of a conceptual analysis of the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for knowing. As any reader of epistemology knows, this program has met some quite serious challenges. But perhaps the simplicity and the ease with which we can ask this question, in a sense, belies the intricacy of the question itself. Perhaps we just cannot get at the nature of

knowing through a direct approach. Perhaps this question is only answered by first asking another question—*how* do we know what we know? The priority of questions might be important here. Cassam touches on just this point in arguing that the notion of ‘ways of knowing’ might help elucidate our knowledge of knowledge itself. If giving necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge fails programmatically, that certainly doesn’t mean we will never be able to give any kind of analysis of knowledge, just that the analysis will be of a non-standard kind, and the relevance of the question, “How do you know that *p*?” just might be central to providing such an analysis. He says, “At the very least it helps by showing that there are questions of the form ‘What is *X*?’ that don’t call for an analysis of the concept of an *X*” (Cassam, 2009, p. 111). In fact, this is precisely what ordinary language philosophers like Ryle and Wittgenstein were driving at. Of course, inquiring into how a subject knows what they know seems to presuppose the very knowledge that is the subject of inquiry.

Understandably, this approach might be met with some resistance by those more inclined to accept a skeptical perspective on knowledge in general. But even the skeptic could be satisfied with this approach, since we could just caveat that we have this presumption. The import of the multiformity principle is that it forces us to acknowledge that answering the question of *how* we know first it seems, is necessary for answering the question of *what* knowing is. And this is more than just a pragmatic attempt to dissolve the question of what knowledge is, since the point is both deeply metaphysical and about the logic of the statements we use to talk about knowledge. The principle of the multiformity of knowledge captures this intuition by suggesting that to understand the nature of knowledge, one needs to understand the ways in which knowledge is had. For, its nature is essentially multiform. On this approach, to understand the question ‘What is

knowledge?’ is to understand that knowledge is essentially a disjunctive kind. To ask what knowledge is just *is* to ask how or in what ways do knowers know.

One way of understanding this important principle is by juxtaposing knowledge, which is multiform, against another epistemic condition like belief, which is quite uniform. The insight that we tend to ask how one knows and why one believes, I think reveals a very important point, which is quite fundamental to our understanding of what knowing is. Though Ryle did not explicate things in quite the way I will, I think we can make a rough pass at differentiating between the two in the following way. If for a moment we regard an individual subject as merely a cognitive system, we might say that capacities are those dispositional properties the system has in virtue of its intrinsic properties, whereas the system’s tendencies are those dispositional properties it has, which are not merely the result of its intrinsic properties, but depend crucially upon the system’s history of interaction with its environment. Presumably, it is fair to say that that which we have a capacity for is also something that we have a tendency for. So, in this sense one is subsumed under the other. However, there is a sense in which it is somewhat infelicitous, at least, to say that one has a capacity to believe and a tendency to know. The reason seems to have to do with the fact that the latter seems to include more than is necessary in describing what the disposition to know is, and the former seems to leave something out. A cognitive system given at least the possibility of a minimal set of appropriate inputs can be described as having certain capacities, whereas for that system to have certain tendencies such inputs would have to be more than just possible—they would have to be actual and would have to be numerous. So, the idea that a cognitive system has the capacity to know (or the liability of

getting things wrong) is a consequence of the intrinsic properties of the system (even if that system is defined to include elements of its environment)<sup>76</sup>. The idea that a cognitive system has the tendency/proneness to believe or disbelieve or even abstain from judging altogether, requires that that system has already engaged cognitively with its environment (or another system for which it is designed to engage). The thought here is that the notion of a tendency implies a history of interaction and we cannot really attribute such a tendency absent any history or behavior indicating the presence of such a disposition, whereas we can attribute a certain capacity to a system independent of any history of its behavior. Capacities are in a way merely design-dependent features of the system and determined as such, but tendencies while also design dependent are only historically determined. In this sense then, it seems appropriate to say that we are born knowers, and only become believers over time.

Returning to the point made earlier that we do not typically ask the question, “*How* do you believe that such-and-such?” but most often phrase the relevant interrogative as “*why* do you believe that such-and-such?” I said that Ryle’s take on this was that the difference is one of an inquiry into the *methods* of knowing as opposed to *reasons* for believing. The reason for this is that Ryle associated verbs like ‘know’ and its cognates with skill words in general. And just as there is no overarching skill in general by which one may be skilled in any number of specific ways, there is no overarching way of knowing by which we know any particular fact. Like being skilled, knowing is inherently disjunctive in nature.<sup>77</sup> No one ever says “He is really

---

<sup>76</sup> Extended cognition hypotheses are perfectly acceptable here.

