

Spring 1-1-2015

How Justification Works

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HOW JUSTIFICATION WORKS

by

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A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Colorado in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
2015

This thesis entitled:
How Justification Works
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Chapman, Andrew David (Ph.D., Philosophy)

How Justification Works

Thesis directed by Professor Robert Hanna

Essential to our self-conception as rational human animals is that we are the makers and takers of reasons—we believe and act based on evidence. The project of determining exactly what this means for us is one of the central projects of philosophical epistemology. One dimension of this project that has been largely neglected, however, is how justification is supposed to play the specifically normative role that it's claimed to play. The project of this dissertation is to examine the specifically normative role of internalistic justification and to provide a positive theory for its nature and function.

When epistemologists claim that justification is normative, what they mean is that it is epistemically better, all things considered, to possess justification than to lack it. According to what I call the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity, the epistemic normativity of justification is to be explained in terms of justification's instrumental ability to bring about true beliefs. However, the Standard Picture, as I show, is fatally flawed and therefore cannot explain the epistemic value of justification. The question of how justification can play its properly normative role thus remains unanswered.

This dissertation proceeds in four parts. In the first part, I lay out, explicate, and analyze the target concept of the dissertation: justification. In the second part, I show how the Standard Picture has been claimed to be able to explain the epistemic normativity of justification and how it has failed to do so. In the third part, I lay out a number of adequacy conditions on a theory of the epistemic normativity of justification—conditions any plausible theory would need to satisfy in order to satisfy its explanatory task. In the fourth part I present a two-part positive theory of the epistemic normativity of justification. This theory relies on philosophical tools developed by Kant, Husserl, and Heidegger and presents a picture of justification as grounded not in an instrumental ability to bring about true beliefs, but in the intrinsically valuable role it plays in our self-consciously social lives.

*for Bob and Rob, who taught me how
and for Addison, who showed me why*

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There is a science which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature. Now this is not the same as any of the so-called special sciences; for none of these others treats universally of being as being. They cut off a part of being and investigate the attribute of this part; this is what the mathematical sciences for instance do. Now since we are seeking the first principles and the highest causes, clearly there must be some thing to which these belong in virtue of its own nature. If then those who sought the elements of existing things were seeking these same principles, it is necessary that the elements must be elements of being not by accident but just because it is being. Therefore it is of being as being that we also must grasp the first causes.

— Aristotle¹

If, now, we put the stress on the *intelligible* character of semantic innovation, a new parallelism may be seen between the domain of the narrative and that of metaphor. We insisted above on the very particular mode of *understanding* involved in the activity of following a story and we spoke in this regard of narrative understanding. And we have maintained the thesis that historical *explanation* in terms of laws, regular causes, functions, and structures is grafted onto this narrative understanding.

The same relation between understanding and explanation is to be observed in the domain of poetics. The act of understanding that would correspond in this domain to the ability to follow a story consists in grasping the semantic dynamism by virtue of which, in a metaphorical statement, a new semantic relevance emerges from the ruins of the semantic nonrelevance as this appears in a literal reading of the sentence. To understand is thus to perform or to repeat the discursive operation by which the semantic innovation is conveyed... My thesis here, just as in the case of the narrative function, is that explanation is not primary but secondary in relation to understanding. Explanation, conceived as a combinatory system of signs, hence as a semiotics, is built up on the basis of a first-order understanding bearing on discourse as an act that is both indivisible and capable of innovation. Just as the narrative structures brought out by explanation presuppose an understanding of the structuring act by which plot is produced, so the structures brought out by structural semiotics are based upon the structuring of discourse, whose dynamism and power of innovation are revealed by metaphor.

— P. Ricœur²

The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. “Whither is God?” he cried; “I will tell you. We have killed him—you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we need to light lanterns in the morning? So we hear nothing as yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? Do we smell nothing as yet of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.

— F. Nietzsche³

¹ Aristotle (2001) *Metaphysics* Bk. IV Pt. I

² Ricœur (2008) 9-10

The God of the theological theism is a being besides others and as such a part of the whole reality. He is certainly considered its most important part, but as a part and therefore as subjected to the structure of the whole. He is supposed to be beyond the ontological elements and categories which constitute reality. But every statement subjects him to them. He is seen as a self which has a world, as an ego which relates to a thought, as a cause which is separated from its effect, as having a definite space and endless time. He is a being, not being-itself...[He] deprives me of my subjectivity because he is all-powerful and all-knowing. I revolt and make *him* into an object, but the revolt fails and becomes desperate. God appears as the invincible tyrant, the being in contrast with whom all other beings are without freedom and subjectivity. He is equated with the recent tyrants who with the help of terror try to transform everything into a mere object, a thing among things, a cog in a machine they control. He becomes the model of everything against which Existentialism revolted. This is the God Nietzsche said had to be killed because nobody can tolerate being made into a mere object of absolute knowledge and absolute control. This is the deepest root of atheism. It is an atheism which is justified as the reaction against theological theism and its disturbing implications.

— P. Tillich⁴

I'll tell you about the driver who lives inside my head
 starts me up and stops me and puts me into bed
 he opens up my mouth when it's time for me to talk
 and fires up my legs when he wants me to walk
 keeps my eyes open for most of the day
 adds to my memories the things that people say
 when he makes decisions I don't have to wait
 but sometimes it seems that he's got too much on his plate

— T. Anastasio & T. Marshall⁵

Human beings are *condemned* to choice and action. Maybe you think you can avoid it, by resolutely standing still, refusing to act, refusing to move. But it's no use, for that will be something you have chosen to do, and then you will have acted after all. Choosing not to act makes not acting a kind of action, makes it something that you do.

— C. Korsgaard⁶

You can choose a ready guide in some celestial voice
 If you choose not to decide, you still have made a choice
 You can choose from phantom fears and kindness that can kill
 I will choose a path that's clear
 I will choose freewill

— G. Lee, A. Lifeson, & N. Peart⁷

³ Nietzsche (1974) §125

⁴ Tillich (2008) 184-5

⁵ Phish (nd)

⁶ Korsgaard (2008) 1

⁷ Rush (1980)

About two hundred years ago, the idea that truth was made rather than found began to take hold of the imagination of Europe. The French Revolution had shown that the whole vocabulary of social relations, and the whole spectrum of social institutions, could be replaced almost overnight. This precedent made utopian politics the rule rather than the exception among intellectuals. Utopian politics sets aside questions about both the will of God and the nature of man and dreams of creating a hitherto unknown form of society.

At about the same time, the Romantic poets were showing what happens when art is thought of no longer as imitation but, rather, as the artist's self-creation. The poets claimed for art the place in culture traditionally held by religion and philosophy, the place which the Enlightenment had claimed for science. The precedent the Romantics set lend initial plausibility to their claim. The actual role of novels, poems, plays, paintings, statues, and buildings in the social movements of the last century and a half has given it still greater plausibility.

— R. Rorty⁸



— L. v. Beethoven⁹

Finale. – The only philosophy which can be responsibly practiced in face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption. Knowledge has no light but that shed on the world by redemption: all else is reconstruction, mere technique. Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in the messianic light. To gain such perspectives without velleity or violence, entirely from felt contact with its objects – this alone is the task of thought. It is the simplest of all things, because the situation calls imperatively for such knowledge, indeed because consummate negativity, once squarely faced, delineates the mirror-image of its opposite. But it is also the utterly impossible thing, because it presupposes a standpoint removed, even though by a hair's breadth, from the scope of existence, whereas we well know that any possible knowledge must not only be first wrested from what is, if it shall hold good, but is also marked, for this very reason, by the same distortion and indigence which it seeks to escape. The more passionately thought denies its conditionality for the sake of the unconditional, the more unconsciously, and so calamitously, it is delivered up to the world. Even its own impossibility it must at last comprehend for the sake of the possible. But beside the demand thus placed on thought, the question of the reality or unreality of redemption itself hardly matters.

— T. Adorno¹⁰

⁸ Rorty (1989b) 3

⁹ Beethoven (1808) mvt. 1, mm. 1-12

¹⁰ Adorno (2006) §153

Preface

What is it like to be one of us?

This question, a reference to Thomas Nagel's famous "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" has, like Nagel's question, clear phenomenological implications. To explain what it is like to be something is first and foremost to explain that thing's phenomenology, its subjectivity, its first-personal perspective on itself and the world. Implicit in Nagel's question is the possibility that the phenomenology of one sort of creature might be radically different from that of another sort of creature. Nagel's answer to his own question is that, given a bat's different *type* of experiential apparatus (e.g., an apparatus including echolocation), it is in-principle impossible for us non-bats to understand what it is like to be a bat. Nagel's argument, along with those of Frank Jackson in "Epiphenomenal Qualia" and "What Mary Didn't Know" struck an important blow for what we might call a *phenomenology first* theoretical methodology in Anglo-American philosophy of mind in the second half of the 20th Century. It is not as though phenomenological data were absent from philosophical investigations of the mind before Nagel and Jackson; however, given the successes of non-phenomenological approaches to the study of mind (chief among them, the burgeoning neuroscientific approach), the burden of proof was seen as squarely on the shoulders of phenomenological investigations to prove their necessity or even their worth. Papers such as Nagel's and Jackson's didn't so much respond to the demand for methodological self-justification as ignore the demand altogether. The implicit thought seemed to be this: Our only contact with the world is phenomenological, and thus, any philosophical investigation into any phenomenon must begin from the phenomenological perspective. If reductionists or eliminativists about the mental wanted to show that there was some non-phenomenological starting-point for our investigations, such a project was up to them to motivate and show the

value of. Until such a time as the phenomenological could be shown to be useless or seriously problematic, however, we should not presume that our best evidence, our phenomenologies, was somehow faulty, confused, or otherwise second-rate as a source of evidence.

This meta-methodological turn in the philosophy of mind is actually a harkening-back to Kant's self-described Copernican Revolution in metaphysics. The Early Modern philosophical period saw valiant and varied attempts to justify the, at that time, relatively recent claim that epistemology was first philosophy, that it was only by starting with epistemological investigations that we could progress to considerations of metaphysics, ethics, and politics. These attempted justifications on the part of Early Modern philosophers, however, almost always took the form of meditations on our epistemic powers themselves. This is initially intuitive: To explain how our epistemic powers work, we ought to focus specifically on the workings of our epistemic powers. The hope was to be able to get to the problems of metaphysics (the really interesting problems!) via a solving of all possible epistemological problems. However, after nearly two centuries of properly epistemological failures, it was becoming obvious that the exigent philosophical projects lay not in epistemology, but somewhere else. Kant tells this same story as follows:

There was a time when metaphysics was called the **queen** of all the sciences, and if the will be taken for the deed, it deserved this title of honor, on account of the preeminent importance of its object. Now, in accordance with the fashion of the age, the queen proves despised on all sides; and the matron, outcast and forsaken, mourns like Hecuba...

In the beginning, under the administration of the dogmatists, her rule was **despotic**. Yet because her legislation still retained traces of ancient barbarism, this rule gradually degenerated through internal wars into complete **anarchy**; and the skeptics, a kind of nomads who abhor all permanent cultivation of the soil, shattered civil unity from time to time. But since there were fortunately only a few of them, they could not prevent the dogmatists from continually attempting to rebuild, though never according to a plan unanimously accepted among themselves. Once in recent times it even seemed as though an end would be put to all these controversies, and the lawfulness of all the competing claims would be completely decided, through a certain **physiology** of the human understanding (by the famous Locke); but it turned out that although the birth of the

purported queen was traced to the rabble of common experience and her pretensions would therefore have been rightly rendered suspicious, nevertheless she still asserted her claims, because in fact this **genealogy** was attributed to her falsely; thus metaphysics fell back into the same old worm-eaten **dogmatism**, and thus into the same position of contempt out of which the science was to have been extricated. Now after all paths (as we persuade ourselves) have been tried in vain, what rules is tedium and complete **indifferentism**, the mother of chaos and night in the sciences, but at the same time also the origin, or at least the prelude, of their incipient transformation and enlightenment, when through ill-applied effort they have become obscure, confused, and useless.¹

Kant's meta-methodological move, his Copernican Revolution, involved a recognition that epistemological concerns could not be solved before we knew the nature of both mind and world that were supposed to stand in epistemological relations to one another, but that such metaphysical investigations were not possible without a functioning cognitive-epistemological apparatus. Thus, *something* must be taken for granted, as a theoretical starting-point: either epistemology or metaphysics. Kant's Early Modern predecessors had taken for granted a particular picture of the nature of both mind and world, and this picture had led to nothing but frustration. Kant describes this frustration, as well as his proposed methodological hypothesis:

Up to now it has been assumed our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us. This would be just like the first thoughts of Copernicus, who, when he did not make good progress in the explanation of the celestial motions if he assumed that the entire celestial host revolves around the observer, tried to see if he might not have greater success if he made the observer revolve and left the stars at rest. Now in metaphysics we can try in a similar way regarding the **intuition** of objects. If intuition has to conform to the constitution of the objects, then I do not see how we can know anything of them *a priori*; but if the object (as an object of the senses) conforms to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, then I can very well represent this possibility to myself.²

¹ Kant (1999) Aviii-x

² *ibid* Bxvi-xvii

As is well known, Kant's methodological presuppositions led him to metaphysical conclusions in the form of his doctrine of Transcendental Idealism. However, one needn't be inclined toward idealism to recognize the power and brilliance of Kant's meta-methodological move. To begin a philosophical investigation by calling into question our phenomenological powers (especially via a radical skepticism about our epistemic faculties) is not only to doom any subsequent investigation, it is also to do so *unjustifiably*. For what could possibly provide us with justification for the methodological presupposition that our only source of justification is itself unjustifiable? Kant's methodology, then, and the one adopted by Nagel and Jackson, involves starting with the only thing we can possibly start with: phenomenology.

This dissertation is methodologically Kantian in this way: I start from the world as it appears to us and I see whether any sense can be made of this appearance. My particular concern herein is only one component of this appearance, but it is a foundational and manifestly central component: justification. To say that justification is a foundational and manifestly central component of appearance is to say that without justification, our phenomenal lives would be very different from how they in fact are. No doubt, there are creatures who possess phenomenologies, but who nevertheless lack the manifest justificational properties, structures, and objects that we possess. A mouse, for example, has a phenomenology, but is not *one of us* in terms of the justificational properties, structures, and objects made manifest in that particular mousey phenomenology. My claim here is that justification, as phenomenally present, is partially *constitutive of* our phenomenologies.

But who are *we* such that I can refer to *our* phenomenologies? In the opening paragraph of Robert Brandom magnum opus, *Making it Explicit*,³ Brandom lays out an answer that I herein plan to adopt:

‘We’ is said in many ways. We may be thee and me. We may be all that talks or all that moves, all that minds or all that matters. Since these boundaries are elastic, we have a task of demarcation: telling who or what we are, distinguishing ourselves from the other sorts of objects or organisms we find in our world. Saying who we are can contract to an empty exercise in self-congratulation—a ritual rehearsal of the endless, pitiable disabilities of clockworks, carrots, cows, and the clan across the river. Such a mean-spirited version of the demarcational enterprise is not forced on us by the way things are, however.

For what we are is made as much as found, decided as well as discovered. The sort of thing we are depends, in part, on what we take ourselves to be. One characteristic way we develop and make ourselves into what we are is by expressing, exploring, and clarifying our understanding of what we are. Arbitrary distinctions of biology, geography, culture, or preference can be and have been seized on to enforce and make intelligible the crucial distinction between us and them (or it). But philosophical thought is coeval with the impulse to understand ourselves according to a more principled, less parochial story—and so to be a more principled, less parochial sort of being.⁴

We are the sorts of creatures who can recognize our own situation and respond appropriately. In an important sense, though, not only *can* we recognize our own situation and respond appropriately, we *must* do so if we are going to be able to keep functioning at the first-personal level of a subject. To lose either our ability to recognize our situation or our ability to recognize the normative commitments and entailments of our situation would be to lose our sapience, our reflectively rational, phenomenologically contentful interaction with the world and with ourselves. To understand ourselves, then, we must understand justification. And that is the goal of this dissertation.

Justification is central to our lives. We demand justification from ourselves when we mull over evidence or consider acting in a new or apparently unwise way. We demand justification from others when they make hitherto unaccepted claims, when they perform unexpected actions,

³ Brandom (1998)

⁴ Brandom (1998) 4

when they hold unorthodox beliefs. Justification is the sort of thing that presents itself to us, is recognized by us, used by us, considered by us, and acted upon by us. In a very important way, we don't even have the ability to shut out justification or to possess justification without recognizing what we've got. Justification forces itself on us in a very peculiar way: It makes itself evident and available for our use without merely *causing* our subsequent actions. Insofar as there is justification, there is at least the *appearance* of free choice and action relating to the presence of that justification. As subjects, agents, doers, makers, appreciators, and lovers, then, we are essentially phenomenally bound up with justification, as each of those roles would be existentially deflated were it not for the manifest presence of justification.

A number of philosophers, as well as more than one prominent Anglo-American philosophical historical tradition, however, have denied the importance of considering ourselves from the first-personal, phenomenological perspective. Thus these philosophers and traditions have either denied the existence or importance of justification or have reconceived of justification in mechanistic or merely modal terms, effectively stripping justification of anything phenomenological, personal, or subjective. The impetus behind these projects is almost always a fascination with the empirical sciences. Since a presupposition of most empirical-scientific projects is the necessarily third-personal nature of the objects of scientific investigation, philosophers attempting to emulate the methodology of the empirical sciences in their own non-empirical philosophical investigations are quick to eschew appeal to anything phenomenological, subjective, first-personal, or otherwise private. My goal in this dissertation is not to debate philosophical methodology with these philosophers. For my purposes here, it is enough to say that there are apparently two ways of considering the lives of persons: one in terms of the tools of the empirical sciences when applied to persons considered as objects and one in terms of the

tools of phenomenology and epistemology as traditionally construed, as concerned with the lived experiences of those persons considered as subjects. I am herein concerned with the latter way of considering the lives of persons.

To return to Brandom, the goal *Making It Explicit* is twofold: First, Brandom hopes to show the reader that the relation between, on the one hand, the inferential relations that propositions stand in, and on the other, the semantic contents of those propositions, have the exact opposite grounding or determination relation than is traditionally supposed. It is the inferential relations that ground and determine semantic content, and not the other way around, says Brandom in a revisionary attempt to stand the traditional relation between semantics and pragmatics on its head. Second, Brandom hopes to show the reader how it is possible for inferential relations to exist metaphysically prior to semantic relations, since this would need to be possible in order for the former to ground the latter. The standard picture maintains that it is properties of truth-preservation, anchored in the representational properties of semantic contents, that ground and determine inferential relations. Without this “validity first” picture of the relation between semantic contents and inferential relations, it is initially difficult to see how something could count as an inferential relation at all, let alone a *correct* inferential relation. Brandom’s proposed solution makes liberal and explicit use of Hegelian metaphysics in order to identify contingent social practices with normatively correct inferential moves. According to Brandom’s picture, it is the social, identified with the inferential, that grounds and determines the semantic. In Brandomian terminology, pragmatics grounds semantics, and not the other way around.

Brandom’s work has generated a vast literature, mostly in the philosophical sub-field of the philosophy of language. The central question addressed in this literature is whether it is in fact possible to ground and determine semantics by means of pragmatics—whether it makes

theoretical or even sociological sense to talk of *semantic meaning* in terms of *pragmatic activity*. Little attention has been paid, however, to what I take to be the crucial rediscovery and reformulation⁵ driving Brandom's entire semantic project: human activities cannot adequately be made sense of in terms of properties of truthfulness, accuracy, or probabilification, at least not insofar as these properties all presuppose the standard picture of truth as correspondence to a mind-independent reality. Let us call Brandom's rediscovery the *pragmatic inadequacy of truth*, or PIT.⁶ While the Brandomian project that is animated by PIT is explicitly semantic in nature, and is properly investigated and critiqued by philosophers of language, there is nothing essentially semantic or linguistic about PIT itself. Accordingly, there is room to investigate the plausibility and consequences of PIT when it is applied to other philosophical sub-disciplines as well as to debates within those sub-disciplines.