<sup>77</sup> It is interesting to note that there is a bit of overlap and similarity of thought here between the knowledge first camp and the virtue-theoretic camp. Even more interesting, though not surprising, is that the intersection of the two is in Ryle.



skilled” and just leaves it at that. The statement cries out for some kind of completion. One wants to respond, “At what?” Knowing is the same. One doesn’t just know that  $p$ . If one knows that  $p$ , then there is a specific way in which one knows. However, the same is not true of all epistemic conditions. Belief, on the contrary, is uniform. There is no corresponding multiformity principle for belief. That is, there are no *ways of believing*. One just either believes that  $p$  or does not without there being any specifiable way in which one has that belief. Belief is not a disjunctive kind. The multiformity claim for knowledge is not a claim about grounds or a kind of basis for knowledge in a given case. One might be tempted to argue that belief is also multiform since one may come to believe that  $p$  on the basis of perception or form the belief that  $p$  on the grounds that one remembers that  $p$ . But the view I’m advocating here does not think of ‘ways of knowing’ in this way. The difference is borne out to some extent by the ways in which we can paraphrase certain uses of the verbs ‘believe’ and ‘know’. One way to get a grip on the claim that knowledge is multiform is to recognize that there are several factive verbs for which ‘know’ is often an acceptable paraphrase. For example, ‘S remembers that  $p$ ’, in most cases, can be paraphrased as ‘S knows that  $p$ ’. This is not the case with belief. There are no non-factive verbs (since belief is non-factive) for which ‘believe’ is typically an acceptable paraphrase. There may be different reasons for which one believes that  $p$  (e.g. S believes that  $p$  because S seems to remember that  $p$ ), but these are not strictly ‘ways of believing’.

Both Cassam and Williamson will agree with the multiformity principle to one extent or another, but there is the question of how exactly to state it. For Cassam, having a factive attitude is not necessary for knowing. So, if it is formulated in such a way that each way of knowing is only thought of as a

factive attitude, then Cassam would reject the principle. For Williamson, the principle is acceptable stated as such, but incomplete. As I argued earlier, I'm inclined to think that insofar as we're talking about propositional knowledge, there must be some corresponding propositional attitude. However, there is one objection to the principle that might be raised by Cassam, and that has to do with its universal application to all cases of propositional knowledge. Cassam has argued that despite the general epistemological value in investigating ways of knowing and seeing their analysis as a fundamental part of a theory of knowledge, it is not necessarily true that if one knows, then there must be a way in which one knows. He cites Hampshire's famous case of knowing that one is in pain, but not being able to give an answer to how one knows that one is in pain. Though I understand the example and the apparently paradoxical situation it represents, I must admit I've never been persuaded that it actually presents a problem. By their own admission, the subject that is in pain, or has a certain sensation is already in the best possible position to know that they are in pain. This is precisely what makes the question, "How do you know that you are in pain?" conversationally inappropriate. But therein also lies the answer to the question itself. Being in the best possible position to know that  $p$ , surely is a way of knowing that  $p$ . We may not have a term or phrase for being in such a position, but that is beside the point. Clearly, in such cases of self-knowledge, the subject could not be in a better position to have such knowledge, and by Cassam's own theory, this is surely a satisfactory answer to the how question. This does, of course, leave open the question of whether or not we would attribute some kind of propositional attitude to the subject, which on Williamson's view, and the one endorsed here is required for propositional knowledge. But again, just because we do not have a term or phrase for such a propositional attitude, does not mean there is no such

attitude. Cases like this are aberrant cases and do, in their own right, require attention, but I see nothing in them, in principle that calls the multiformity principle into question.

## Concluding Remarks

I mentioned in the introduction of this chapter that the multiformity principle might have some interesting applications to various problems in current epistemology. Therefore, I'd like to conclude by discussing one of those possible applications. The Gettier problem, ever since Gettier published his famous paper, has become a perennial problem in contemporary epistemology. Much has been written about this problem: solutions have been proposed, arguments trying to dissolve the problem have been proposed and arguments against its validity as a real problem for the JTB theory have been proposed. One of the latest takes on just what drives the intuition that in a Gettier scenario something has gone afoul is that there is some kind of knowledge undermining luck involved in such cases. Pritchard has developed a very sophisticated approach to handling the Gettier problem and Gettier-like problems by advocating for a kind of anti-luck epistemology.<sup>78</sup> There certainly is in most Gettier scenarios some kind of undermining luck involved and no doubt an approach like Pritchard's is an appropriate way to address the problem of lucky knowledge in such cases. However, I'd like to propose an alternative way of conceiving of Gettier cases and what exactly is going wrong in such cases. A classic example of a Gettier case is the Roddy case. The case roughly goes like this. You are driving through the countryside and pass some green pastures with what