This dissertation is a contribution to the tradition of Anglo-American epistemology, a tradition developed by such thinkers as Bertrand Russell and G.E. Moore, but also a tradition that was inaugurated by Plato in his *Theaetetus*. While the primary concept of this epistemological tradition is undoubtedly *knowledge*, arguably, the secondary concept is *justification*. It is justification that is the topic of this dissertation, specifically what is now known as *access-internalistic justification*, essentially a technical term for *evidence*.

In the work of epistemologists such as Lawrence BonJour, Richard Fumerton, and Michael Huemer, research into justification is enjoying somewhat of a heyday of late. The core of this research focuses on a specifically ontological question: "What sorts of objects or states count as 'justification'?" In a recent paper, however, Ali Hasan briefly, and perhaps somewhat

⁵ E.g., the seeds of such a theory are present in, among others, Aristotle's *Poetics* (in 2001), Kant (1999), Hegel (1976), Heidegger (2008), and Wittgenstein (2009).

⁶ This is essentially related to, although not strictly identical with, Kant's notion of the primacy of the practical (see Kant (1999)).

unintentionally, redirects the ontological investigations of contemporary work on justification to a specifically *normative* question: “How is it that any proposed justificational object or state can serve as justification, i.e., can make it more epistemically *appropriate* for us to believe some particular proposition?” While Hasan uses this question specifically as a rhetorical bludgeon against Huemer’s particular justificational theory, he never presents a satisfactory explanation for how his favored theory, Fumerton’s, itself comes close to answering this normative question. This, however, is one step further along than most contemporary epistemologists, who either have not recognized, or are uninterested in, this normative-epistemological question.

Insofar as contemporary epistemologists, save Hasan, have confronted this question at all, that confrontation has occurred obliquely. A standard, near-universal assumption about the nature of justification is that justification is an epistemic good precisely and only because of justification’s intimate relationship to *truth*. Truth, it is assumed, is the sole epistemic good of belief, and the sole epistemic goal of inquiry. These features of truth show truth to be an intrinsic epistemic good, and hence, imbue anything that leads to truth with mere instrumental epistemic goodness. In sum, justification is instrumentally epistemically good because it is a tool for true belief, the latter of which is intrinsically good. Of course, epistemologists rarely spell things out so explicitly—it is occasionally said in passing that the goal of justification is truth, and that’s about all there is to the discussion. Even Hasan’s criticisms of Huemer merely presuppose that justification is instrumentally good for achieving the intrinsic good of truth, and criticize Huemer for not presenting a justificational theory that is sufficiently related to truth.

I take PIT, the thesis of the pragmatic inadequacy of truth, to be not only applicable to the philosophy of language, but to epistemology as well. The project of this dissertation, then, is to show that, even supposing the epistemic goodness of true belief, PIT infects and dooms

justification's ability to aid in the search for truth. Assuming, however, that our justificational practices—chief among them our searching out, asking for, and giving *reasons* for our actions and beliefs—are not massively misguided, we are confronted with an apparent trilemma, or at least with three propositions whose apparent truth demands theoretical reconciliation:

1. The truth of belief is an epistemic good.
2. Justification is an epistemic good.
3. The epistemic goodness of justification cannot be explained in terms of the epistemic goodness of truth (nor vice versa).

While some (specifically *access externalistic*, often specifically *scientific naturalistic*) epistemologists may take the truth of (3) as evidence enough to reject (2) (although, of course, they would need to explain how (3) could be used as *evidence* to reject a blanket claim about the epistemic goodness of *justification*), I don't think we should be so quick to dismiss the epistemic goodness of justification. After showing that it cannot be the supposed epistemic goodness of truth that imbues justification with epistemic goodness, I present a proposal for how justification could possibly perform the job it is supposed to perform.

My proposal harkens back to Kant's philosophy of perception, and explicitly rejects a contemporary conceptualist-reductionist-naturalist approach inaugurated by the combined efforts of W.V.O. Quine and Wilfrid Sellars. Thankfully, it is enough to clearly state my Kantian thesis and to show how Quine's and Sellars's criticisms of the nonconceptualist-anti-reductionist-non-naturalist Kantian tradition were not so much *misunderstandings* of Kant as they were attempts to respond to views that Kant never professed to hold to begin with. While my project has a direct negative bearing on the plausibility of central Quinean and Sellarsian theses, it is most certainly not my project herein to attempt a direct response to or refutation of Quine or Sellars. Once the Kantian picture is seen aright, it can correctly be seen to offer the resources to make

sense of the epistemic goodness of justification, not in terms of truth, but in terms of the proper function of our epistemic apparatus.

But this is all too much too fast, and a proper presentation of my Kantian solution must await its proper place in the final chapters of this dissertation. If what I say here is plausible, then I will have shown that contemporary epistemologists have not properly understood a central problem of epistemology, and I also will have presented the outlines of a solution to this problem: the problem of *how justification works*.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Preface was an informal introduction to the central themes and topics of this dissertation.

Correspondingly, the purpose of this more formal introductory chapter is threefold: (i) to act as an extended abstract of the dissertation, (ii) explicitly to formulate the central themes and topics of this dissertation and to provide a brief overview of those themes and topics as they have appeared in (mostly recent) literature, and (iii) to provide brief overviews/abstracts of the chapters-proper of this dissertation.

1.1. The Good in the Way of Belief

For any proposition, p , why should we believe it rather than its negation, $\text{not-}p$? To ask this question, in its broadest form, is really to ask two questions:

1. What sort of thing is it that makes it the case that we should believe a particular proposition?
2. Is it p or is it $\text{not-}p$ that possesses whatever thing is identified in the answer to (1)?

Let's focus specifically on the first question. When we ask this question, what we are looking for in response is some property, object, state of affairs, event, etc., that can play a *normative* role, that makes it the case, *ceteris paribus*, that for some particular belief, belief is better than non-belief. For this reason, purely pragmatic or means-ends answers will not do the trick. To see why, consider an analogous case concerning morality. The standard question of the normative ethicist is: *What sort of thing is it that makes it the case that we should perform a particular action?* Consider two popular answers, the act utilitarian answer and the Kantian answer.

According to the act utilitarian, what makes it the case that we should perform a particular action is the resultant balance of pleasure over pain for all sentient creatures being highest from the performance of that action rather than any other possible action. According to the Kantian, what

makes it the case that we should perform a particular action is whether the action was performed out of recognition of, out of respect for, and in accordance with the Categorical Imperative. Now consider a follow-up question for the utilitarian and the Kantian: *Is the thing you've identified itself morally good in a way that can generate the requisite sort of moral bindingness?* If the answer is *yes*, then we have a fully fleshed-out moral theory: We ought to perform certain actions either because they get us something morally good (in the case of act utilitarianism) or because they themselves, qua actions, are morally good (in the case of Kantianism). If the answer is *no*, however, then we're left scratching our heads. How exactly is it that an action that either doesn't get us something morally good or that isn't itself morally good get imbued with moral goodness that is sufficiently normatively binding so as to make it the case that we *should* perform some particular action?

The upshot of the previous paragraph is this: If we ought to do something, then there need to be relevant objects that explain where the relevant normative force comes from, that can play the role of sources of normativity. Transposed back to the epistemic case, if it is actually the case that we ought to believe some proposition over its negation, then there must be something normative that explains this oughtness, and that binds those who actually and truly ought to do the believing. If no belief is any better than any other, in any situation, along any lines, then we have arrived at the position of normative nihilism with respect to epistemology. Very few philosophers have found such epistemic normative nihilism attractive, however. There may be sociological reasons for this: philosophers are people who argue for the acceptance of one position over some competing position. But if there is nothing at all that would privilege the acceptance of one belief over others, then there is nothing to argue for. Philosophical argumentation would be tantamount to argumentation about how many angels can dance on the

head of a pin—even if an answer were proffered, there would be nothing to support accepting it over any other position since there are no such creatures as angels.

It is possible that whatever thing makes it better to hold some belief instead of its negation is not *sui generis*, unique to beliefs or to epistemology more generally. That is to say, it is possible (i) that epistemic normativity is reducible to some other sort of normativity, (ii) that other sorts of normativity are reducible to epistemic normativity, or (iii) that there is only one sort of normativity, for which ‘epistemic normativity,’ ‘moral normativity,’ etc. are the names in different philosophical domains. In this dissertation, I want to leave this question to one side. Regardless of the correct relationship between the domain of epistemic normativity and other sorts of normativity, herein, my target is a specific set of questions within the domain of epistemic normativity.

What, then, is the sort of thing that makes it the case that we should believe a particular proposition? According to William James, “The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief, and good, too, for definite, assignable reasons.”¹ This formulation not only further explicates the issue at hand, but also provides the most famous answer to the current question. According to James’s picture, there is something that it is *good* for beliefs to have, presumably such that beliefs *with* this thing are better than beliefs *without* this thing, *ceteris paribus*. The definite article, *the*, indicates that, like most philosophers, James believes that what will prove itself good in the way of belief, since it is the *only* thing that actually is the good for beliefs, is *truth*. That is, the only thing that could make it the case, *ceteris paribus*, that one belief is epistemically better than another, or that it is epistemically better to believe some proposition over some other, is truth—the truth of the proposition at hand.

¹ James (1995) 42

James has famously historically been misunderstood as claiming that when beliefs are good *for whatever reason at all*, those reasons are to be called ‘truth.’ But this interpretation has the explanatory direction of James’s picture exactly backwards. According to James, *truth*, that property possessed by all and only true propositions, is epistemically normative such that beliefs that are true are better, *ceteris paribus*, than beliefs that are not, and further, that the goodness of truth is something that is open to investigation—it needn’t merely be taken as an article of faith that true beliefs are better than their false counterparts. *This* is the pragmatic element of James’s philosophy, however, one that will concern me no further in this dissertation. The important takeaway from James is that it is truth that is epistemically normative such that we ought to believe true propositions and we ought not to believe their false counterparts. According to James’s picture, and the picture of almost every contemporary epistemologist, then, *truth* is the one and only intrinsic, end-in-itself epistemic good such that, to use Aristotle’s terminology, any other possible epistemic goods are good for the sake of truth and truth is not chosen for the sake of any further epistemic good. For convenience, I will call this the *Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity* (Standard Picture):

Truth is the one and only intrinsic epistemic good such that any other possible epistemic goods are good for the sake of truth and truth is not chosen for the sake of any further epistemic good.

The subject of this dissertation is epistemic justification, more specifically, the epistemic normativity of epistemic justification, and even more specifically, where this epistemic justification comes from and how it is supposed to bind us in the appropriately epistemic sort of way. For convenience, I will call this the *Guiding Question of the Dissertation* (Guiding Question):

What is the source of the epistemic normativity of justification and how does this normativity bind epistemic subjects in the appropriately epistemic sort of way?

According to the Standard Picture, the answer to the Guiding Question is simple: The epistemic normativity of justification is provided or inherited by the epistemic normativity of truth and since we are epistemically normatively bound to believe true propositions (*ceteris paribus*), we are thereby epistemically normatively bound to believe justified propositions (*ceteris paribus*).

1.2. What Is Meant by ‘Internalism’?

The term *internalism* is appended to any number of terms commonly used in contemporary philosophy, among them *reasons*, *content*, *linguistic*, and *knowledge*. In this dissertation, what I am concerned with is the topic of *epistemic justificational internalism* (henceforth: *justificational internalism*). According to many philosophers, there is a relation between *knowledge internalism* and *justificational internalism* such that either the latter is entailed by the former and is a constituent component of it (such that all justificational internalism is a necessary component of any version of knowledge internalism) or even that the two positions mutually entail one another (necessarily, knowledge internalism is true iff justificational internalism is true). While the relation between knowledge internalism and justificational internalism is a fruitful domain for further philosophical research, given that there is substantial disagreement over both the relation between justificational internalism and knowledge internalism, and also over even the correct formulation of knowledge internalism, I will leave discussions of these issues aside in this dissertation.

Even having narrowed the scope of discussion to justificational internalism alone, independent of any other type of internalism, there is still disagreement over the proper scope of the term. According to *mentalistic justificational internalism*, the basis for a person’s

justification (what I will otherwise refer to as a *justifier*² or a *justificational state*) is always a proper component or element of that person's mind or mentality. Suppose, for example, that the mind or mentality is always spatially internal to a person's head, or in any case always necessarily determined by what is spatially internal to a person's head. In this case, the mentalistic justificational internalist would be a proponent of the view that only things literally within a person's head, or necessarily determined by what is spatially internal to a person's head, can serve as justifiers for that person. The mentalistic justificational *externalist*, on this picture, is a proponent of the negation of mentalistic justificational internalism: it is not the case that only things within a person's head, or determined by what is spatially internal to a person's head, can serve as justifiers for that person.

According to *access justificational internalism*, however, a person's justifiers are always phenomenally accessible to that person such that she can tell or is at least in a position to be able to tell when she is in possession of a justifier. The access justificational *externalist* is a proponent of the negation of access justificational internalism: it is not the case that all of a person's justifiers are phenomenally accessible to that person. As things are formulated, internalism and externalism of both mentalistic and access sorts are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive. However, as formulated, there is no reason to think that there is a necessary connection between internalism of one sort and internalism of the other sort (or externalism of one sort and externalism of the other sort).³

The proper topic of this dissertation is access justificational internalism, the thesis that a person's justifiers are always phenomenally accessible to that person such that she can tell when she is in possession of a justifier. My goal herein is to see how access justificational internalism

² The term *justifier* is first used in this context by William Alston (1989) 189.

³ A simple introduction to the mentalism/access distinction can be found in Pappas (2014).

(and henceforth, I'll just refer to this position as *justificational internalism*, or *internalism* and the relevant sort of justification as either *internalistic justification* or merely as *justification*) is supposed to work, that is, how it is supposed to be possible for internalistic states, phenomenally accessible to the possessor of those states, to play the justificational role they are supposed to play.

First, however, an important caveat: As far as I'm concerned in this dissertation, there may be both internalistic justification and externalistic justification, and further, it may be the case that knowledge requires one or the other or both. What I am not concerned with here is defeating externalist positions of any sort, nor am I concerned with an argument over terminology, over who may properly lay claim to the term 'justification.' What I am concerned with here is merely how it is possible for internalistic states to perform any justificational role at all. If, at the close of this dissertation, I've found some plausible way for internalistic states to perform a justificatory role, all that will show is that a very hardline version of externalism that claims that it is impossible for internalistic states to play a justificatory role is false. It will still be an open question whether the sort of justification provided by internalistic states is valuable in the sort of way required for different epistemic projects, and it will further be an open question whether the sort of justification provided by internalistic states is necessary for (or sufficient for, along with truth and belief) knowledge.

1.3. The Internalistic Intuition, First Pass

Within philosophical history, internalism has enjoyed a privileged position. It has seemed just obvious to many that insofar as our epistemic lives aim toward justification or responsibility at all, it is at least in part due to the fact that we possess particular states of which we can be phenomenally aware, and that these states themselves serve as justifiers. Every demand for

evidence, every demand of “How do you know that?” is, in this way, a demand for the identification of some internalistic justificational state possessed by the demandee.

Justification, the thought goes, makes available to us something that is relevant to our beliefs and that we can use in forming those beliefs. What is made available to us is the *content* of our justification, and the mode of its being made so available is phenomenal. The content of the justification, in order to be relevant to potential beliefs, must have something in common with those potential beliefs. On the simplest construal of internalistic justification, the content of my justification just is a subset (proper or otherwise) of my ultimately justified belief. For example, if I see that the cat is on the mat, the cat’s being on the mat, a component of my justificatory visual state, is epistemically accessible to me. It is available to me, not merely phenomenally, but also for epistemic use, its epistemic usefulness being essentially bound up in its phenomenal character. There is something very simple about this picture. If I am going to use a tool, then I had better not only be able to locate the tool if it’s around me, but I had also better be able to understand what the tool allows me to do and how to do it once I’ve located the tool. The same is true of internalistic justification: If I am to possess justification for a specific belief, then I had better not only be able to tell when I’ve got the justification, but also the content of the justification itself—what it justifies. On this picture, justification is a process that individuals and justificatory states engage in together, just as hammering in a nail is a process that individuals and hammers engage in together.

The other possible picture of justification, the externalistic picture, denies the epistemic access component, the phenomenal character component, the awareness component that is essential to internalistic justification. On this picture, not only are beliefs able to be justified without the subject *consciously doing* anything at all to bring about that justification, but also, a

subject might possess justification for a belief and have no conscious awareness at all that she possesses it. Or even: A subject might be reasonably sure that she possesses justification for a belief and be dead wrong. While other epistemic properties, such as the *truth-values* of beliefs, might be epistemically inaccessible to subjects, it has struck many as a perversion of the term *justification* to use it in this epistemically inaccessible sense. For example, Alvin Plantinga argues in his *Warrant* trilogy that his preferred term, ‘warrant,’ should be used to signify the sort of thing externalists are aiming at, and that *justification* should be reserved for internalistic justification alone.⁴ H. A. Prichard has argued that a second-order picture of justification such that when we are justified, we can be *justified* that we are justified (which at least minimally entails that we can have epistemic access to that justification) makes most sense of the concept of justification.⁵

What it is to be a good epistemic subject, claims Plato in the *Theaetetus* is that the subject possess an *account* of why she believes what she believes. This *account* serves to connect the subject to the world such that if her beliefs are true, they aren’t *merely luckily* true, and such that if her beliefs are false, the fact that she held them to begin with can be explained. But what is it that’s so bad about holding *merely luckily true, inexplicably held* beliefs? As regards the latter, the thought, I submit, is that a subject who holds beliefs *for no good reason*, whether those beliefs are true or not, has run afoul of two norms that are important for our personal and interpersonal epistemic lives, what I will call *Reasons-Responsiveness* and *Reasons-Apprehension*:

⁴ Plantinga (1993a, 1993b, 2000)

⁵ Prichard (1950). Strictly speaking, in this essay, Prichard is arguing for the KK thesis, the thesis that knowledge that-p entails knowledge that-knowledge that-p. However, in the context of the essay, it is clear that Prichard is interpreting *knowledge* wholly internalistically, and that his driving intuition is an internalistic intuition about *justification* rather than *knowledge*. Statements similar to Prichard’s have been given by Bach (1985) 250, Chisholm (1977) 17, and Ginet (1975) 34 (all quoted in Alston (1989) 212-3).

Reasons-Responsiveness

When a person holds a particular belief, then she ought to be able to provide what she takes to be the good reasons why she holds that belief, either to others when reasons are demanded of her or to herself when she questions her own beliefs.

Reasons-Apprehension

When a person possesses a reason, then she ought to be able to understand both *why* and *how* it is supposed to be a reason for what it is supposed to be a reason.

Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension are imprecise codifications of the normative impulse behind the demand for an *account* for one's belief, a demand for something that ties the subject's belief to the world, a demand for something that shows that the subject, lucky or not, truly believing or not, has at least attempted to believe *explicitly*, that is, *for the sake of something she takes to be reasonable* (traditionally conceived of as *for the sake of truth*, as we saw above). Without something approximating Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension, the worry is that the subject is a gear turning while nothing else turns with her.

1.4. Pure vs. Impure Internalism

All that said, we are still left with two broad justificational positions that might count as *internalism*, what I'll call *pure* and *impure internalism*:

Pure Internalism

For any internalistic justifier, there is no properly justificatory component essential to that justifier that is either not understood to be justificatory or that is epistemically inaccessible, *qua* properly justificatory components, to the relevant subject.

Impure Internalism

For at least some internalistic justifiers, there are some properly justificatory components essential to those justifiers that are either not understood to be justificatory or epistemically inaccessible, *qua* properly justificatory components, to the relevant subject (or both).

To elucidate this distinction, consider the following:

Ethel heads to the track to wager on the ponies. As she walks to her seat, she overhears two shady characters whispering to one another. All she can make out is, “One light in the Old North Church.” Had she understood the code used by these shady characters, she would have understood that the upcoming race had been fixed in favor of perennial underdog Paul Revere.

Is Ethel justified in believing that Paul Revere will win the race? Certainly, she possesses a justifier, the overheard speech of the shady characters, for believing that Paul Revere will win.

Not only does she possess this justifier, she has epistemic access to it. However, there is a worry that even though she has epistemic access to a justifier, she doesn’t recognize the justifier *as* a justifier.

Modify the case, then, so that Ethel recognizes the shady characters as Buggy and Mugsy, the Slugabed Brothers, notorious in those parts for fixing races. In this case, Ethel takes what they say to be evidence for which horse will win the race. However, Ethel still doesn’t understand their code, and so even though she is in possession of what she takes to be justification for which horse will win the race, she doesn’t understand the content of that justifier.

Modify the case again so that Ethel recognizes the shady characters as the Slugabed Brothers, takes what they say to be evidence, and further understands the code that she takes to be evidence.

Even though, in each of the above three cases, justification is epistemically accessible to Ethel, it is only in the final case that justification whose content is itself epistemically accessible is both taken to be justification by Ethel and understood by her. In the other two cases, there is some potentially epistemically accessible component of the justification that is missing for Ethel.

It is only in the final case that Ethel has what we could call *pure internalistic justification* for the belief that Paul Revere will win the race.

Many philosophers (as we will see later on in the dissertation) have been tempted to hold that the possession of some justificatory object's being epistemically accessible to the possessor *at all* is enough to make that justificatory object internalistically justificatory. However, in cases of mere impure internalistic justification, it seems as though one of the intuitive reasons for preferring or requiring internalistic justification, Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension, is missing. Suppose that, in the first case above, caused by overhearing the shady characters, Ethel believes that Paul Revere will win the race. Ethel neither understands *why* she believes that Paul Revere will win, nor can she provide reasons to herself or others for why she believes it. In such a situation it seems perverse to attribute to Ethel the same *sort* of justification that she possesses in the final case.

Another way to think of the distinction between Pure Internalism and Impure Internalism is this: According to the pure internalist, there is no properly justificatory component of a piece of internalistic justification that is epistemically inaccessible to the possessor. According to the impure internalist, by contrast, there is some properly justificatory component of a piece of internalistic justification that is epistemically inaccessible to the possessor. At no point will the possessor of pure internalistic justification have to end her explanation of her possession of justification by saying "I simply have no idea how or why what I claim is justificatory is, in fact, justificatory." At some point, if pushed hard enough, however, the possessor of impure internalistic justification will have to end her explanation of her possession of justification by saying "I simply have no idea how or why what I claim is justificatory is, in fact, justificatory,"

even if, at *some* points along the way of her explanation, she has perfect epistemic access to the properly justificatory components of her justification, *qua* properly justificatory components.

Accordingly, to make sense of the two guiding internalist norms laid out above, Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension, in this dissertation, I will treat only *pure internalism* as a form of internalism, as a consequence, the term *internalism* will henceforth denote *pure internalism* only. The burden of proof now stands with anyone who might defend impure internalism to show how such a justificatory theory could possibly answer to the demands of Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension.

1.5. Internalism Precisified

To reiterate, in this dissertation, I am not concerned with the strong internalist claim that all and only the things that count as epistemic justifiers are epistemically accessible to the justified subject. Correspondingly, I want to set aside the question of whether externalistic states can possibly perform justificatory functions. Instead, what I am interested in is, if internalistic states can perform justificatory functions, then how it is that those internalistic states are able to do this. As such, I am not here concerned with one thing that has concerned a number of contemporary epistemologists, viz., whether *all* of a subject's justifiers are internalistic or whether only some are.⁶

I now want to make explicit what I mean by *internalistic justification*:

A Subject, S, has an internalistic justification for a belief B if and only if (1) S possesses an internalistic justifier, IJ, for a belief, B, strictly due to S's potential phenomenal access to IJ and its relation to B, and (2) S is thereby in a position to become aware (2i) of her possession of IJ, (2ii) that IJ is a justifier for B, and (2iii) how it is that IJ is a justifier for B.

⁶ See Pappas (2014) Section 3 for a discussion of this issue and a distinction between “strong” and “weak” versions of internalism, where the latter of which is the thesis that all justification is internalistic and the former of which is the thesis that merely some, but not all, justification is internalistic.

This definition of internalistic justification takes into account all of the desired features of internalistic justification presented above including:

1. Necessary phenomenal/epistemic access to the justifier
2. Adherence of the justifier to the strictures of Reasons-Responsiveness
3. Adherence of the justifier to the strictures of Reasons-Apprehension
4. Adherence of the justifier to the strictures of Pure rather than merely Impure Internalism

1.6. Attention and Intentionality

Two important and related concepts for internalistic justification are the concepts of attention and intentionality. As recent work on introspection and consciousness has noted,⁷ it is not enough for an object merely to be present to consciousness, or merely to be available upon introspection, for a subject to be in an epistemic relation with that object that is appropriate for justification. The reason for this is that an object may be consciously available to a subject, or available to a subject upon introspection, the subject might be occurrently conscious or introspecting, and she may be either not consciously attending to the relevant portion of her phenomenal field, or she may not be paying very much attention to it at all (a lazy introspector, as it were). For this reason, many philosophers have stipulated that in order for such practices as justification to be possible, a subject must be consciously *attending*, in the right way, to her phenomenal field.

Relatedly, let us recall the very simple picture of internalistic justification where in order to be justified in believing that-p, a subject's internalistically justificational state must contain p as a content. In order for this picture to be possible, then it must be the case that the intentional content of the justificatory state shares something essential with and relevant to the belief

⁷ See the essays in Smithies and Stoljar (2012) for this issue and related themes.

justified. This essential thing, it seems, would need to be phenomenally accessible to the subject possessing the relevant justificatory state in order for the state to be *internalistic* in the right sort of way. It could not be the case, that is, that a subject possesses internalistic justification for the belief that-p, is aware of her justificatory state, but the essential shared intentional connection between the justifier and the justified belief is *inaccessible* to her. To put this in the language of *attention* from the previous paragraph, a subject must be able consciously to attend to the essential intentional connections that underlie the justificatory relevance of her justifier to the belief it justifies.

This thesis, that a person is able consciously to tell to what objects she is intentionally directed in intentional states, is known as the thesis of *phenomenal intentionality*.⁸ At first blush, it seems as though there is an affinity between a picture of justification as internalistic and a picture of intentionality, at least intentionality related to justification and the objects justified, as phenomenally accessible. Interestingly, almost no work has been done to connect the necessary phenomenal component of internalistic justification to the necessary phenomenal component of intentionality that is defended by proponents of the thesis of phenomenal intentionality. This connection, as I see it, is essential to understanding how it is possible for internalism to work, and will be discussed at length in the dissertation.

1.7. The Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation has nine chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 prepare the ground for a thorough discussion of the mechanics of internalism. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 present novel arguments against even the possibility of internalistic justification. Chapters 6 and 7 present and explicate features that are missing from the current discussion of internalistic justification, features that I see as

⁸ See the essays in Kriegel (2013) on the topic of phenomenal intentionality.

necessary to any successful picture of internalism. Chapters 8 and 9 lay out the two sides of my positive proposal for how internalistic justification is possible. What follows are brief overviews of each of these chapters.

Chapter 2: When It Comes to Justification, We're All Foundationalists

In Chapter 2, I show that all internalistic justificational theories, even if they purport to be coherentist or infinitist in structure, are actually foundationalist. What this means is that for those of who are supporters of a picture of justification such that we can tell when we've got it, i.e., internalistic justification, when it comes to that justification, we're all foundationalists.

While the consequences of this claim, if true, are significant across epistemology, I use this argument at this point in this dissertation for a very specific and narrow reason. While substantial philosophical work has been done in the area of justificational internalism both motivating the plausibility of internalism and attempting to determine the ontological status of internalistically justificational states, almost no work has been done on the particular topic of this dissertation: how it is possible for internalistic justificational states to play the epistemically normative role they're purported to play. However, a few recent philosophers, chief among them Ali Hasan, have done initial work on how it is possible for *foundational* justificational states to play the epistemically normative role *they're* purported to play.

Chapter 3: The Phenomenology of Justification

Chapter 3 is largely explicative in nature while the next is largely argumentative. In this chapter, my goal is to get clear on the epistemic nature of the foundational justifiers in two broad sorts of internalist foundational theories: the classical internalist foundationalism of philosophers such as Lawrence BonJour and Richard Fumerton on the one hand, and the "seemings"-theories of philosophers such as James Pryor and Michael Huemer on the other. The main distinction

between the two kinds of theories is the sort of object or state that is claimed to be justificatory. In classical theories, it is a phenomenal state of direct awareness of the facts that is taken to be justificatory, while in seemings-theories, it is a mentalistic phenomenal item called a *seeming* that is taken to be justificatory.

Chapter 4: The Normativity of Justification

In Chapter 4, I examine the specifically epistemically normative properties of foundational justificatory states. The central question of this chapter will thus be this: In virtue of what is it that internalistic justifiers possess the requisite epistemically normative properties to play the role of epistemic justifiers? First, I briefly summarize the main features of seemings theories so that I can introduce and explicate a problem that has been raised for seemings theories, viz., how it is possible for something answering to the criteria of a seeming to play the normative epistemic role it is supposed to play? Second, I generalize this problem from its specific application to seemings theories, so that it is applicable to all internalistic versions of foundationalism. This problem, what I call the Normative Problem for Justification (NPJ) sets up a demand for a theoretical answer to where, exactly, the epistemically normative force of justifiers is supposed to come from. Third, I show how NPJ is applicable to Bonjour's particular version of classical foundationalism. Fourth, I show how an argument employed by both Bonjour and by Huemer in order to support their particular justificational theories, what I'll call the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining, does not, despite what is sometimes apparently implicitly assumed, answer the challenge of NPJ. Fifth, I show how, despite recent claims to the contrary, Fumerton's particular version of classical foundationalism is also susceptible to the demands of NPJ.

Chapter 5: The Swamping Problem for Justification

In Chapter 5, I extend the notorious Swamping Problem to internalistic justification and its relationship to truth. The thesis of this chapter, again, but now further specified, is that the epistemic value of justification cannot be explained in instrumentalist terms via the ultimate goal of true belief. The reason for this is that if justification is merely instrumentally valuable in terms of the ultimate goal of true belief, then justification, a non-factive state or property (i.e., one whose existence, presence, or possession does not entail the truth of its related belief) can possess no epistemic value or normativity over and above that possessed by truth. But since justified true beliefs are epistemically better than merely true beliefs and justified false beliefs are epistemically better than merely false beliefs, justification itself must possess some epistemic value over and above that of truth.

Chapter 6: The Existential Problem for the Instrumental Value of Justification

In Chapter 6, show that any attempt to conceive of justification as instrumentally epistemically valuable is doomed to failure. That is, the thesis of this chapter is that if justification is epistemically valuable, then this epistemic value must be intrinsic epistemic value. The central argument of this chapter is derived ultimately from Kant, but was given its fullest recent articulation by Wittgenstein and (other) Existentialist philosophers. The argument rests on an epistemic problem relating to theories of instrumental value: If it is the case that some thing, X, is valuable only in terms of its ability to bring about some other thing, Y, then it must be possible for a subject to have some way of determining whether she is engaged with X in the proper way so as to bring about Y. As an example: If my car is valuable only in terms of its ability to get me to work, then it must be possible for me to have some way of determining whether I'm using my car in a way such that it will get me to work. However, once the necessity of this determining

ability is recognized, we are off on a vicious regress. If X's value in relation to Y requires some further object, Z, which is the recognition of when X is being used correctly in relation to Y, then Z's ability to do its job, to relate X and Y in the appropriate manner, requires some further object, Z+1, which is the recognition of when Z is being used correctly in relation to X and Y, and so on. This is the problem (of grounding rules for applying concepts in judgments) for which Kant's schematism is introduced as a solution, the problem (of grounding rules for making practical self-commitments) for which Kierkegaard's leap of faith is also introduced as a solution, which Wittgenstein regarded as a regress of rules-needed-for-applying-rules problem, and which Sartre dramatically calls *abandonment*.

Chapter 7: The Givenness of Justification

In Chapter 7, I lay the groundwork for a positive picture of ourselves and of our epistemic lives as phenomenally and intentionally related to the world around us via a fundamental phenomenal/intentional relation of givenness between the world and us. The world presents itself to us in a certain way, and it is this self-presentation on the part of the world, along with our mental/epistemological/phenomenal uptake of this worldly self-presentation, that underlies the phenomenal and epistemically normative nature of internalistic justification.

Chapter 8: The Identity of the Phenomenology and Intentionality of Justification

In Chapter 8, I analyze the sort of intentionality required for internalistic justification. The primary motivating goal of a picture of internalistic justification that includes a nonconceptual openness to a given world is to secure the relationship between the mind and the world required for justification. Without such a mind-world connection, a justificational theory will be at best solipsistic and at worst unable to explain how a subject's justificational states have anything at all to do with the beliefs and actions they purportedly justify. In this chapter, I secure the final

component of such a mind-world connection: intentionality. Intentionality, in terms of justificational states, is the *aboutness* of those states, the connectedness between those states and their worldly contents. Without an explanation of the intentionality of justificational states, there would be no explanation for the relation between the justificational states themselves and their justificatorily relevant contents. I have put this point in terms of the relationship between state and content rather than between state and object or content and object due to the discussion of the phenomenal presence of givenness in the previous chapter. According to the picture defended in the previous chapter, the contents of justificatory states just is the objects of those states—there is no phenomenal content over and above the intentional objects of the states.

Chapter 9: Nonconceptual Normative Phenomenology

Chapter 9 is devoted specifically to the nature and functioning of nonconceptual normativity. According to Hanna (forthcoming: 2015), our nonconceptual mental states allow for worldly situated nonconceptual content to play the constitutive role of the normative base for epistemic and moral superstructure of our justificational practices of giving and seeking reasons for our beliefs and actions. This claim is relevantly similar to the picture of givenness that I argued for in Chapter 7. This chapter expands on the claims made in Chapter 7 by explicating the specifically phenomenal nature of the normative components of givenness. That is, this chapter analyzes and explicates the nature and content of the normative force of internalistic justification in terms of the felt phenomenal force of those states. Another way to put this is that this chapter argues that the way to tie together the nonconceptual nature of internalistic justificatory states and the normativity of internalistic justificational states is via the phenomenal contents of those states.

Chapter 10: Justifying Oneself to Oneself for Oneself

In Chapter 10, I add the final theoretical component of internalistic justification into the picture: intentionality. The goal of this chapter is to show how spontaneous intentional acts can at once *call forth* the normativity of internalistic justificational states, while also themselves being *grounded in* the normatively robust situatedness of the subject in the world. This chapter thus continues and extends the anti-Cartesian phenomenal and existential picture of the normativity of internalistic justification begun in Chapter 9 while defending a *realistic*, albeit *revisionist*, conception of the source and nature of internalistic justification.

Chapter 2. When It Comes to Justification, We're All Foundationalists

Theories of epistemic justification divide along two taxonomic lines that supposedly cross-cut one another, one phenomenal (the division between *internalistic* and *externalistic* justificational theories) and one structural (the division between *foundationalist*, *coherentist*, and *infinist* justificational theories). The purpose of this chapter is to show that all internalistic justificational theories, even if they purport to be coherentist or infinitist in structure, are actually foundationalist. What this means is that for those of who are supporters of a picture of justification such that we can tell when we've got it, i.e., internalistic justification, when it comes to that justification, we're all foundationalists.

While the consequences of this claim, if true, are significant across epistemology, I use this argument at this point in this dissertation for a very specific and narrow reason. While substantial philosophical work has been done in the area of justificational internalism both motivating the plausibility of internalism and attempting to determine the ontological status of internalistically justificational states, almost no work has been done on the particular topic of this dissertation: how it is possible for internalistic justificational states to play the epistemically normative role they're purported to play. However, a few recent philosophers, chief among them Ali Hasan, have done initial work on how it is possible for *foundational* justificational states to play the epistemically normative role *they're* purported to play. Accordingly, in response to the dearth of philosophical work on the specific topic of this dissertation, I'm coming at that topic indirectly. If I can show, as I claim to be able to in this chapter, that necessarily, all internalism is foundationalism, then examining the specifically epistemic and normative properties of

foundationalistic justifiers (in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively) will be a way to address my intended topic, albeit somewhat indirectly.¹

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I lay out seven justificational theories that have appeared in the literature (although only three of these theories are truly taken seriously). Even though it is only foundationalism, coherentism, and infinitism I am concerned with here, as they are the three theories taken seriously in the literature, I think that it is important to survey the four additional theories that I survey since these four have either been confused with one or more of foundationalism, coherentism, or coherentism or could be interpretations of the (sometimes unclear) words of some prominent justificational theorists. It should become evident through my discussion that there are serious problems with three of these additional theories qua justificational theories (problems that have been forcefully presented in the literature) and that if the final theory, foundherentism, is a plausible theory at all, it will be subject to the same critiques as those I make of coherentism-proper. Second, I focus specifically on foundationalism for some time in order to get very clear on the precise formulation of the theory I prefer and that makes the most sense of the various presentations of the theory in the literature. This is important, I believe, for the overall force of the argument I make in this chapter. What I am claiming is that all plausible internalistic justificational theories are foundationalist at their core. Accordingly, it is my task to limn the conceptual boundaries of foundationalism as carefully as I can. Third, I lay out a very important conceptual distinction, that between justificational independence and semantic independence. Understanding this

¹ The reader needn't worry here that I'm engaged in some version of affirming the consequent. While it is true that a conditionalized interpretation of "All internalism is foundationalism" has *internalism* as the antecedent term and *foundationalism* as the consequent term, my claim here is not that *everything* true of foundationalism is thereby true of internalism. For example, it is not implausible that there are foundationalistic *externalistic* theories of epistemic justification or warrant, so claiming that if something is true of foundationalism, it must be true of internalism as well really would be to affirm the consequent in the perilous manner. What I am claiming here is that looking at *specifically internalistic* versions of foundationalism, we can get *at least some idea* of how internalistic theories of justification, construed as broadly as you please, are supposed to work.

distinction is important for my overall project since a number of coherentist philosophers, I charge, have used a conflation of justificational dependence and semantic dependence as a premise in an argument for coherentism (or at least against foundationalism). Fourth, once the stage is properly set, I present the main argument of this chapter—what I call the Argument from Phenomenal Priority for Foundationalism. If this argument is successful, then I will have shown what I set out to show in this chapter, viz., that all properly internalistic theories of epistemic justification are versions of justificational foundationalism.