---

<sup>78</sup> See Pritchard (2005, 2007).

appear to be sheep in them. You have no reason to suspect that anything is wrong with your perceptual faculties, and there is also no reason to suspect that there is any funny business going on in the environment. You do not suspect that anyone is putting fake sheep in the fields to fool passers-by into thinking that there are sheep. In fact, there is nothing deceptive going on in the environment and there are sheep in the field. However, what you take to be a sheep, is actually a big dog, that from your vantage point happens to look like a sheep. You form the belief that there is a sheep in the field based on your perception of what is actually a dog. But just by chance, there happens to be a sheep in that particular field, only your view of it is obstructed by the dog, since it is directly behind the dog. Thus, your belief that there is a sheep in the field is true. Now, according to the standard justified true belief account of knowledge, as long as you have a justified true belief that there is a sheep in the field, you know that there is a sheep in the field. In this case, it is quite reasonable to say that your belief that there is a sheep in the field is justified given the fact that you can normally rely on your ability to detect sheep. And your belief is true, since there is a sheep in the field. Thus, you have a justified true belief that there is a sheep in the field. However, it isn't clear that in this case you know that there is a sheep in the field. This is roughly how the case goes.

The intuition that in such a case a person would lack knowledge despite having a justified true belief is shared by many. Intuitions, of course, vary but it is reasonable to object to the claim that one knows in such a case. So much for the JTB theory of knowledge. Now, the anti-luck theorist is going to argue that the reason why one lacks knowledge in such cases is due to the presence of a kind of luck in the situation. Pritchard refers to this as veritic luck. It is just lucky that you have a true belief in this case, since had there

not been a sheep in the field behind the dog, you would have still believed (falsely) that there is a sheep in the field. This is a plausible explanation for why we might not regard such a case as a case of knowing. However, there is another way of looking at this case. If the multiformity principle is correct, then there is always a way in which one knows when one knows. So, if you do have knowledge in a Gettier case, then there must be a way in which you know. But how exactly does the subject know in the case just described? Is there a way of knowing that we can point to in such cases to explain the fact that the subject knows? In what way could you know that there is a sheep in the field? What might just be going on in Gettier cases, what drives the intuition that something is wrong in such cases is just the fact that we cannot see the way in which the subject is supposed to have knowledge. We implicitly endorse the multiformity principle in our everyday knowledge attributions, and in such cases, it strikes us as obviously problematic that the subject knows, for the very reason that such knowledge is not explained by anything. If the subject knows in the Roddy case, then the subject would appear to have bare knowledge, that is, she would know without there being a specific way in which she knows. This, I think, just strikes us as incorrect. Underlying this intuition is the fact that we take knowledge to be the kind of thing for which there is some kind of explanation possible. If such an explanation is not possible, it strikes us problematic to attribute knowledge. The multiformity principle explains the intuition that something is wrong in Gettier cases, because the exact thing that is absent from such cases is a way of knowing. It may be the case that we also find lucky knowledge unacceptable. So, Pritchard's approach seems a viable way of understanding such cases. However, it could just be that being lucky is not a way of knowing.

## References

- ADAMS, F. 2011. Husker du? *Philosophical Studies*, 153, 81-94.
- ALM-ARVIUS, C. 1993. *The English verb see: A study in multiple meaning*, Gothenburg, Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.
- ARISTOTLE 1960. *Metaphysics*, Univ of Michigan Pr.
- AUDI, P. 2012. Properties, Powers, and the Subset Account of Realization. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 84, 654-674.
- AUDI, R. 1998. *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, Routledge.
- BENNETT, J. 1989. *Events and Their Names*, Oxford University Press Uk.
- BERNECKER, S. 2010. *Memory: A Philosophical Study*, Oxford University Press.
- BREWER, B. (2011). *Perception and its objects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BRUECKNER, A. 2002. Williamson on the primeness of knowing. *Analysis*, 62, 197-202.
- BRUECKNER, A. L. 1995. The characteristic thesis of anti-individualism. *Analysis*, 55, 146-48.
- BURGE, T. 1986. Individualism and psychology. *Philosophical Review*, 95, 3-45.
- BURGE, T. 1993. Mind-body causation and explanatory practice. In: HEIL, J. & MELE, A. R. (eds.) *Mental Causation*. Oxford University Press.
- BURGE, T. 1995. Intentional properties and causation. In: MACDONALD, C. & MACDONALD, G. F. (eds.) *Philosophy of Psychology: Debates About Psychological Explanation*. Blackwell.
- BURGE, T. 2005. Disjunctivism and perceptual psychology. *Philosophical Topics*, 33, 1-78.
- BURGE, T. 2010. *Origins of Objectivity*, Oup Oxford.
- BYRNE, A. & LOGUE, H. 2009. *Disjunctivism: Contemporary Readings*, MIT Press.