2.1. Seven Internalist Justificational Theories

In this section, I present seven internalist justificational theories, showing specifically how and why three of these theories (foundationalism, coherentism, and infinitism) are the ones taken seriously in the contemporary literature and why three of these theories (contextualism, circularism, and provisionalism) are distinct from the first three and are not or should not be taken seriously. I also present foundherentism, Susan Haack's supposed hybrid of foundationalism and coherentism, since foundherentism is either already a version of foundationalism or is a version of coherentism and hence subject to the Argument from Phenomenal Priority for Foundationalism.²

Before presenting these theories, I need to very briefly introduce some terminology. *Heritable justification* is justification that a proposition or set of propositions has by inheriting this justification from another proposition or set of propositions that is itself justified. *Emergent justification*, on the other hand, is justification that a proposition or set of propositions has because of its instantiation of some other, non-justificational property, and not in relation to a justified item or piece of justification. A *foundational justificatory component* is a piece of

² See Haack (2013).

justification or a justified object that serves as the basis of all other justification epistemically related to that justificatory component. A *non-foundational justificatory component* is a piece of justification or justified object that possesses its justification in virtue of its ultimate relation to a foundational justificatory component.

That said, here are the four internalist theories of justification that show up in the contemporary literature:

Justificational Foundationalism

There exist two classes of justified propositions, foundationally justified propositions and non-foundationally justified propositions. Foundationally justified propositions are immediately justified while non-foundationally justified propositions are mediately justified by the relations they stand in to either foundationally justified propositions or to other non-foundationally justified propositions. Justification is heritable, foundational propositions are the foundationally justificatory component and non-foundational propositions are the non-foundationally justificatory component.

Justificational Coherentism

There exists one class of justified propositions. A proposition is justified iff it is a member of a set whose members are coherent with one another. This is a sort of emergent justification—members of the set do not inherit justification from one another. All justified propositions are the non-foundationally justificatory component and the (recognition of the) coherence of the set itself is the foundationally justificatory component.³

Justificational Infinitism

There exists one class of justified propositions. A proposition is justified iff it is a member of a set whose members stand in an infinite chain-like relation to one another. This is a sort of emergent justification—members of the set do not inherit justification from one another. All justified propositions are the non-foundationally justificatory

³ Coherentism faces the traditional grounding problem, i.e., that a set's intrinsic properties do not determine the extrinsic properties of the individual members of the set, i.e., that coherence does not determine truth, but there are interesting responses to that problem, the most interesting of which, to my mind, is Davidson's response ("A Coherence Theory of Justification and Truth") so I won't address it here. What coherentism cannot escape is the Argument from Phenomenal Priority, presented below. See Bonjour "The Coherence Theory of Empirical Knowledge," *Philosophical Studies*, vol. 30 (1976), pp. 281-312.

component and the (recognition of the) infinite chain-like structure of the set itself is the foundationally justificatory component.

Justificational Foundherentism

There exist two classes of justified propositions, foundationally justified propositions and non-foundationally justified propositions. Justification happens in two ways: (i) Foundationally justified propositions are immediately justified while non-foundationally justified propositions are mediately justified by the relations they stand in to either foundationally justified propositions or to other non-foundationally justified propositions. Justification is heritable, foundational propositions are the foundationally justificatory component and non-foundational propositions are the non-foundationally justificatory component. (ii) Propositions are further justified by standing in relations of coherence with one another. This is a sort of emergent justification. All justified propositions are the non-foundationally justificatory component and the (recognition of the) coherence of the set itself is the foundationally justificatory component. This is simply foundationalism + coherentism—one set of propositions, two sorts of justification.⁴

Contextualism, as a basic theory of justification rather than either a theory of the semantic contents of justificational claims or of knowledge more broadly, is a much less popular position.⁵

At this point in the philosophical dialectic, it is not taken seriously as a viable position. We can define the position as follows:

Justificational Contextualism

A recognition of the historical, social, linguistic, etc., context of the concept of justification *along with* a recognition of a situation's falling under that contextually determined concept, *together* determine whether a proposition, state, act, etc., is justified. In addition, contextually determined Idealism is either false or at least does not apply to the concept of justification.⁶

⁴ Haack (2013) gives the term its name, but BonJour expresses the thesis in (1978) under the name *weak foundationalism* and points to precursors in (1978, fn. 14). Further see Russell (2009), Part II, Ch. 11, and part V, Chs. 6 and 7; Goodman (1952); Scheffler (1982), Ch. V; Firth, (1964).

⁵ See DeRose (1992, 2011) for an explication of contextualism as the purely semantic thesis. See Annis (1978) and Williams (1999). It is worth noting that Contextualism can be viewed as both a realist and an anti-realist position. Williams (1999) seems to hold that anti-realist contextualism is incompatible with foundationalism, but this is false. Foundationalism is not an essentially realist doctrine. Insofar as there are foundationally justified items and these items can transfer their justification to non-foundationally justified, but still justified, items, then we have a sort of foundationalism. Williams assumes that the facts that make items appropriate for foundational justification must be realistic in nature, but this is not the case.

⁶ If this sort of idealism is true, then context determines truth, which determines justificational properties. Were this sort of idealism true, contextualism would be a sort of foundationalism where foundational justificational properties are determined by context.

Aside from contextualism, any of these theories is compatible with either a context-sensitive approach to justification or a context-invariant approach.⁷ However, since all proper theories of justification have a primary justificatory component, and circularism (see directly below for a definition) *lacks* such a component, i.e., there is nothing that *initially supplies justification*, circularism is not a proper theory of justification.

In this connection, here are two positions that are not defended in the literature, but that could have been. (In fact, there seems to be some confusion in the literature. Porter, e.g., thinks the first position, what I call *circularism*, is identical with *coherentism*, which it is not, and that the second, what I call *provisionalism*, is identical with *infinetism*, which it is not).

Justification Circularism

Fundamental justificatory component: None. Derived justificatory component: Heritable justification. Structure: Each proposition, p, stands in a dyadic justificational relation *only* between a proposition, q, where $p \neq q$, and q transfers (via a heritability relation) justification to p and a proposition, r, where $q \neq r \neq p$ and p transfers justification to r. Further, for all propositions, x, such that x belongs to the set of transfer propositions and, x serves as both recipient of and donor of justification. Accordingly, the overall justificatory structure is circular in nature.

As critics have noted, there is no source of justification in the circularist model. In our terminology, there is no primary justificatory component. Since all proper theories of justification have a primary justificatory component, circularism is not a proper theory of justification. Circularism is emphatically not the same as coherentism, although critics of coherentism sometimes seem to confuse the two positions. An easy way to recognize the difference is that coherentism is an emergent justificatory picture while circularism is a heritable justificatory picture.

⁷ See DeRose (1999) for a contextualist—context-sensitive—approach.

*Justificational Provisionalism*⁸

Fundamental justificatory component: None. Derived justificatory component: Heritable justification. Structure: Each proposition, *p*, stands in a dyadic justificational relation *only* between a proposition, *q*, where $p \neq q$, and *q* transfers (via a heritability relation) justification to *p* and a proposition, *r*, where $q \neq r \neq p$ and *p* transfers justification to *r*.
 Fundamental justificatory component: None. Further, there exists *some* proposition, *x*, such that *x* belongs to the set of transfer propositions and, *x* serves as a donor but not a recipient of justification. Accordingly, the overall justificatory structure is infinite in one direction but terminating in the other.

At one point, Klein seems to accept provisionalism (under the name of *infinetism*), although he has more recently accepted infinitism as I've formulated it above.⁹ However, note that, just as with circularism, there is no primary justificatory component for provisionalism. Since all proper justificatory theories must contain a primary justificatory component, provisionalism, like circularism, is not a proper justificatory theory.

Since we're talking about *internalistic* justification in each of the above definitions, I've mentioned, in parentheses, *recognition*. For example, there could be an externalistic version of coherentism that claims not that *recognition* of coherent relationship but merely *coherent relationships* is what's necessary for some justification-like property. But insofar as we're talking about justification, we need the recognition component included. Said another way: Suppose that a coherentist claims that the primary justificatory component of her theory is the mere coherence of a set of propositions. This theory would be a version of externalism, since coherence itself is not an epistemic property, i.e., has no necessary phenomenal component. In order to make coherentism and infinitism properly internalistic theories, it must not merely be membership in a set possessing a specific property (coherence, infinite structure, respectively),

⁸ BonJour (1978), fn. 9, suggests that Peirce (1868) might have held this view, or at least found it plausible.

⁹ Klein (1998). Although I should note that in recent conversations with others who have tried to get clear on exactly what Klein believes, in correspondence with them, he has denied that he believes either of infinitism and provisionalism as I've laid them out. I think it is best, then, not to talk about either of these theories as *Klein's theory*, but instead as theories that have appeared in the literature.

but instead *recognition* of this property or of this set membership. This follows without further argument from the definition of internalism laid out in the Introduction that we've been working with throughout this chapter and that we'll continue to work with for the rest of the dissertation.

To sum up the work done in this section: While seven different justificational theories have appeared in the literature, only four of these theories are viable internalistic justificatory theories. These four theories are foundationalism, coherentism, infinitism, and foundherentism. Foundherentism is a combination of foundationalism and coherentism and, as such, will not be treated as a separate theory in the remainder of this chapter since whatever I have to say about foundationalism and coherentism can be applied directly to foundherentism. We now have three theories: foundationalism, coherentism, and infinitism. My goal in the remainder of the chapter will be to show that coherentism and infinitism are actually versions of foundationalism. First, however, I will further explicate the notion of foundationalism as it appears in this chapter and as it will appear throughout the dissertation.

2.2. Foundationalism

The standard route to foundationalism is via what has come to be known as the Regress Problem (and its concomitant Regress Argument). The Regress Argument looks like this:

1. Suppose there is no foundational justification.
2. A proposition can either be justified by another proposition that is not identical to the first proposition or not justified by another proposition.
3. If there is no foundational justification, then for any justified proposition, that proposition must be justified by another proposition that is not identical to the first proposition.
4. For any justified proposition, that proposition must be justified by another proposition that is not identical to the first proposition.
5. If (4) is true, then for any proposition, P_1 that is justified, there must exist another justified proposition, P_2 , that provides P_1 with its justification.

6. If (5) is true, then an infinite regress results.
7. If (6) is true, then knowledge and justification are impossible.
8. (7) is absurd.

Therefore,

9. There is foundational justification.
10. If there is foundational justification then foundationalism is true.

Therefore,

11. Foundationalism is true.

Philosophers then argue about whether foundationalism actually solves the Regress Problem.¹⁰

Some philosophers¹¹ primarily identify foundationalism with a thesis about the *structure* of justification. But this is not quite right. As we've already noted, structure alone leaves out two important components of a justificational theory: the ultimate source of justification and the type of justification (heritable or emergent). Further, there is no reason for preferring one particular structure of propositions to some other when considering whether some theory is foundationalist in nature. Foundationalism is a theory about the source and type of justification rather than specifically about the merely structural relations between justified items. The following criterion, then, is both necessary and sufficient for something's being a foundationalist justificational theory. Call this the *Master Condition on Foundationalism*:

- (i) If anything at all is justified, then there is at least one *foundationally justified* proposition and (ii) if anything other than the foundationally justified proposition(s) is justified, then it is justified entirely because of its relationship to the foundationally justified propositions.

¹⁰ See Klein (2005), Smithies (2014).

¹¹ See Porter (2006), Fumerton (2010), Smithies (2014).

Further, the general discussion of foundationalism in the literature revolves around the distinction and relations between immediate justification, mediate justification, non-inferential justification and inferential justification. Justification is immediate iff it can be possessed by a justified item unmediated by some further justified item or item/relation that supplies justification. Justification is non-inferential iff it can be possessed by a justified item not in virtue of the inferential relation that item stands in to some other justified item. This is simple enough. However, philosophers¹² generally talk about *immediate* and *non-inferential* justification as though they are synonyms (and similarly, mediate and inferential justification as if they are synonyms). This is not strictly true. Justification is immediate iff it is not *mediated*. A further argument is needed to prove that the only thing that could mediate justification is *inference*. Granted, there is no fleshed-out position in the literature that treats anything *other than inference* as a potential justification-mediator, but it has at least not been proven impossible that there could be justification-mediators other than inference. *Foundationalism* is generally taken to be the Master Condition *along with* the thesis that *all justification is heritable justification*. However, strictly, there is no reason to claim that theories that employ at least one foundational justifier and that this justifier is the justificational ground of all other justification are not also versions of foundationalism.

There is also a distinction to be drawn between *causal justification conditions* on a proposition and *epistemic justification conditions* on a proposition. If X is a causal justification condition on proposition P, then it is *in virtue of X's* obtaining that P is justified (for a specific person, S). X *makes* P justified. If X is an epistemic justification condition on P, then X *provides justification for* P. These two notions come apart in all but crude externalist causal theories of

¹² E.g., Pryor (2005) and Alston (1976)

justification. Something need not be the state in virtue of which a proposition is justified in order to justify that proposition and something need not justify a proposition if it is the state in virtue of which that proposition is justified. This important distinction is subtle enough for some leading epistemologists to have missed. For example, Pryor (2005) does not adequately draw this distinction.

2.3. Justificational vs. Semantic Independence

Wittgenstein (followed by Sellars, followed by McDowell and Brandom, along with many others)¹³ obliquely draws our attention to the distinction between (i) the justificational independence of propositions and (ii) the semantic independence of propositions. Unfortunately, all four of these philosophers, with the possible exception of Brandom, run roughshod over the distinction, and in at least some of their writings, use this conflation as grounds for the dismissal of foundationalism. In the meantime, we can define each of these notions as follows:

Justificational Independence

A proposition, P, is justificationaly independent of some other object, property, state, process, etc., X (where $X \neq P$), just in case no dependence relation holds between P's justificational status and specific properties, including the ontological and existential status, of X (in either direction).

Semantic Independence

A proposition, P, is semantically independent of some other object, property, state, process, etc., X (where $X \neq P$), just in case no dependence relation holds between P's semantic content and specific properties, including ontological and existential status, of X (in either direction).

We can also specify (i) *absolute* and (ii) *relative* versions of the above two notions, whereby (i) a proposition is *absolutely independent* in the relevant sense when its relevant status is independent, in the relevant sense, from *all other objects* and (ii) a proposition is *relatively*

¹³ Wittgenstein (2009), Sellars (1997), McDowell (1996), Brandom (1998)

independent in the relevant sense when its relevant status is independent, in the relevant sense, from *some specified class of objects*. Hence, absolute independence entails relative independence and a failure of relative independence entails a failure of absolute independence.

Wittgenstein and the other neo-Wittgensteinian philosophers mentioned above have made a strong case for the failure of the relative (and hence, of the absolute) *semantic* independence of propositions. The thread that runs through each of their arguments is that certain know-how, abilities, pragmatic facts or knowledge, properties of the acts of individual tokenings of terms, etc., play a role in the determination of the semantic content of propositions and sub-sentential items.¹⁴ These arguments have as their intellectual progenitors Hegel's arguments in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Alston (1976) lays out similar arguments made by Lehrer (1990) and Will (1974). All of these philosophers, excluding Alston, believe that foundationalism is committed to *semantic* independence. But this is false. Foundationalism is *emphatically not* a thesis about semantic content, but instead a thesis about the source and nature of *epistemic justification only*.

From a contemporary point of view, armed with the conceptual distinction between justification and semantics, it seems odd that philosophers would have conflated justificational and semantic independence as they did.¹⁵ While arguments are not given in the literature for the presumption that justificational independence includes semantic independence, we can plausibly

¹⁴ See Wittgenstein (2009), Sellars (1997), McDowell, (1996, 2013), and Brandom, (1998, 2010).

¹⁵ Although perhaps this wouldn't seem that strange to philosophers with an appreciation of the historical contours and philosophical dialectic of 20th-Century Anglo-American philosophy. verificationist semantics (and its extension as far as the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein) systematically and self-consciously conflates the semantic and the epistemic. This conflation is claimed to be a feature and not a bug of verificationism. Even despite his sustained attack on the foundational verificationist assumptions that led to this conflation (in, e.g., Quine (1960)), Quine himself was guilty of the same conflation. It was this mistake, on the part of Quine, that led to his (historically and philosophically disastrous, to my mind—a disaster we're just now, fifty years later, starting to recover from) assimilation of the analytic/synthetic distinction—an essentially semantic distinction—to the epistemic/pragmatic distinction of unwilling/willing to give up. See Hanna (*forthcoming*: 2015), Ch. 4, for a philosophically inflected dialectical-historical retelling of the history of the analytic/synthetic distinction from Kant through Quine and beyond.

reconstruct two such arguments, call them the *Argument from Semantic Knowledge* and the *Argument from Reliable Differentiation*.

Argument from Semantic Knowledge

1. To be justified in believing that-p, a subject must be able to differentiate reliably between justificational states that justify p and those that don't.
2. To be able to differentiate reliably between justificational states that justify p and those that don't, a subject must be justified that she is using language correctly.
3. If a subject must be justified that she is using language correctly before she can be justified in believing something further, then all justified beliefs rely on some further belief.

Therefore,

4. All justified beliefs rely on some further belief.

Argument from Reliable Differentiation

1. In order to be justified in believing anything, we must be justified that we are using language correctly.
2. If a subject must be justified that she is using language correctly before she can be justified in believing something further, then all justified beliefs rely on some further belief.

Therefore,

3. All justified beliefs rely on some further belief.

Note that proposition (4) from the first argument and proposition (3) from the second, which are identical, when combined with a plausible condition on foundationalism to the effect that *there are some justified beliefs that do not rely on some further belief*, would mean the falsity of foundationalism. Moreover, it should be obvious what's gone wrong in both of these arguments: The word *rely*, as used in this argument-context, in both arguments, is ambiguous between semantic dependence and justificational dependence. Once we clear that up, we can accept the

conclusions of the arguments (that is, if their premises are true, which I won't examine here) without thereby committing ourselves to an anti-foundationalist proposition.

2.4. The Argument from Phenomenal Priority for Foundationalism

In this section, I provide an argument that I call the *Argument from Phenomenal Priority for Foundationalism* for the conclusion that foundationalism is the only theory of internalist justification. What do I mean by this? First, I do not mean that foundationalism is true or is the only true theory of justification broadly construed. If internalism somehow turns out to be impossible, then so will internalistic versions of foundationalism. However, I want to remind the reader that the purpose of this dissertation is *not* to evaluate the actual truth of internalism or internalist foundationalism, but instead to see whether and how internalism is possible at all—to discover the constitutive mechanics of the claimed normative justificatory component of internalistic justification.

Klein (2005) argues that since foundationalism is defined by a proposition's justificational status depending on that proposition's instantiation of a particular property, coherentism is also a proper version of foundationalism. Klein does not extend his critique to his own theory, infinitism, and believes infinitism to be a legitimate competitor theory to foundationalism (which he conceives of as traditional foundationalism, traditional coherentism, or any other theory that combines their features). But if coherentism is a version of foundationalism because the recognition of a propositional set's specific properties is the real justification for or strong dependence base for the justification for emergent justification, then infinitism is similarly a version of foundationalism.

We can explicate *phenomenal priority* as follows:

A theory has the property of phenomenal priority iff all properties that are the proper and essential intentional objects of that theory strongly depend on phenomenal properties.

The theory of internalism, then, possesses the property of phenomenal priority since the two proper and essential intentional objects of internalism, (i) positive justificatory status or justificatory force of a subject or of a proposition for a subject at a time and (ii) a given subject's specific phenomenal state at a time, strongly depend on particular, localized phenomenal properties, i.e., a particular subject's phenomenal state at a time. Here we should also recall that for internalism as conceived in this dissertation, it is phenomenal properties all the way down—there is nothing of a non-phenomenal nature that is relevant to the properties that are the proper and essential intentional objects of internalism.

The fact that internalism possesses the property of phenomenal priority entails that each potentially internalist justificatory theory possesses that property as well. According to foundationalism, our awareness of foundational justification, along with our awareness of its justificatory status, serves as the relevant phenomenal strong dependence base. According to coherentism, our awareness of an individual proposition's coherence with the set of propositions of which it is a proper member, or the greater coherence of a given set of propositions, along with our awareness of the justificatory force of coherence, serves as the relevant phenomenal strong dependence base. According to foundherentism, our awarenesses of both (i) foundational justification along with our awareness of its justificatory status and (ii) our awareness of an individual proposition's coherence with the set of propositions of which it is a proper member, or the greater coherence of a given set of propositions, along with our awareness of the justificatory force of coherence, jointly and mutually supportively serve as the relevant phenomenal strong dependence base. According to infinitism, our awareness of a proposition's membership in an (actual or potentially) infinite chain of propositions serves as the relevant phenomenal strong dependence base.

It is crucial to remember, too, that according to the strong internalist, it is *in no way* the actual obtaining of coherence relations, propositional set membership, etc. that strongly determines justificatory properties, statuses, or facts. The reason is that coherence relations, propositional set membership, etc. are *externalistic* in such a way that their obtaining is epistemically opaque to the relevant subject. What does so-determine justificatory properties, statuses, and facts is awareness of or acquaintance with specific phenomenal properties. Since this is the case, however, all (apparently different) versions of strong internalist theories are (in fact) versions of foundationalism. Here is the argument that shows this:

1. All internalist justificational theories require a subject's immediate recognition of the instantiation of a property or relation or of a fact or state of affairs.
2. This immediate recognition of the instantiation of a property or relation or of a fact or state of affairs is itself justificatory.
3. If, in some theory of justification, immediate recognition of the instantiation of a property or relation or of a fact or state of affairs is itself justificatory, then that theory is a version of foundationalism.

Therefore,

4. All internalist justificational theories are versions of foundationalism.

Premise 1 is the most vulnerable to criticism—more on this below. Premise 2 simply lays out the long-established relationship between immediate justification and the rest of the justificational set of propositions. Premise 3 is just the definition of foundationalism.

Let's first look at responses to this argument that are dead on arrival. The first is to claim that it is not *recognition of* the instantiation of some property or relation that serves as the strong dependence base or the actual justification, but merely the *instantiation itself*. This response cuts *recognition* out of the picture. But this response is nothing more than an abandonment of internalism in favor of some form of externalism.

Let's take a look at *singular* primary justificational theories first, i.e., theories that hold that there is one and only one primary justificatory component. I see no dialectical way around the conclusion that all internalist theories are versions of foundationalism for the proponent of an atomistic justificational theory, i.e., one that accepts, as its sole primary justificational component, atomistic justification. Since, however, the only prominent atomistic justificational theory is foundationalism, there is little reason to believe that a proponent of an atomistic justificational theory would balk at this conclusion.

The proponent of an emergent justificational theory has one dialectical out, as I see it. She might claim that while *recognition* of the instantiation of some property or relation serves as the strong dependence base for emergent justification, (i) that recognition is not itself justificatory in that it is not recognition of justification and (ii) there is no foundational *proposition* that is justified by the actual, emergent, primary justification. The picture would be this: S recognizes either P's membership in a set of propositions with a specific property or that specific propositional set's instantiation of that property, e.g., S recognizes P's membership in a coherent set or propositions or a propositional set structured or structurable as an infinite chain. That recognition serves as the strong dependence base and nothing more for the instantiation of the relevant normative justificational properties in P and P's co-propositional-set-members.

I think this response, while initially attractive, misses the mark on two fronts. First, it is plausible that proponents of emergent justification have missed the necessary existence of a proposition that stands justificationally between the recognition that serves as the strong dependence base for justification and the emergent-justified set of propositions (coherent, infinite, or otherwise). It is *this proposition* that is immediately justified, not the members of the propositional set themselves, and this proposition then transfers its justification to the relevant

set, out of which justification emerges. The content of this intervening proposition would be something like *Proposition P is a member of Propositional Set A and A is coherent.* or *Proposition P is a member of Propositional Set A and A is structured or structurable as an infinite chain.* This would be a sort of mongrel theory possessing atomistic, transfer, and emergent justification.

Second, however, even if it is false that there exists the intervening proposition described in the previous paragraph, it is important to remember that foundationalism is defined by the existence of foundational justification where foundational justification is to be interpreted *either in the sense of a foundational item's being justification or providing justification.* The thrust of internalism is to guarantee that whatever plays the foundationally justificatory role *either by being justification itself or by providing justification* is directly consciously accessible, and recognized, and also that it is this recognition that serves to imbue the related justification with its justificatory force. The upshot of all of this is that coherentism appeals, no less than does foundationalism, to foundational justification. For the coherentist, however, *all propositions* are foundationally justified by emergence justification. In turn, what this means is that coherentism is properly classed as a version of foundationalism.

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, my goal has been to show that all properly internalistic theories of epistemic justification are versions of justificational foundationalism. While the mechanics of justificational theories are complicated (and there is substantial theoretical/conceptual discussion that I have left aside here, since it is not directly relevant to the goal of this chapter), and so laying out and explicating exactly what justificational theories entail can be exacting work, the central argument of this chapter is simple. Since all internalistic theories of justification require

phenomenal accessibility to justifiers and since coherentism and infinitism both take membership in a specific sort of set to be what ultimately justifies or provides justification for all of the propositions in that set, recognition of this set membership is foundationally justificatory for coherentism and infinitism. This means that both coherentism and infinitism satisfy the Master Condition on Foundationalism, and hence, are both versions of foundationalism. Granted, classical foundationalism, foundationalist coherentism, and foundationalist infinitism are still different in important ways. What is relevant here, however, is that they are all still versions of foundationalism.

My reason for proving that all internalistic theories are foundationalist is so that I can prove things about internalistic theories by proving things about foundationalist theories. In the next two chapters, I do just this. I am aided in this goal by the fact that almost all prominent foundationalist philosophers are also (at least nominally) internalists as well, or at least think that the sort of foundationalism they propound must be able to answer to internalist demands. Chapter 3 is an explication of the three prominent internalist foundationalist theories present in the literature. In that chapter, I focus heavily on the *phenomenal* component of internalist foundationalism. Chapter 4 is an analysis of these theories in terms of the *normative* component of foundationalism.

Chapter 3. The Phenomenology of Justification

In the previous chapter, I argued that all properly conceived and formulated theories of internalistic justification are versions of foundationalism regarding justification.

Foundationalism, let us recall, is the theory that beliefs possess epistemic justification either because they themselves are foundational beliefs or because they are properly structurally and semantically related to foundational beliefs. Foundational beliefs are those beliefs that are justified, but not in virtue of their relation to any further beliefs. Non-foundational beliefs are those beliefs that are justified in virtue of their ultimate relation to foundational beliefs. It helps to think of justification *flowing* upward from foundational beliefs to non-foundational beliefs.

While this thesis, that all internalistic justificational theories are versions of foundationalism, is interesting in its own right, its place in and value to this dissertation's overall project is merely instrumental. By showing that all internalistic justificational theories are foundationalist, I am then able to use the developments in the theory of foundationalism to examine internalistic justification. This move is necessary, I believe, because while substantial work has been done on the question of how exactly foundationalism is supposed to work, *qua* normative epistemic justificational theory, very little such work has been done on internalism-proper. The sociological reasons for this are not entirely clear, but perhaps it has been because most philosophers think that if anything at all has a claim to being a plausible justificational theory, it is internalism. Color me skeptical—it's not only not self-evidently clear to me that internalism is a plausible justificational theory, it's not even adequately clear how it's supposed to be a justificational theory at all. Getting adequately clear on that is the project of this dissertation.

The present chapter and the next are best seen as a pair that investigates the issue of the nature of the internalist foundationalist justifier—that epistemically accessible thing that is claimed, in versions of internalist foundationalism, to be the source/ground/basis/origin of epistemic justification. While there are very interesting metaphysical and mentalistic issues surrounding the ontological place of internalistic epistemic justifiers in the world, as well the relationship between brain states, mental states, and internalistic epistemic justifiers, those issues are not my present concern. I am confident that whatever I say here can be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the reader's preferred metaphysical theory and philosophy of mind.

The reader will have noticed, no doubt, via a glance at the Table of Contents at the end of the Introduction, that while I spend two chapters, the present one and the next, on the nature of specifically *foundational* justification, I plan to devote almost no time to *non-foundational* justification. My reasons for this are threefold, and I think that it is important to briefly explicate them now. First, most philosophers have taken the most interesting and difficult issues regarding the nature of justification to be found in an examination of specifically *foundational* justification, so what I say here is in keeping with the prevailing dialectical winds. Second, most philosophers, myself included, seem to believe that the correct interpretation of non-foundational justification can be read directly off of the correct interpretation of foundational justification with only minor emendations. That is, it is not as though foundational and non-foundational justification are categorically different sorts of justification. Finally, the positive theory that I provide in Chapters 9 and 10 for how internalistic justification could possibly work is of a sort that its application to both foundational and non-foundational justification should be unproblematic—i.e., I am not there merely proposing a theory of foundational justification, but instead, a theory of internalistic

justification broadly construed—and more specifically, sufficiently broadly construed so as to include both foundational and non-foundational internalistic justification.

This chapter is largely explicative in nature while the next is largely argumentative. In this chapter, my goal is to get clear on the epistemic nature of the foundational justifiers in two broad sorts of internalist foundational theories: the classical internalist foundationalism of philosophers such as Lawrence BonJour¹ and Richard Fumerton² on the one hand, and the “seemings”-theories of philosophers such as James Pryor³ and Michael Huemer⁴ on the other. The main distinction between the two kinds of theories is the sort of object or state that is claimed to be justificatory. In classical theories, it is a phenomenal state of direct awareness of the facts that is taken to be justificatory, while in seemings-theories, it is a mentalistic phenomenal item called a *seeming* that is taken to be justificatory. While the differences between the natures of these two claimed justifiers are subtle, it is important to get a full appreciation of them in order to understand completely the arguments of the next chapter.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I lay out BonJour’s classical foundationalism and Fumerton’s classical foundationalism, drawing attention to their differences, but more importantly, to their similarities. Second, I lay out the Pryor/Huemer seemings-theory. Finally, I draw attention to a few epistemologically relevant differences between the two theories. My goal here is not to adjudicate between the plausibility of the two sorts of theories—plenty of other philosophers have already done excellent work in this area, and I’ll point out some of that work along the way. My goal is simply to talk about the state of the art in terms of the internalist foundationalist picture of justification.

¹ See BonJour (1978, 1985, 1998, 2001, 2003).

² See Fumerton (1995, 2001, 2010).

³ See Pryor (2000, 2005).

⁴ See Huemer (2001, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2013).

One distinction that it is important to make before I begin this investigation, and one that will be with me throughout this dissertation, is the distinction between a foundational *belief* and foundational *justification*. A parody of foundationalism is that it is a theory that claims that certain beliefs called foundational beliefs are justified, but not by anything—that justification doesn't come from anywhere. But this picture is inaccurate. According to foundationalism, foundational beliefs are justified by foundational justification, and there are many places that justification might come from. What the foundationalist *outright rejects* is that all justification must come from further beliefs. For a justificational picture that claims that all and only beliefs or belief-like doxastic states can play the role of justifiers,⁵ a foundationalist picture is ruled out by fiat. However, one of the objectives of this chapter is to show that the picture of a *foundational justifier* is at least coherent.

3.1. Classical Foundationalism

The two prominent versions of classical foundationalism are most clearly articulated by Bonjour and Fumerton. I will outline each in turn. What is shared by both versions is a commitment to the thesis that justifiers are states of direct awareness or apprehension of facts that are relevant to the truth of foundational beliefs. Classical foundationalists, like most epistemologists, subscribe to what I called, in the Introduction, the Standard Picture:

Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity (Standard Picture)

Truth is the one and only intrinsic epistemic good such that any other possible epistemic goods are good for the sake of truth and truth is not chosen for the sake of any further epistemic good.

⁵ We see such a picture in Sellars (1975, 1997), Bonjour (1978, 1985), Davidson (1983, 428), McDowell (1994, 7), Brandom (1998), Williams (2005).

Thus, say classical foundationalists, a state of direct awareness of facts relevant to the truth of *p* is imbued with epistemic normativity, i.e., the ability to justify, precisely because of its relation to facts relevant to the truth of *p*, since truth is itself epistemically normative.

According to BonJour's classical foundationalism, conscious experience, the sort of thing that, in at least some cases serves as a foundational justifier, is reflexive in such a way that it entails awareness (on the part of the experiencer) of the phenomenal contents of the experience.⁶ This reflexivity is internal to the experience itself and is directed (at least) at the phenomenal contents of the experience itself. The reflexivity needn't, however, be strong enough to ground or guarantee *self-conscious* awareness or *meta-awareness* of some sort. So BonJour's picture of experience is perfectly compatible with a picture whereby non-self-conscious things like infants and non-human animals, merely sentient things, possess the right sort of experience for justification. It is important to note, however, that when BonJour claims that when an experiencer is necessarily aware of the phenomenal contents of the experience, he is not also claiming that the contents of the experience are the objects of experience themselves. So for BonJour, the following is an entirely natural sentence: "While I am experiencing an apple, what I am aware of is not the apple that I am experiencing, but instead the phenomenal contents of the experience of the apple."

On this view, if I can become aware of sensory items such as the empirical world, non-empirical, non-mental items such as Platonic objects and things in a Fregean third realm, bodily items such as pleasures and pains, and mental items such as beliefs and desires, I am directly aware not of the items themselves, but instead of my conscious experience of the items. What it

⁶ Some, myself included, might note that "conscious experience" is already the sort of thing that involves awareness of itself, and that "phenomenal contents" are necessarily experienced in such a way that BonJour's reflexive component of conscious experience is either redundant or confuses first-order conscious with second-order self-conscious or at least consciousness-of-consciousness. If this is a confusion on BonJour's part, nothing said here in terms of explication will turn on it.

is to be consciously aware of something is to be directly aware of the phenomenal contents of the experience of that thing. This directness is a conceptually unmediated phenomenal awareness of the relevant facts themselves. The objective directly accessible targets can be both conceptually articulated, such as belief, and conceptually unarticulated, such as bodily pleasures.⁷ The fact, however, that we can become directly aware of conceptually articulated items as well as conceptually unarticulated items does not mean that we have two different sorts of direct awareness—conceptual and nonconceptual. For BonJour, *direct awareness* is a nonconceptual process with nonconceptual contents in that it requires the deployment of none of the subject's own concepts, the exercise of none of her conceptual capabilities, regardless of whether its object is itself conceptually articulated or conceptually unarticulated. We should not confuse, BonJour would caution, the conceptually unmediated nature of direct awareness with the perhaps conceptually articulated nature of some of the objects of direct awareness.

According to BonJour, states of direct phenomenal awareness of the facts relevant to the truth of a belief foundationally justify that belief insofar as a subject is aware of and attending to the relevant features or components of her direct awareness, believes and is aware of her belief that her direct awareness contains these features or components, and is in an epistemic position to recognize that this belief *agrees with* or *fits* the relevant features or components of her direct awareness. For example, according to BonJour's picture, in order for me to be visually foundationally justified in believing that the cat is on the mat, I must be directly aware of and attending to phenomenal features of my visual experience that represent or indicate that the cat

⁷ Note that for someone like Hegel (1977) who believes not just that our entire mental lives are conceptually articulated (a version of both state and content conceptualism (see Evans (1982) for the original conceptualism/nonconceptualism distinction, even though Evans's distinction does not match contemporary usage. See Bermúdez & Cahn (2011) for a contemporary overview) but also that the world itself is composed of concepts, bodily pleasures will also be conceptually articulated. I am leaving aside such positions as Hegel's in the present exposition. Nothing will turn on this.

and the mat are present and stand in a particular relation to one another, I must believe and be aware of my belief that the phenomenal features of my visual experience represent or indicate that the cat and the mat are present and stand in a particular relation to one another, and I must be in an epistemic position to recognize that the relevant features of my visual experience agree with or fit my belief.

According to Fumerton's classical foundationalism, by contrast, foundational justification relies on a relation technically known as *acquaintance*. Unlike Bonjour's notion of direct awareness of the phenomenal contents of experiential states as built into these states themselves, Fumerton's "acquaintance" is a relation between epistemic subject and truth-related fact. Specifically, it is a *thought*, a non-linguistic mental complex that is the primary bearer of truth-values, that possibly stands in acquaintance relations to facts. Like Bonjour's direct awareness property of experiences, however, Fumertonian acquaintance is also conceptually unmediated, i.e., nonconceptual.

On this picture, I have a foundationally justified belief insofar as I am acquainted with facts relevant to the truth of that belief, acquainted with my possession of the relevant thought, and acquainted with the correspondence between the fact and the thought. In building his classical foundationalist theory, Fumerton is clearly concerned with eliminating the possibility that anything relevant to the truth of a belief, and hence relevant to the justification (according to the Standard Picture) of a belief, could fall outside the realm of the epistemically accessible. According to the standard version of the correspondence theory of truth, either truth strongly supervenes on the obtaining of a relation of correspondence between primary bearer of truth-values and the relevant facts or truth just *is* the obtaining relation of correspondence between primary bearer of truth-values and the relevant facts. On Fumerton's picture, then, we are

justified either insofar as we are acquainted with each of the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions on the truth of the justified belief, or insofar as we are acquainted with the truth of the belief itself.

3.2. Seemings Theories

One might claim that it would be difficult to find an epistemological theory more philosophically intuitive than seemings theories. We all know what it means to say that it seems to us as if something is the case. This is not technical vocabulary but the vocabulary of the competent language-user. When it seems to us that something is the case, then that's reason to believe that it is the case. Isn't this the way we all already operate? Isn't this a simple way of explaining how we all manage to get around the world? If so, then why not build an epistemological theory on top of these obvious facts?

There is a terminological consideration that I want to point out at the outset of this section, not only because the terminology that I here employ is, in a very minor sense, unusual, but also because my choice of this terminology has a philosophical justification and philosophical implications—somewhat ironically, my use of nonstandard terminology is an attempt to be maximally clear. Many seemings theorists, e.g., Huemer and Pryor, prefer to present their version of internalist foundationalism as a sort of conservatism, in the broad sense of the term. *Conservatism* in this sense is the position that certain beliefs, positions, states, etc. have a kind of epistemic inertia (to be distinguished from mere *psychological* inertia in which one is merely *disinclined* to modify her epistemic situation) such that these beliefs, positions, states, etc. enjoy some kind of positive epistemic status *precisely because* they are the normal, typical, already held or possessed beliefs, positions, states. While this epistemic betterness can be overridden in most versions of epistemic conservatism, without any defeaters, the existing and

the natural is to be epistemically preferred. To make the analogy with political conservatism (although, of course, not to assume a natural connection between *epistemic* conservatives and *political* conservatives) explicit, the political conservative often believes that existing institutions are politically better and ought to be politically preferred unless some good reason can be provided to prefer some other institution.

However, in this dissertation, I do not assume that all seemings theorists are epistemic conservatives because, conceptually, seemings theories and epistemic conservatism are logically independent of one another. One could just as consistently be a seemings theorist and an epistemic progressive (to stretch the political analogy a bit), who thinks that more epistemic work needs to be done, over and above initially existing epistemic conditions, in order to secure even minimal justification. Accordingly, when I am discussing a seemings position that is silent on whether it is also a version of epistemic conservatism, I will use the term “seemings” and not “conservatism” to refer to that position. As I’ve mentioned, I think that this terminology is somewhat unorthodox. For example, the way that Huemer initially formulates what he calls “phenomenal conservatism” is not strictly a version of conservatism at all, although it is a version of seemings theory. It would take an extra thesis to turn it into conservatism-proper.