- CASSAM, Q. 2007. Ways of Knowing. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 107, 339 - 358.
- CASSAM, Q. 2009. What is Knowledge? *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*, 84, 101-.
- CHISHOLM, R. 1970. Events and propositions. *Noûs*, 4, 15-24.
- CHISHOLM, R. M. 1976. *Person and Object: A Metaphysical Study*, Open Court.
- CRANE, T. (2006). Is there a perceptual relation? In T. S. Gendler & J. Hawthorne (Eds.), *Perceptual experience* (pp. 126–146). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DAVIDSON, D. 1963. Actions, reasons, and causes. *Journal of Philosophy*, 60, 685-700.
- DAVIDSON, D. 1967. The logical form of action sentences. In: RESCHER, N. (ed.) *The Logic of Decision and Action*. University of Pittsburgh Press.
- DAVIDSON, D. 1970. Events and particulars. *Noûs*, 4, 25-32.
- DAVIDSON, D. 1980. *Essays on Actions and Events*, Oxford University Press.
- DRETSKE, F. I. 1969. *Seeing and knowing*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- FODOR, J. A. 1980. Methodological solipsism considered as a research strategy in cognitive psychology. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 3, 63.
- FODOR, J. A. 1987. *Psychosemantics: The Problem of Meaning in the Philosophy of Mind*, MIT Press.
- FODOR, J. A. 1991. A modal argument for narrow content. *Journal of Philosophy*, 88, 5-26.
- FRENCH, C. 2012. Does Propositional Seeing Entail Propositional Knowledge? *Theoria*, 78, 115-127.
- FRENCH, C. 2013. Perceptual Experience and Seeing that P. *Synthese*, 190, 1735-1751.
- FRENCH, C. 2014. Knowledge and Ways of Knowing. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 114, 353-364.

- FRICKER, E. 2009. Is knowing a state of mind? The case against. In: PRITCHARD, D. & GREENOUGH, P. (eds.) *Williamson on Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- FUNKHOUSER, E. 2006. The Determinable-Determinate Relation. *Noûs*, 40, 548-569.
- GINET, C. 1988. Memory. In: PARKINSON, G. H. R. (ed.) *The Handbook of Western Philosophy*. New York: Macmillan.
- GISBORNE, N. 2010. *The event structure of perception verbs*, Oxford University Press Oxford.
- HINTON, J. M. 1967. Visual experiences. *Mind*, 76, 217-227.
- HYMAN, J. 2006. Knowledge and evidence. *Mind*, 115, 891-916.
- KALLESTRUP, J. 2009. Knowledge-wh and the problem of convergent knowledge. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 78, 468-476.
- KALLESTRUP, J. 2013. No bare knowledge. *Logique et Analyse*, 56, 333-345.
- KAPLAN, D. 1977. Demonstratives. In: ALMOG, J., PERRY, J. & WETTSTEIN, H. (eds.) *Themes From Kaplan*. Oxford University Press.
- KENNY, A. 2003. *Action, emotion and will*, Routledge.
- KIM, J. 1993. *Supervenience and Mind*, Cambridge University Press.
- LEWIS, D. 1970a. An argument for the identity theory. *Journal of Philosophy*, 63, 17-25.
- LEWIS, D. 1970b. How to define theoretical terms. *Journal of Philosophy*, 67, 427-446.
- LEWIS, D. 1979. Attitudes de dicto and de se. *Philosophical Review*, 88, 513-543.
- LOMBARD, L. B. 1986. *Events: A Metaphysical Study*, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- MALCOLM, N. 1963. *Knowledge and Certainty*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall.
- MARTIN, C. B. & DEUTSCHER, M. 1966. Remembering. *Philosophical Review*, 75, 161-96.
- MCDOWELL, J. (1996). *Mind and world*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