According to the seemings theorist, internalist foundationalistic justifiers are non-doxastic (in that they are neither beliefs nor relevantly similar to beliefs) propositional attitudes that are nonetheless not describable in terms of inclinations to believe some proposition or other. If a person possesses a seeming, then she is aware not only of her possession of the seeming, but is also aware of the content of that seeming (and, presumably, if she is a normally functioning epistemic subject, aware of the relation between that content and possible particular belief

contents). There are specific nuances that distinguish the individual seemings theories from one another, but they all agree on something like this:

For any person, S, seeming, J, and belief, B, iff it's the case that the content of J = the content of B and S is in possession of J, S thereby and because of her possession of J possesses some degree of justification for B.

The justification provided by seemings, just like that provided by most justificational sources, is defeasible in that in the presence of additional pieces of evidence (presumably other seemings), evidence that either contradicts, undercuts, or overrides the content of the initial seeming, the all-things-considered strength initial justification would call for reappraisal. Huemer (2007, 30) has tended to formulate the justificatory criterion such that defeaters would not only change the all-things-considered justification, but would also negate the possible justification provided by the seeming such that the seeming would lose any and all justification it initially provided. This formulation is unnecessary, however. The standard picture of defeaters is not that they *remove* the justification that they defeat, but that they *overwhelm* it in some way—overriding, undercutting, etc. There is nothing incoherent about claiming that you have justification for p, but overriding justification for not-p, and that the justification for p, while having been overridden, is nonetheless still justification.

Most seemings theorists also include as a conceptual component of a seeming a felt push/pull toward the truth or the acceptance of the truth of the propositional content of the seeming (which, we recall, would also be the propositional content of the belief justified by the seeming).⁸ This push/pull, a sort of *noetic force*, in William James's terminology⁹ is a simultaneous felt representation of the propositional content of the seeming as true or at least very likely true as well as a felt taking-for-true (*Fürwahrhalten*), to use Kantian terminology, of

⁸ See Tolhurst (1998), Huemer (2001), Pryor (2005), Tucker (2013)

⁹ James (2013) 1482738295

at least some positive degree.¹⁰ This felt push/pull is supposed to be distinct from an inclination to believe since, according to Huemer, one might possess a defeated seeming, and thereby have no inclination at all to believe the content of the seeming, and yet still feel the noetic force of the seeming, the push/pull toward the truth of the propositional content of the seeming. Some, e.g., Tooley (2013) have raised doubts about the intelligibility of this notion. While I don't here want to examine its plausibility, I merely want to note that there is at least some debate over its possible existence.

Porter (2006) has noted that there are two ways that the justification provided by foundational justifiers can end up justifying foundational beliefs: either noninferentially or inferentially. According to the noninferential picture, the connection between the foundational justifier and the belief justified by that foundation is neither an inference nor inference-like. The possession of this justifier alone by an epistemic subject is sufficient to justify whatever belief it is the justifier is justificationaly related to. According to the inferential picture, the connection between the foundational justifier and the belief justified by that foundation is an inference. However, since, according to foundationalism, foundational beliefs are not themselves justified by any further beliefs, the inference must be *directly* between the foundational justifier and the foundational belief. The relation between justifier and foundational belief is something like this: There are in fact three relevant beliefs: (i) the foundational belief, (ii) a belief whose propositional content is the existence or presence or possession of the foundational justifier, and (iii) a condition belief connecting the truth of (ii) with the justificational status of (i), something like, "When it seems to S that p, then S's belief that p thereby possesses at least some degree of justification." While I am skeptical both that the inferential picture actually justifies the

¹⁰ See Kant (1998) A820/B848

purportedly foundational belief and that it is actually a version of foundationalism, I will leave my skeptical worries aside. I merely wish to note that the inferential picture is one that shows up in the literature. The inferential picture is not relevant to classical foundationalism, since, according to the classical foundationalist, states of direct awareness of truth-relevant facts are what directly and immediately justify foundational beliefs. There is nothing, according to the classical foundationalist picture, on the side of the justifier, that could stand in an inferential relation to the foundational belief.

3.3. Key Differences

The first and most obvious key difference between classical foundationalism and seemings theories is that the justifier for the classical foundationalist is conceptually unarticulated while the justifier for the seemings theorist is conceptually articulated. It is nonconceptual states of direct awareness or acquaintance, even if these states take as one of their relata a conceptually articulated item (or even a concept!), the states themselves still involve neither the application of any concepts nor the exercise of any of the subject's conceptual capabilities. By definition, seemings are conceptually articulated items—they are propositional attitudes. Since all propositions involve concepts, the state that is a seeming necessarily will have concepts as some of its contents.

But I have simplified perhaps illicitly in the previous paragraph when discussing specifically classical foundationalism. It is important, when examining whether and precisely what about these justifiers is conceptual to draw the distinction between a mental representation's being "state-conceptual" and something's being "content-conceptual." If a mental representation is state-conceptual, then the mental state associated with that representation will necessarily involve the application of or exercise of the subject's concepts or

conceptual capabilities; and a mental representation is state nonconceptual if and only if the state does not require conceptual capacities for the specification of that state. If a mental representation is content-conceptual, on the other hand, then regardless of its status as state-conceptual or state-nonconceptual, at least some component of the content of the state necessarily involves concepts. For the classical foundationalist, while the states that serve as justifiers are themselves always conceptually unarticulated, so state-nonconceptualism is always true of classical foundationalism, whether the content is also conceptually unarticulated will depend on which view of content—internalism or externalism—is correct. If content *internalism* is correct, then both the state and the content of the justifier will be conceptually unarticulated. However, if content *externalism* is correct, if the correct version of externalism is one that says that the intentional objects of the relevant states are literal components of the contents of those states, and if those intentional objects are themselves conceptually articulated, then while the state that is the justifier will be conceptually unarticulated, the content of the justifier itself will be conceptually articulated.

The second key difference between classical foundationalism and seemings theories is the ways in which these theories' justifiers are claim to be connected to the foundational beliefs they purportedly foundationally justify. According to the classical foundationalist account, when all of the relevant conditions of either direct awareness or acquaintance are met, the related beliefs become justified via a noninferential attachment of the foundational justifier to the foundational belief. What this means is that it is not as though the relevant complex of justificatory conditions transfers or transmits justification via an inference that holds between the justifier and the justified belief, nor is it the case that the justification of the foundational belief merely supervenes on the obtaining of the relevant complex of justificatory conditions. The

relevant complex of justificatory conditions *is* the justification for the foundational belief, and it performs its justificatory function via a noninferential connection to the foundational belief. The reason why this connection needs to be noninferential is that the justificatory complex itself is conceptually unarticulated. Assuming (as most philosophers do) that inferential relations can only hold between two proposition-like entities, and assuming (as most philosophers do) that propositions and proposition-like entities are necessarily conceptually articulated, it would not be possible for the justificational complex and the justified belief to stand in an inferential relation to one another. Some philosophers (notably Sellars and those influenced by him¹¹) are skeptical of the possibility of philosophically interesting relations (as the relation of justifying certainly is) holding between the conceptually articulated and the conceptually unarticulated. However, Fumerton, BonJour, and Pryor have noted that relations of correspondence and descriptive adequacy, both philosophically interesting, seem to hold between conceptually articulated mental states and the conceptually unarticulated non-mental world.¹² Even further, Moser has noted that explanation or explanatory goodness or adequacy (scientific or otherwise) is a relation that holds between conceptually articulated sentences or mental items and the conceptually unarticulated world.¹³ If we have no problem with these relations, then we ought to have no problem with at least the intelligibility and possibility of a justificatory relation that holds between a conceptually unarticulated complex and a conceptually articulated belief.

Seemings, on the other hand, are themselves conceptually articulated items—they are propositional attitudes. Accordingly, the way is open for the justificatory relation between seemings and the foundational beliefs they justify to be an inferential relation. The seemings

¹¹ See Sellars (1963), (1975) BonJour (1978, 1985), Davidson (1983, 428), McDowell (1994, 7), Brandom (1998), Williams (2005).

¹² See Fumerton (2001, 13-14), BonJour (2001, 30), and Pryor (2005, 190-191), cited in Hasan (2013).

¹³ Moser (1989, 92-93). cited in Hasan (2013)

theorists are generally unclear about the relation they think obtains between seemings qua justifiers and the beliefs they purportedly justify, however. In his formulations of his theory, Huemer uses the ambiguous term *thereby* to refer to the relation seemings and justified beliefs stand in to one another. *Thereby* could signal supervenience, inference, even causation. Interpreting the relation between seemings and beliefs in the straightforward, intuitive manner that was employed in order to motivate the theory in the first place, however, I think that it is best to conclude that what is intended is an inferential relation between a seeming and a belief—beliefs are justified by seemings because they can be inferred from seemings. This opens up an interesting question about the actual propositional content of a seeming, one that I will only gesture at here. If we allow for beliefs to be inferred from seemings, and if the propositional content of a seeming is the same as the propositional content of the subsequently justified belief (as is claimed—a seeming that *p* justifies the belief that *p*), then is the relation between seemings and their subsequently justified beliefs one of *logical entailment*?

The third and final key difference between classical foundationalism and seemings theories is the story told about how the proposed justifiers are actually justificational, i.e., how the relevant states possess epistemic normativity. The classical foundationalist has a straightforward story to tell about where this epistemic normativity comes from. For both Bonjour and Fumerton, the relevant relation—of direct awareness and acquaintance, respectively—is one that, when exercised properly, puts the epistemic subject in contact with an awareness of the truth of the belief supposedly justified. Since, according to the Standard View, it is the truth of beliefs that is *the* epistemic good for beliefs, direct awareness of or acquaintance with that truth imbues those states of direct awareness or acquaintance with epistemic normativity such that they can perform a justificatory role. The story told by the seemings

theorist is not quite as clear, if it is present at all. According to the seemings theorist, seemings are states whose phenomenal content is *as if* their propositional content were true—they represent or present their content as true. But while this claim makes reference to truth, it is only *as if* or *phenomenally hypothetical* truth—this is the way things would be first-personally *were* things this way. Without some further reason or something further built into a seeming that would provide actual reason to think the propositional contents of the seeming *are* true, it seems as though the reference to truth in the definition of seemings is doing no actual justificatory work. To this, the seemings theorists, chief among them Huemer, have responded in two ways. The first has been go the way of the epistemic conservative and to claim that absent some defeater, the way things seem to us, the automatic way we take things to be, already has the epistemic normativity necessary to justify beliefs. No further explanation is needed since the fact that we take the world to be a certain way is itself the only support necessary for a justificational item. The second has been to claim that seemings are the only possible justificatory items and since to deny the justificatory status of seemings would be to implicitly claim to have justification for denying the justificatory status of seemings, seemings come prepackaged with their own refutation-prevention: To attempt a refutation of seemings theories is to implicitly presuppose the truth of seemings theories. I'll examine fully the claims of both the classical foundationalist and the seemings theorist regarding the source of epistemic normativity in the next chapter.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has been largely explicatory. I've laid out the two theories of internalistic foundationalism that appear commonly in the literature. These theories, classical foundationalism and seemings theory, while distinct in many ways, possess a few key similarities. Chief among

these similarities is the justificatory status of a phenomenally accessible mental state or complex of mental states. My reason for focusing on foundationalist theories specifically is because of the work done in the previous chapter. In the previous chapter, I showed that any acceptable version of an internalistic theory of epistemic justification must also be a version of a foundationalist theory of epistemic justification. In order to examine the specific issue I'm interested in exploring in this dissertation, viz., the nature and source of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification, I will come at the relevant issues by way of specifically foundationalist issues.

In the next chapter, I build on the explicative work accomplished in this chapter in order to show that, despite the sophistication of both classical foundationalist and seemings theories, as formulated, both are theoretically impoverished. Specifically, what is missing, I will show, is any plausible story for what it is that makes their purported justifiers justificatory such that they can play the normative epistemic role justifiers are claimed to be able to play. Not only are these theories *impoverished* in that they are missing something however; I will also show that due to their adherence to the Standard Picture, there is no plausible story that could be told regarding what it is that makes their purported justifiers justificatory. That is, there is no plausible way for either of classical foundationalism or seemings theories, when construed along the lines of the Standard Picture, to be coherent theories of internalistic epistemic justification.

Chapter 4. The Normativity of Justification

The current chapter and the previous one can be seen as a pair in which I investigate the central concept of this dissertation: internalistic justification. In Chapter 2, however, I showed that all acceptable versions of internalistic justification are also versions of justificational foundationalism, such that if something is an internalistic theory of justification, it accepts the thesis that all epistemic justification is ultimately based on or grounded in foundational justificational states: phenomenally accessible states that are able to play an epistemically normative justificatory role without inheriting the ability to play that role from their relation to some further belief or belief-like object or state. Accordingly, in Chapter 3 and in this chapter, I am investigating the nature of specifically *foundational* internalistic justification rather than internalistic justification construed more broadly or incompletely construed.

Internalistic justifiers have two defining components: their phenomenal component in terms of which they count as properly *internalistic*, and their epistemically normative component in terms of which they count as properly *justificatory*. In Chapter 3, I examined the specifically phenomenal properties of foundational justificatory states and the relation between those states and the foundational beliefs they purportedly justify. That chapter was largely explicatory in that I laid out the two prominent versions of internalist foundationalism present in the literature: classical foundationalism, and seemings theories. In this chapter, I examine the specifically epistemically normative properties of foundational justificatory states. The central question of this chapter will thus be this: In virtue of what is it that internalistic justifiers possess the requisite epistemically normative properties to play the role of epistemic justifiers?

The structure of this chapter is as follows: First, I briefly summarize the main features of seemings theories so that I can introduce and explicate a problem that has been raised for

seemings theories, viz., how it is possible for something answering to the criteria of a seeming to play the normative epistemic role it is supposed to play? Second, I generalize this problem from its specific application to seemings theories, so that it is applicable to all internalistic versions of foundationalism. This problem, what I call the Normative Problem for Justification (NPJ) sets up a demand for a theoretical answer to where, exactly, the epistemically normative force of justifiers is supposed to come from. Third, I show how NPJ is applicable to Bonjour's particular version of classical foundationalism. Fourth, I show how an argument employed by both Bonjour and by Huemer in order to support their particular justificational theories, what I'll call the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining, does not, despite what is sometimes apparently implicitly assumed, answer the challenge of NPJ. Fifth, I show how, despite recent claims to the contrary, Fumerton's particular version of classical foundationalism is also susceptible to the demands of NPJ.

Before I get started, however, I want to get clear on a technical issue concerning the relation between justifiers and normativity. As I am using the term, whatever counts as a *justifier* is itself normative or has normative properties such that a subject's possession of that justifier makes it epistemically better, *ceteris paribus*, for her to believe the proposition(s) justified by that justifier. However, someone might question this relation between a justifier and epistemic normativity as follows: Suppose that my visual awareness that the cat is on the mat serves as a justifier for my belief that the cat is on the mat. Neither the fact of the cat and her relation to the mat, nor the visual state, whose propositional content is of the cat and her relation to the mat, nor even the truth of that proposition, is itself normative (the true proposition, "The cat *is* on the mat" tells me nothing, as such, about what *ought* to be the case). Accordingly, justifiers themselves are not normative, or are at least not always normative.

This argument's premises are correct, but the conclusion drawn doesn't follow from those premises. It is important to keep in mind the distinction between the *content* of a state and the state itself, a distinction that was introduced in the last chapter when discussing conceptualism and nonconceptualism. The fact that the phenomenal and propositional content of a state is inherently descriptive needn't mean that the state itself isn't normative, especially if the state itself is of a type whose tokens are typically normative. When we are discussing the normativity of justifiers, we're discussing the normativity of just that—the *justifiers themselves*—and not of some mere proper component of the justifiers. Some state, e.g., a visual state, can be *normative* in that its possession or presence or instantiation has normative implications of licensing, prohibiting, requiring, etc., certain behaviors while its propositional content (or even just some proper component of its propositional content) is inherently descriptive. There is nothing contradictory or incoherent about that. This would be accomplished in one of three (mutually compatible) ways:

1. There is more propositional content in a justificational state than is immediately apparent and the additional propositional content is normative. E.g., In the visual state whose apparent propositional content is, "The cat is on the mat," there is additional, immediately unapparent propositional content normatively connecting the immediately apparent propositional content to beliefs or acts of believing. This normative propositional content makes it such that the justificational state itself is normative.
2. There is nonpropositional content in a justificational state and (at least some of) this nonpropositional content is normative. This normative nonpropositional content makes it such that the justificational state itself is normative.
3. Whether a justificational state is normative is not strictly determined by whether its content is normative, such that even if all of a state's content (propositional and otherwise) is inherently descriptive, the state itself can still be normative.

There is much more that can be said about the relationship between the specific properties of content and its relation to the specific properties of states, but I take what I've said to be

sufficient to address any worries that the particular picture I am working with is unintuitive or otherwise implausible. Further, there is an enormous amount that can be said about the relationship between normative states, inherently descriptive states, reasons, and whether reasons themselves are normative. This latter issue is fascinating and complicated, but outside of the scope of the current project.¹

4.1. Seemings Theories and NPJ

As I laid it out in the previous chapter, seemings theories of justification are based on the following claim:

If it seems to S that *p*, then, in the absence of defeaters, S thereby has at least some degree of justification for believing that *p*.²

A *seeming* is a technical term for a purportedly phenomenally familiar mental item. A seeming is a non-doxastic, non-inclinalational propositional attitude whose presence and content are phenomenally accessible to its possessor and whose phenomenology contains a certain push/pull toward the truth of its propositional content. According to seemings theorists, the *thereby* in their guiding claim is not merely logical, but instead signals that the seeming itself is justificational, such that either its possession provides justification for the belief whose propositional content is the same as that of the seeming, or the seeming itself *is* justification for the belief whose propositional content is the same as that of the seeming.

Seemings, then, are justificational items—they are *justifiers*. According to the picture of justification we're working with, then, seemings should be both phenomenally accessible to their possessors in a radical way (such that their presence, their content, and their justificational

¹ A final—methodological—note here: 'Justification,' as the term and concept are used, refers to normative states. Accordingly, any attempt to analyze justification must begin by assuming the possibility that there can be such states. As such, someone might even say that the preceding apologetics for the possibility of normative justificational states is either unnecessary or even inappropriate.

² Huemer (2007) 30

relation to what they purportedly justify are all phenomenally accessible to their possessors) and also normative such that their possession by a subject changes her normative relation to at least one belief (*ceteris paribus*). The question, then, is what it is, in virtue of which, seemings possess these normative properties—where the normativity comes from, how it does what it does, and why it normatively connects the subject to the specific beliefs that it does rather than other beliefs. To put these in a numbered list:

1. What grounds the epistemic normativity possessed by justifiers?
2. How is it that this epistemic normativity changes the epistemic normative relationship between subject and belief?
3. Why is it that this epistemic normativity normatively connects the subject to the specific beliefs it does rather than other beliefs?

Call these three questions the Trio of Questions Concerning the Epistemic Normativity of Justification. The question I'm asking in this chapter, then, is whether any of the standard justificational theories under consideration can answer the Trio. In other words, here is *the Guiding Question of the Chapter*:

Can one or more of the standard theories of epistemic justification present in the literature answer not just the question of *what it is* that is supposed to be justificatory—i.e., what justifiers *are*—but further answer the Trio of Questions Concerning the Epistemic Normativity of Justification—i.e., how justifiers are supposed to function *as* justifiers?