- MOON, A. 2013. Remembering entails knowing. *Synthese*, 190, 2717-2729.
- MOURELATOS, A. P. D. 1978. Events, processes, and states. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 2, 415 - 434.
- MYERS-SCHULZ, B. & SCHWITZGEBEL, E. 2013. Knowing That P without Believing That P. *Noûs*, 47, 371-384.
- NAGEL, J. 2013. Knowledge as a Mental State. *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, 4, 275-310.
- NOZICK, R. 1981. *Philosophical Explanations*, Harvard University Press.
- OWENS, J. 1987. In defense of a different doppelganger. *Philosophical Review*, 96, 521-54.
- OWENS, J. 1993. Content, causation, and psychophysical supervenience. *Philosophy of Science*, 60, 242-61.
- OWENS, J. 2007. Psychological externalism and the role of belief in the analysis of knowledge. In: GOLDBERG, S. (ed.) *Internalism and Externalism in Semantics and Epistemology*. Oxford University Press.
- PEACOCKE, C. (1983). *Sense and content: Experience, thought, and their relations*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- POLLOCK, J. 1970. *Knowledge and Justification*, Princeton University Press.
- PRITCHARD, D. 2005. *Epistemic Luck*, Clarendon Press.
- PRITCHARD, D. 2007. Anti-luck epistemology. *Synthese*, 158, 277-297.
- PRITCHARD, D. 2008. Sensitivity, safety, and anti-luck epistemology. In: GRECO, J. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Skepticism*. Oxford University Press.
- PRITCHARD, D. 2012. *Epistemological Disjunctivism*, Oxford University Press.
- PRITCHARD, D. & GREENOUGH, P. 2009. *Williamson on Knowledge*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- PUTNAM, H. 1975. The meaning of 'meaning'. *Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, 7, 131-193.
- RECANATI, F. 2016. Indexical Thought: The Communication Problem. In: GARCIA-CARPINTERO, M. & TORRE, S. (eds.) *About Oneself*.

- RUSSELL, B. 1921. *The Analysis of Mind*, Duke University Press.
- RYLE, G. 1949. *The Concept of Mind*, Hutchinson and Co.
- RYLE, G. 1953. Ordinary language. *Philosophical Review*, 62, 167-186.
- RYLE, G. 1954. *Dilemmas*, Cambridge [Eng.]University Press.
- RYLE, G. 1968. The thinking of thoughts: What is "le Penseur" doing?(University Lectures, University of Saskatchewan, 1968). G. Ryle, *Collected papers*, 2, 1929-1968.
- SAUNDERS, J. T. 1965. Does all memory imply factual memory? *Analysis*, 25, 109-115.
- SOSA, E. 2009. Timothy Williamson's Knowledge and its Limits. In: PRITCHARD, D. & GREENOUGH, P. (eds.) *Williamson on Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SOTERIOU, M. 2013. *The Mind's Construction: The Ontology of Mind and Mental Action*, Oup Oxford.
- STANLEY, J. & WILLIAMSON, T. 2001. Knowing how. *Journal of Philosophy*, 98, 411-444.
- STEUP, M. 1992. Memory. In: DANCY, J. & SOSA, E. (eds.) *A Companion to Epistemology*. Blackwell Reference.
- STEWART, H. 1997. *The Ontology of Mind: Events, Processes, and States*, Oxford University Press.
- STEWART, H. (2013). Processes, Continuants, and Individuals. *Mind*, 122 (487):fzt080.
- STICH, S. P. 1978. Autonomous psychology and the belief/desire thesis. *The Monist*, 61, 573-91.
- STOUT, R. (1997). Processes. *Philosophy* 72 (279):19-27.
- STOUT, R. (2003). The Life of a Process. In Guy Debrock (ed.), *Process Pragmatism*. Rodopi.
- UNGER, P. 1972. Propositional verbs and knowledge. *Journal of Philosophy*, 64, 301-312.
- VAIDYA, A. J. 2013. Nyāya Perceptual Theory: Disjunctivism or Anti-Individualism? *Philosophy East and West*, 63, 562-585.

WILLIAMSON, T. 1995. Is knowing a state of mind? *Mind*, 104, 533--65.

WILLIAMSON, T. 2000. *Knowledge and its Limits*, Oxford University Press.

WITTGENSTEIN, L., ANSCOMBE, G. E. M. & ANSCOMBE, G. E. M. 1958.  
*Philosophical investigations*, Blackwell Oxford.