According to seemings theorists, seemings theories are intuitive and powerful because they answer a number of relevant questions:

1. What are these things that are before (or in) the mind when things seem to us to be thus-and-so?
2. What is the phenomenal relation between the things identified in (1) and the semantic content of the things identified in (1)?
3. What is the psychological relation between the things identified in (1), the semantic content of the things identified in (1), and the action of coming to hold beliefs with the semantic content of the things identified in (1)?

4. What is the causal relation between the things identified in (1), the semantic content of the things identified in (1), and the action of coming to hold beliefs with the semantic content of the things identified in (1)?

The answer to the first question, we know, is that these things are seemings, non-doxastic, non-inclinal propositional attitudes whose presence and content are phenomenally accessible to their possessor and whose phenomenology contains a certain push/pull toward the truth of their propositional content. The answer to the second question is that in addition to merely being phenomenally accessible to their possessors and having a felt push/pull toward the truth of their propositional contents, it is *as if*, from the perspective of the possessor of a seeming, the fact corresponding to their propositional content existed—it is *as if* the propositional contents of the seemings *were* actually true. So they *present* or *represent* themselves as having true propositional contents. The answer to the third question is that seemings are the psychological antecedent to beliefs possessing the same propositional contents as those seemings. Whatever one takes psychological states to be, and whatever one takes the specifically positive psychological connections between psychological connections to be, seemings psychologically positively bring about beliefs. The answer to the fourth question is that seemings (perhaps not alone) cause beliefs with the same propositional contents as those of the seeming. Seemings are the proximate cause or at least the most causally relevant thing to the event of the subject coming to believe what she thereby comes to believe.

However, we should notice that while the seemings theorist has given at least the outlines of answers to ontological, phenomenal, psychological, and causal questions, one central question is importantly missing and unanswered: the specifically *normative epistemological* question concerning how exactly seemings have anything at all to do with justifying the beliefs they purportedly justify. Ali Hasan puts things this way:

It is uncontroversial that [seemings] can make a *psychological* difference to the subject's perspective, and that they can *explain* why we believe or are inclined to believe certain things, but why should this make an *epistemic* difference?

Perhaps we can make some progress here if we ask what it is that is in my perspective when it seems to me that *p*. Is it just the proposition *p* (or perhaps the proposition *p is true*) that is in the subject's perspective? But if this is all, then it is not clear why this makes an epistemic difference, whereas merely thinking or consciously believing that *p* (or that *p is true*) does not. Perhaps the seeming that *p* involves a distinctive phenomenology, a felt or conscious "pull" or "impulsion" towards the truth of *p*. For it to seem to me that *p* is for me to be aware of or have within consciousness the assertive, striking-me-as-true character of my attitude towards *p*... Whatever the particular proposal, the problem remains: it's not clear why any of this should provide the subject with [justification for *p*].³

But perhaps Hasan and I are being too quick in criticizing seemings theories. Recall that in the previous chapter, I noted that some seemings theorists describe their positions as varieties of *epistemic conservatism* wherein something's being epistemically established in some way provides that thing with justification so long as there is nothing that conflicts with, undercuts, or overrides that justification. Conservatism of the epistemic sort is that particular epistemic items with certain properties of naturalness or establishment are *default justified*—justified not positively by any particular sort of epistemic justifier, but instead, justified by their status as *already established*.

Here is an important note, however, before investigating specifically epistemic conservatism as it applies to seemings theories. Recognizing that seemings theories need to be combined with epistemic conservatism in order to answer to the normative demands of any proper justificational theory is also to recognize that seemings theories *by themselves* are not actually justificational theories. While seemings theories might explain the phenomenal, ontological, psychological, and causal properties of seemings, they can't explain the epistemically normative properties of seemings precisely because seemings, on their own, *have*

³ Hasan (2013) 7-8

no epistemically normative properties. It is only by supplementing seemings theories with something further that seemings can possibly play an epistemically normative role, i.e., can be justificatory.

This sort of epistemic conservatism raises a number of questions. Important for our purposes is this: Are the established epistemic items beliefs or seemings? If it is beliefs, then what we've got is a version of what is called *belief conservatism* in which things already believed are to be justificationaly preferred merely in virtue of the fact that they're already believed. While seemings theorists give no indication that they're belief conservatives, we should also note that belief conservatism of this sort seems to have no room in its justificational ontology for seemings. What justificational work would seemings be doing if beliefs became justified just by being believed?

On the other hand, if it is seemings themselves that are the established items, then we might wonder how it is that seemings, and not some other mental states, possess the properties that make them potential justifiers. What is it, precisely, about seemings that makes them able to play a justificatory role? If the response from the seemings theorist is that *we do in fact* take seemings to be justificatory (just check our epistemic practice), then we ought to worry. Just because we take something to be justificatory, that does not make it justificatory. Further, classical foundationalists claim that *they* don't take seemings to be justificatory, and that, in fact, if we check our epistemic practice, we'll see that *we* (the people, as it were) don't take seemings to be justificatory either. Finally, critics of the intelligibility of the concept of seemings, e.g., Tooley (2013), claim that it is *impossible* for us to take seemings as justificatory, since there can't possibly even be such things as seemings. The point here isn't that seemings theories aren't correct; it's instead that if a sort of epistemic conservatism is to bolster the claim that seemings

are justificatory, we need to understand what it would mean for a seeming to be *already established* in the right sort of way as to meet the conditions of epistemic conservatism.

There's an even further and deeper worry here that deals specifically with the notion of epistemic conservatism. Suppose that we accept that there exist such mental states as seemings, that they are *possibly* justificatory, and that there is some way for seemings to be *established* such that they meet the antecedent conditions required by the epistemic conservative. Why should we think that epistemic conservatism is correct? Let's look at the analogy with political conservatism again here in order to make acute the present worry about epistemic conservatism. The analogous version of political conservatism that I've been using as an analogy is one that claims that established institutions are politically justified *precisely because* they are established. While many reasons are given for this sort of political conservatism, the most plausible are the following three:⁴

1. What is already established has clearly been (at least somewhat) successful, and the best explanation of this success is goodness (in some way).
2. What is not already established is epistemically opaque to us such that the badness (of some sort) of the risks of implementing something new/different outweigh the potential goodness (of some sort) of the possibilities.
3. Change from the already established itself requires justification, which justification is lacking or at least insufficient to justify change.

To move back to the realm of the epistemic: Suppose that the abductive inference in (1) is legitimate (and we have, as yet, no reason to think that it is). Even so, if the best explanation for good practical consequences is the epistemic goodness of some state, a further argument is still required to show that that sort of epistemic goodness is *internalistic justification* and not something else altogether. Presumably, the sort of good pragmatic consequences under

⁴ See Allit, "The Conservative Tradition."

discussion are something like our being able to get around the world or our believing true things. The question then is: Why think that the best explanation of these practical consequences is the fact that seemings states possess internalistic justification?⁵ Suppose that the claims of (2) are true. Even so, it is unclear how this would show that seemings themselves possess internalistic justification. It is not even clear what plausible premise(s) would need to be added in to (2) in order to wind up with justification at all. To drive this point home: Just because one of two options has epistemically opaque properties or consequences, that does not show anything about the properties or consequences of the other option, especially if we aren't even justified in believing that the two options on the table are jointly exhaustive of the logical space of options. Finally, let us assume that the first part (3) is true, which isn't entirely implausible—change requires justification. Even so, and even if such justification is lacking, that doesn't yet show us anything about the justificational status of the established option.

Finally, it should be noted that *even if* all of these issues can be addressed and epistemic conservatism can not only be made plausible, but also can be motivated such that we have reason to believe that it's true, nevertheless it's still unclear why we should think that the sorts of objects that epistemic conservatism would take as its inputs would be seemings rather than some other objects. Huemer comes close to begging the question against other internalistic justificational theories when he seems to just assume that not only are seemings perfectly acceptable justificational items, but that they are clearly the only possible sort of justificational items.⁶

To sum up what I've said in this section: Seemings theories are normatively problematic for at least four reasons:

⁵ In fact, I will provide good reasons in the next two chapters to conclude that the goodness of internalistic justification is unconnected to its ability to bring about true beliefs, contra the Standard Picture.

⁶ See Cullison (2013).

1. Seemings theories-proper tell a story about the phenomenal, ontological, psychological, and causal properties of seemings, but never explain how any of those properties are related to justification.
2. In order to answer the properly epistemically normative questions that a normative theory ought to be able to answer, seemings theories need to be combined with something like epistemic conservatism. However, a recognition of such a necessity is also a recognition that seemings theories on their own are not actually justificational theories.
3. Epistemic conservatism itself is substantially confused as well as thoroughly unmotivated.
4. The connection by seemings theorists of seemings and epistemic conservatism is unmotivated, and often presents itself as near-, if not explicit, begging the question.

So here is my conclusion so far: Not only has no reason been given to suppose that seemings are the sorts of things that can have epistemically normative properties and hence play a justificatory role, it is not even clear that such reasons exist. Accordingly, seemings theories fail even to answer the first of the three questions of the Trio of Questions Concerning Epistemic Normativity, namely: *What grounds the epistemic normativity possessed by justifiers?*

4.2. NPJ Generalized

In the previous section, I raised a number of problems for seemings theories *qua* theories of internalistic epistemic justification. These problems all stem from an attempt to find an acceptable solution to what I've called the Normative Problem for Justification (NPJ). NPJ is the problem that motivates the Guiding Question of the Chapter:

Can one or more of the standard theories of epistemic justification present in the literature answer not just the question of *what it is* that is supposed to be justificatory—i.e., what justifiers *are*—but further answer the Trio of Questions Concerning the Epistemic Normativity of Justification—i.e., how justifiers are supposed to function *qua* justifiers?

And, again, the Trio of Questions Concerning the Epistemic Normativity of Justification is this:

1. What grounds the epistemic normativity possessed by justifiers?
2. How is it that this epistemic normativity changes the epistemic normative relationship between subject and belief?

3. Why is it that this epistemic normativity normatively connects the subject to the specific beliefs it does rather than other beliefs?

The goal of this section is to formulate NPJ such that its force for any possible theory of epistemic justification becomes apparent. By this, I don't mean that NPJ, when properly formulated, should show that there is no plausible or possible theory of internalistic justification. However, any plausible theory of justification should be able to answer the demands of NPJ by answering the Guiding Question of the Chapter, and hence, the applicability of NPJ to any proposed theory of internalistic justification should be readily apparent.

What is justification good for? According to the Standard Picture, justification is intrinsically good insofar as it gets us closer to true beliefs, since truth is the only intrinsic good in the way of belief. However, the Standard Picture isn't the only *possible* picture of justification. Alternate pictures could be generated either by altering the instrumentalist nature of justification according to the Standard Picture, or by altering the good in the way of belief according to the standard picture, or both. Whatever the picture, the question is this: How does this picture of internalistic justification function?

Another way of asking this question is this: What are the epistemically normative and phenomenally accessible components of whatever it is that is supposed to count as an internalistic justifier, and how are these components related to one another so as to satisfy the conditions on internalistic justification? This way of asking the question makes the *problematic* nature of NPJ especially acute. According to the proponent of internalist justificational theories, there are phenomenally accessible items that are also, *themselves*, epistemically normative either because they themselves are intrinsically epistemically valuable or because they are appropriately related (again, in a phenomenally accessible way) to something that is itself

intrinsically epistemically valuable. If such items exist, the fact that they can play all of these roles not only simultaneously, but also in a way that the roles are constitutively bound up with one another, is remarkable.

Consider the Standard Picture. On the Standard Picture, since the epistemic normativity of epistemic justification is based on the instrumental value of justification, and since this instrumental value exists because of the relation between justifier and truth, and since truth is phenomenally opaque, an adherent to the Standard Picture who is also a proponent of internalistic justificatory theories must say that there are phenomenally accessible states/objects that are epistemically normative in a radically phenomenally accessible fashion and that all of this is due to a phenomenally accessible relationship between these objects and truth. If any of these components is missing, the picture fails.⁷ NPJ, then, is this very problem, namely, what I will call *the Normative Problem of Justification (NPJ)*:

Given the sort of radical phenomenal accessibility required of internalistic justification, how is it possible for any state/object possessing this radical phenomenal accessibility also to be epistemically normative in the way required of epistemic justification?

Among adherents to the Standard Picture, some epistemologists, many of whom have been impressed by Quinean arguments in favor of the naturalization of epistemology,⁸ have given up on the internalist project at all and become radical externalists. These radical externalists claim that since truth is the good in the way of belief and since truth is phenomenally opaque, there is no hope of finding the right sort of object to play all of the roles needed for an acceptable

⁷ In this dissertation, I will not argue for or against the claim that truth is intrinsically epistemically valuable or normative. While I am skeptical of this claim, I will merely assume its plausibility here, since my goal here is not to evaluate *what is* epistemically valuable but to determine, once we know what is epistemically valuable, how this value combines with the conditions on epistemic normativity and phenomenal accessibility to produce something that can possibly play the role of internalistic justification. For an extended argument in favor of the claim that truth is intrinsically epistemically valuable, see Lynch (2004).

⁸ See Quine (1969).

internalistic theory. Accordingly, these radical externalists say, there are no properly epistemic goods that are phenomenally accessible.

One way of stating the goal of this dissertation, then, is that it is to see whether it is possible to resist such a radical externalist conclusion.

4.3. Bonjour's Classical Foundationalism and NPJ

In this section, I show how Bonjour's classical foundationalism attempts and fails to address NPJ. The problem for Bonjour's picture is that it fails to answer the question of how it is that the items he identifies as justifiers are justifiers at all—i.e., Bonjour's picture fails to explain how it is that its purportedly justificational items possess epistemic normativity. More specifically, Bonjour's picture fails in two ways: First, one of his necessary justificational criteria is phenomenally inaccessible, and hence, conflicts with the demands of an internalistic theory of justification. Second, his theory faces a dilemma: Either the items it identifies as foundational justifiers, i.e., the source and ground of all justification, are themselves in need of further justification (and hence, according to Bonjour's own foundationalism, are unjustified) or else the items it identifies as foundational justifiers are not in need of further justification, but are not relevantly related to truth, and hence, are unable to play the role they're intended to play.

Bonjour's classical foundationalism is a version of the Standard Picture—Bonjour explicitly affirms the Standard Picture on a number of occasions, even before his official conversion from coherentism to foundationalism. What this means is that for Bonjour, a purported justifier is an actual justifier only because of its relation to truth. Further, we should remember that in order for a purported justifier to be a properly internalistic justifier, it must be radically phenomenally accessible such that its existence, its content, and its normative relation to the belief(s) it purportedly justifies are all phenomenally accessible to its possessor.

As I pointed out in Chapter 3, BonJour's theory looks like this:

[S]tates of direct awareness of the facts relevant to the truth of a belief foundationally justify that belief insofar as a subject is directly aware of and self-consciously attending to the relevant features or components of her direct awareness, believes and is also aware of her belief that her direct awareness contains these features or components, and is in an epistemic position to recognize that this belief *agrees with* or *fits* the relevant features or components of her direct awareness. For example, according to BonJour's picture, in order for me to be visually foundationally justified in believing that the cat is on the mat, I must be directly aware of and self-consciously attending to phenomenal features of my visual experience that represent or indicate that the cat and the mat are present and stand in a particular relation to one another, I must believe and also be aware of my belief that the phenomenal features of my visual experience represent or indicate that the cat and the mat are present and stand in a particular relation to one another, and I must be in an epistemic position to recognize that the relevant features of my visual experience agree with or fit my belief. (46-7)

Of these three components of the justificational complex, it is the self-conscious recognition of agreement with or fit between a subject's belief and her direct awareness of the facts that is specifically problematic. This component is problematic for at least two reasons.

The first reason that this "self-conscious recognition of agreement/fit" component is problematic is that "agreement/fit" sounds like "correspondence," which in turn sounds like "truth" or at least "the grounds of truth." However, as we know, both truth and its grounds are phenomenally inaccessible to subjects. Hence, if BonJour's theory requires that a subject recognize that some belief of hers is true or at least stands in a relation to the facts that would ground truth, then BonJour's theory has put a phenomenally *inaccessible* criterion on the necessarily phenomenally *accessible* state of internalistic justification. Even if "agreement/fit" is not precisely truth or correspondence, it is difficult to see what the definition of "agreement/fit" could be such that it would be *genuine* agreement/fit (rather than mere *believed* agreement/fit or something similar) while also being phenomenally accessible. The moral here is that building a recognition of something truth-like into one's justificational theory will make the conditions on that justification at least partially phenomenally inaccessible.

The second reason that this “recognition of agreement/fit” component is problematic is that it faces the following dilemma: Either this recognition is judgmental or relevantly similar to a judgmental process, or else it is not. But both horns of this dilemma are problematic. If the first horn is true, then it is difficult to see why this judgmental process itself wouldn’t require *its own* justification, essentially pushing justification back one step where the dilemma will again appear. I.e., if the first horn of the dilemma is true, then it is hard to see what relation the “recognition of agreement/fit” has to do with securing justification at all, since even if such recognition takes place, given that the recognition itself would require justification, the subject is no closer to having achieved a justified belief. If the second horn of the dilemma is true, then a second dilemma arises: Either this non-judgmental recognitional process is itself in need of justification, or else it is not. If the non-judgmental recognitional process is itself in need of justification (e.g., perhaps this process is nonconceptual, hence non-judgmental; however, there is no reason to think that a nonconceptual process does not itself require justification in the same sort of way that a conceptual process does), then we have the same problem as we did with the first horn, viz., we haven’t actually achieved justification, merely pushed the demand back. If the non-judgmental recognitional process is itself *not* in need of justification, then we are owed some story of how and why. Not only are we given no such story, it is difficult to see what such a story would look like.⁹ We can imagine someone attempting to provide such a justification, but it is improbable that we would accept the justification as anything other than an epistemological decree rather than an actual justification.

⁹ It is important to recognize that justifying a theory of justification or a component of the theory of justification is not itself a demand for more justification at the object-level of the justificational theory. “How is X justificatory?” and “What is the justification for X?” are different questions at different levels—the latter at the object-level and the former at the meta-level. As such, the recognition that justificational theories themselves might need justification is not an argument against foundationalism (Williams (1999) either gets very close to making this conflation or actually does make it).

To sum up what I've said in this section: BonJour's classical foundationalism is problematic for at least two reasons:

1. The theory requires a self-conscious recognition or awareness of an agreement or fit between a belief and the contents of a direct awareness. But it is difficult to see how this agreement or fit is not either just correspondence or else something epistemically akin to correspondence. If this is the case, then, since correspondence is phenomenally inaccessible, the theory is contradictory in that it builds a phenomenally inaccessible component into a theory all of whose components are supposed to be phenomenally accessible.
2. The theory faces a dilemma one horn of which merely pushes the question of the source of justification back, leaving it unanswered, and the other horn of which either does the same thing or simply insists, with no reason given, that certain states are justificatory.

4.4. The Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining

Both Huemer and BonJour have employed an argument in support of their particular theories that I will call the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining. I want to briefly address this argument here for two reasons. The first reason is that the argument is unsound, and so any appeal to the argument or an argument structurally similar will not support any theory at all. It is important, I think, to show the unsoundness of this argument because proponents of either a seemings theory or of BonJour's version of classical foundationalism might claim that in light of this argument, my demand for some story about how either seemings theories or classical foundationalism are supposed to work is misguided. The second reason that I want to address this argument is that *even if* the argument were sound, what it would prove would be irrelevant to NPJ—it wouldn't address NPJ at all.

The Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining looks like this:

1. In order to argue against Position X, a person must possess Y.

However,

2. It is possible for a person to possess Y only if she acts as though Position X is true.

Therefore,

3. We ought to believe that Position X is true.

First, notice that the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining is invalid. In order to make it valid, something like (2.5) would need to be inserted as a premise:

- 2.5. If a person can't do ϕ without acting as though ψ then she ought to believe that ψ .

Instantiated, Position X would be either seemings theory or BonJour's classical foundationalism, and Y would be either justificatory seemings or justificatory BonJour-style epistemic complexes (respectively). But not only is (2.5) intuitively false, it is unclear what the plausible justification for (2.5) would be. The main problem here is that (2.5) moves from a descriptive claim about the necessary conditions on the performing an action—an action that we have no reason to believe is necessary, either descriptively or normatively—to a normative claim about the holding of a belief. So (2.5) jumps both the gap between the descriptive and the normative and also that between the practical/pragmatic and the epistemic. Modifying this argument so that it doesn't make these two jumps would strip it of its supposed argumentative force.

But suppose that we could somehow get from (1) and (2) through some plausible additional premise, to (3). Even then, we haven't been told anything at all about how it is that either seemings theories or BonJour's classical foundationalism is supposed to function at the normative level. All we're told is that we ought to believe that they are true. And we should further suspect that the *ought* in the conclusion is not an epistemic ought—i.e., it isn't the case that we ought to believe that these positions are true *because they're justified* or *because they actually are true*—but is instead a practical or pragmatic ought. The reason for this is that (1) and (2) are concerned only with abilities and not at all with truth, justification, or any other supposed

epistemic goods. Even if we could somehow be shown that the *ought* in (3) were an epistemic ought, the mere fact that we epistemically ought to believe something does not tell us how the internal components of what we ought to believe function.

It shouldn't surprise us that the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining is a non-starter. Merely intuitively, we can't move from claims about what we can't but help doing to claims about what is true or justified without going through substantive premises about the necessary conformity of world to mind, or world to intentional action. Such substantive premises strike most people as implausible.¹⁰ Accordingly, the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining not only doesn't justify our belief in either seemings theory or classical foundationalism, even if it did, it wouldn't address what's under discussion here, namely NPJ.

4.5. Fumerton's Classical Foundationalism and NPJ

In this section, I show how Fumerton's classical foundationalism attempts and fails to address NPJ. The problems for Fumerton's theory structurally mirror those for Bonjour's theory and will be presented as such. Interestingly and relevantly, however, in a recent paper, Hasan has claimed that Fumerton's theory does not fall victim to one particular aspect of the dilemma that befalls Bonjour's theory. Accordingly, I will present the dilemma that Fumerton's theory falls victim to as a direct response to Hasan's attempted defense of Fumerton.

Fumerton's theory looks like this, to quote myself from the previous chapter:

[J]ustification relies on a relation technically known as *acquaintance*. Unlike Bonjour's notion of direct awareness of the phenomenal contents of experiential states as built into these states themselves, Fumerton's "acquaintance" is a relation between epistemic agent and truth-related fact. Specifically, it is a *thought*, a non-linguistic mental complex that is the primary bearer of truth-values, that possibly stands in acquaintance relations to facts.

¹⁰ They don't strike me as all that implausible, since I find a strong version of Transcendental Idealism plausible. However, even given Transcendental Idealism of my preferred sort, the Argument from Potential Practical Self-Undermining can't get off the ground.

Like BonJour's direct awareness property of experiences, acquaintance is conceptually unmediated.

On this picture, I have a foundationally justified belief insofar as I am acquainted with facts relevant to the truth of that belief, acquainted with my possession of the relevant thought, and acquainted with the correspondence between the fact and the thought. In building his classical foundationalist theory, Fumerton is clearly concerned with eliminating the possibility that anything relevant to the truth of a belief, and hence relevant to the justification (according to the Standard Picture) of a belief, could fall outside the realm of the epistemically accessible. According to the standard version of the correspondence theory of truth, either truth strongly supervenes on the obtaining of a relation of correspondence between primary bearer of truth-values and the relevant facts or truth just *is* the obtaining relation of correspondence between primary bearer of truth-values and the relevant facts. On Fumerton's picture, then, we are justified either insofar as we are acquainted with each of the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions on the truth of the justified belief, or insofar as we are acquainted with the truth of the belief itself. (47-8)

Fumerton, like BonJour, is an adherent of the Standard Picture, and as such, believes that it is in relation to truth or possible truth that justificatory states become justificatory. As I noted in the previous chapter, Fumerton's theory is specifically formulated in order to put each of the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions on the truth of a belief, as well as the belief itself, directly and in a conceptually unmediated fashion, before a subject's consciousness—in her phenomenology. As Fumerton puts it:

But how does acquaintance give us noninferential justification? My suggestion is that one has a noninferentially justified belief that *P* when one has the thought that *P* and one is acquainted with the fact that *P*, the thought that *P*, *and* the relation of correspondence holding between the thought that *P* and the fact that *P*. No single act of acquaintance yields knowledge or justified belief, but when one has the relevant thought, the three acts together constitute noninferential justification. When everything that is *constitutive* of a thought's being true is immediately before consciousness, there is nothing more that one could want or need to justify a belief.¹¹

But, of course, this is precisely where the first problem for Fumerton lies. As I noted in Section 4.3 of this chapter, neither truth itself, nor the entire ground of truth, is phenomenally accessible to a subject. Fumerton's condition that a subject be *acquainted with the correspondence* between

¹¹ Fumerton (1995) 75

facts and thought is either truth itself or else the entire ground of truth, and hence, is phenomenally inaccessible. To construct a theory that says otherwise is to construct a theory with either a falsehood or a contradiction. As such, Fumerton's theory, like Bonjour's, is impossible.

Hasan, however, thinks that it is not clear that the holding of the correspondence relation between facts and thought is phenomenally inaccessible.¹²

First, it is worth pointing out that verifying that one is directly acquainted with correspondence is a sophisticated matter. In order to ascertain whether I am acquainted with the correspondence between some fact *F* and the thought that *p*, I must be acquainted with the fact of my being acquainted with this particular correspondence relation, acquainted with the thought that I am acquainted with the correspondence between *F* and *p*, and acquainted with the correspondence between the former fact and the latter thought! It is no wonder, then, that we will have some difficulty verifying that we are directly acquainted with correspondence, even if and when we are.

Second, while it is possible for one to be convinced, under the influence of a cunning Sellarsian perhaps, that one is *not* "acquainted with correspondence," this does not raise any serious worries with the view. A subject might understand "acquaintance with correspondence" in some theoretical way and yet simply fail to identify or pick out the right sort of awareness, and be moved by theoretical arguments to deny that one is every acquainted with correspondence. But why should this make any difference to one's perspective on the truth of some proposition in a case where she is directly acquainted with the relevant correspondence, whether she judges that it is an awareness of correspondence or not? Some views might treat this belief to the effect that there is no such acquaintance with correspondence as a defeater or, more plausibly perhaps, as having little or no effect on one's first-order justified belief that *p*. In either case, the acquaintance theorist can insist that acquaintance with correspondence does make the relevant difference to the subject's perspective on the truth.¹³

But these apologetics miss the point. Since truth is a non-epistemic, non-phenomenal property, the obtaining of the relation that is necessary and sufficient for truth is phenomenally inaccessible to any and all subjects.¹⁴ We don't have to come at the issue of the possible

¹² Notice the difference between this weak claim, that it is not clear that it is false that..., and the stronger claim that it is clear that it is true that... Hasan is interested only in defending the former claim.

¹³ Hasan (2013) 15-6

¹⁴ The phenomenal inaccessibility of truth should not be confused with the phenomenal inaccessibility of internalistic justification. Clearly I am not asserting the latter, since that would be to assert a conceptual contradiction. While we might, at times, have justification for the truth of some proposition, it is the *justification*,

acquaintance with the correspondence relation positively via a *modus ponens* move. We have definitive evidence that a necessary condition on the obtaining of the correspondence relation is phenomenally inaccessible. Hence, we can know, negatively, via a *modus tollens* move, that the correspondence relation is phenomenally inaccessible.

Fumerton's view faces a further problem at this point that is either not faced by Bonjour's view, or if it is faced by Bonjour's view, it is less evident. According to Fumerton's view, as we've seen, acquaintance with the necessary and sufficient conditions on the truth of a thought (or perhaps even truth itself) is the necessary and sufficient condition on justification. Assume, disregarding the above discussion for the moment, that this is possible. What this means is that a subject's acquaintance with the necessary and sufficient condition on the truth of a thought—along with her acquaintance with the relevant relata of the correspondence relation—is either itself the necessary and sufficient condition on justification or justification itself. This has three consequences (two of which are inverses of one another—stated separately here for rhetorical effect):

1. Acquaintance with truth just is justification.
2. All justified thoughts are true thoughts.
3. No false thoughts are justified.

We might start to wonder what justification is supposed to be doing at all if acquaintance with truth is *necessary* for justification. On the Standard Picture, isn't justification the sort of thing that is supposed to *get us to* truth? If recognition of the truth of something is necessary for truth, then it's unclear what the purpose of justification is at all.

rather than the *truth itself* that is phenomenally accessible to us in these cases. Clearly, if we are justified, all things considered, in believing that something is true, then we epistemically may (or ought to) believe that it is true, and perhaps we may (or ought to) infer that the relevant correspondence relation holds. But to have an internalistically justified belief that the correspondence relation holds and being *acquainted* in the Fumertonian sense with the relation itself, such that the relation is *present to phenomenology*, are two very different things.

In addition to these problems, Fumerton's view faces the same dilemma faced by Bonjour's view: that either purportedly foundational justifiers are not actually foundational and the source of justification is pushed off to a further justifier (which, itself, presumably is not foundational either, *ad infinitum*), or else there is no explanation available for how justification gets off the ground in the first place, i.e., for where it is that foundational justification is supposed to come from. However, according to Hasan, while Bonjour's view faces this dilemma, Fumerton's escapes it. Accordingly, I will first present Hasan's attempted explanation of why this is so before showing that Hasan is not right and that Fumerton's view is just as susceptible to the dilemma as is Bonjour's.¹⁵

Here is what Hasan says:

Fumerton's response to the Sellarsian dilemma is straightforward. Fumerton could be understood as grasping the non-judgmental or non-conceptual horn of the dilemma, since none of the fundamental acts of acquaintance are themselves judgmental or conceptual in character. However, since a thought, and correspondence with a thought, can be objects or targets of acquaintance, the view avoids the worry that it cannot provide justification.¹⁶

And here is Hasan's thought: The dilemma is between the judgmental and the nonjudgmental, the conceptual and the nonconceptual, in terms of justificational states or acts. If a justificational state or act is judgmental and conceptual, then the acts of judging or of applying concepts will themselves need further justification (judging and applying concepts are things that can be performed correctly or incorrectly, and our internalistic guide to performing them correctly could only be further justification). But if this is the case, then our purported justifier is not what it

¹⁵ I should note that in his paper, Hasan (2013) isn't addressing exactly the dilemma I'm presenting here but an analogous dilemma known as the Sellarsian Dilemma. The Sellarsian Dilemma concerns whether a purportedly foundational justifier involves judgmental (or judgment-like) acts, and hence is in need of further justification, or whether it does not. The reason this is not exactly the same dilemma as the one presented here is that Hasan takes it that there is a possibility of escaping the dilemma by showing that non-judgmental/nonconceptual justifiers are not themselves in need of further justification. Since this claim by Hasan (and others who have opted for this response to Sellars (1997)) is entirely unmotivated, I have used the structure of the Sellarsian Dilemma for form the justificational dilemma in this chapter. Hasan's reasons for why Fumerton's account does not fall victim to the Sellarsian Dilemma can be applied to the present dilemma.

¹⁶ Hasan (2013) 13

represents itself to be, namely, foundational. This horn of Hasan's dilemma is identical to the first horn of the dilemma that afflicts Bonjour's theory. However, says Hasan, since Fumerton's acts of states of acquaintance are nonconceptual in that they do not require (nor could they possibly involve, it would seem) the exercise of the subject's conceptual abilities, we shouldn't be worried that Fumerton's theory will be impaled on the first horn of the dilemma. However, this does not mean, as Hasan presumes, that Fumerton's theory's acceptance of the *other* horn of the dilemma does not also carry with it the possibility of impalement.¹⁷ Specifically, Hasan's and Fumerton's shared thought is this: If a state is nonconceptual or nonjudgmental, then there is nothing left about the state that could require justification, and hence, Fumertonian states of acquaintance are justifiers that themselves require no justification.

But this shared thought is clearly false. Consider an analogy with another state: the state of being in this physical location rather than in that one. Your being in this state (not your having *gotten* in this state) is nonconceptual and nonjudgmental. But it doesn't follow from that, that the state requires no justification. "What are you doing here?" seems a perfectly reasonable question, a demand for justification rather than mere causal-historical circumstances. If this example doesn't grab the reader, similar examples can be spun off *ad infinitum*. So just because Fumertonian acquaintance states are nonjudgmental and nonconceptual, it doesn't follow that they stand in no need of justification.

In fact, it is entirely implausible that states of acquaintance, if those states possess the epistemic normativity necessary for internalistic justification, would require no justification themselves. To be acquainted in a way that is normatively robust is to have situated oneself

¹⁷ I will not here entertain the Sellarsian/Davidsonian hypothesis that all justificational states must be conceptually articulated states for two reasons. First, this hypothesis is false. See, e.g., Hanna (2011) "Myth of the Myth." Second, the entirety of Chapter 7 of the current dissertation is devoted to explicating a concept of givenness that would be amenable to both Fumerton and Hasan.

toward the world in some way rather than some other way. Perhaps it is even to take the world to be a certain minimal way, a taking that doesn't involve judgment or the application of concepts.

This is the exact sentiment expressed by Davidson and quoted approvingly by Hasan:

The relation between a sensation and a belief cannot be logical, since sensations are not beliefs or other propositional attitudes. What then is the relation? The answer is, I think, obvious: the relation is causal. Sensations cause beliefs and in *this* sense are the basis or ground of those beliefs. But a causal explanation of a belief does not show how the belief is justified.¹⁸

Mere causal goings-on are not justificatory, even if the mere causal goings-on are phenomenally accessible. Insofar, then, as acquaintance requires action of some sort on the part of the subject, that action is subject to the demands of justification. Accordingly, on the picture embraced by Hasan, purportedly foundationally justificatory phenomenal states are not, in fact, foundational at all.

On the other hand, as we saw in the case of Bonjour's theory, someone might claim that these nonconceptual, nonjudgmental states that *appear* to be in need of justification are not, in fact, in need of justification at all, but refuse to explain why this is. As in the case of Bonjour's theory, such a move would be to institute epistemic normativity via epistemological fiat—an impossible move.

To sum up what I've said in this section: Fumerton's classical foundationalism is problematic for at least three reasons:

1. The theory requires an acquaintance with the holding of a correspondence relation between a thought and the relevant facts. But since truth and the necessary and sufficient conditions on truth are phenomenally inaccessible, either it is the case that Fumerton's theory is internally contradictory, or else justification is impossible.
2. By requiring a recognition of correspondence for justification, Fumerton is essentially reducing justification to truth and making false but justified thoughts impossible. But this

¹⁸ Davidson (1983) 428

flies in the face of foundational intuitions about the sort of thing justification is supposed to be.

3. The theory faces a dilemma one horn of which merely pushes the question of the source of justification back, leaving it unanswered, and the other horn of which either does the same thing or simply insists, with no reason given, that certain states are justificatory.

4.6. Conclusion

What I called the Guiding Question of this chapter was this:

Can one or more of the standard theories of epistemic justification present in the literature answer not just the question of *what it is* that is supposed to be justificatory—i.e., what justifiers *are*—but further answer the Trio of Questions Concerning the Epistemic Normativity of Justification—i.e., how justifiers are supposed to function *as* justifiers?

The answer is *no*. While this fact is acknowledged by classical foundationalist theories, seemings theories just ignore this component. This act of ignoring an essential component of internalistic justification on the part of seemings theories make the theories not only implausible, but essentially impoverished—seemings theories, as they stand, are not actually theories of internalistic justification. While classical foundationalist theories acknowledge the necessity of epistemic normativity for purported justifiers, they fail at explaining both the nature and source of this justification. One tentative conclusion that one might draw after this chapter is that there is something wrong with the combination of the Standard Picture and the picture of internalistic justification in which it is both merely instrumentally valuable and also has this value due to its relation to truth. This, in fact, will be the main argumentative goal of the next two chapters.

Chapter 5. The Swamping Problem for Justification

In the previous two chapters, I explicated and then critically examined the leading internalist foundationalist theories of justification. My explication and critical examination were directed specifically at the two necessary properties possessed by all internalistic justification: phenomenal accessibility, and epistemic normativity. My goal in the critical examination part was to show two interrelated things: First, no internalist justificatory theory worthy of the name can escape the demand to provide an answer to what I called NPJ: the Normative Problem for Justification. NPJ is the problem of explaining exactly how it is that supposed justifiers are actually epistemically normative in the way required of epistemic justification. Second, no contemporary internalist justificatory theory has provided a satisfactory answer to NPJ. Classical internalist foundationalism falls victim to either a vicious infinite regress of justifiers or has no answer at all for how its justifiers are normative. On the other hand, seemings theories, relatively new players on the epistemic scene, don't even seem to be able to meet the minimum conditions for being a justificational theory.

An important result of this chapter and the next (although not their primary goal) is partially to vindicate classical internalist foundationalism, By sharp contrast, seemings theories, as far as I can tell, are unsavable. The problem with these theories is not internal to the theories themselves, but instead rests on a fundamental mistaken assumption about the nature of justification. The mistaken assumption is that the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity is the correct picture of normativity. Let us recall the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity:

Truth is the one and only intrinsic epistemic good such that any other possible epistemic goods are good for the sake of truth and truth is not chosen for the sake of any further epistemic good.

My argumentative goal in this chapter and the next is to show that *truth* cannot possibly be the source (either directly or indirectly) of the epistemic normativity possessed by justification. If this is correct, then two consequences follow immediately:

1. The Standard Picture is false and either (i) there is more than one intrinsic epistemic good, (ii) there is one and only one intrinsic epistemic good and it is not truth, or (iii) there are no intrinsic epistemic goods.
2. In order to make sense of the epistemic normativity of justification, we need to determine some other intrinsic epistemic good that justification either possesses or is instrumental in getting us.

In this chapter, I extend the notorious Swamping Problem to internalistic justification and its relationship to truth. The thesis of this chapter, again, but now further specified, is that the epistemic value of justification cannot be explained in instrumentalist terms via the ultimate goal of true belief. The reason for this is that if justification is merely instrumentally valuable in terms of the ultimate goal of true belief, then justification, a non-factive state or property (i.e., one whose existence, presence, or possession does not entail the truth of its related belief) can possess no epistemic value or normativity over and above that possessed by truth. But since justified true beliefs are epistemically better than merely true beliefs and justified false beliefs are epistemically better than merely false beliefs, justification itself must possess some epistemic value over and above that of truth.

The structure of this chapter is as follows. First, I briefly lay out the contemporary Swamping Problem as it appears in the work of, e.g., Linda Zagzebski (2003) and Jonathan Kvanvig (2003). The contemporary problem, it is important to note, is formulated specifically as a problem for the purported additional epistemic value of knowledge, when knowledge is construed as reliably formed true belief, as compared to merely true belief. Second, I lay out the schematic reconstruction of the Swamping Problem as it appears in a recent paper by J. Adam

Carter and Benjamin Jarvis (2012) and I show how, via Carter's and Jarvis's arguments, the Swamping Problem is applicable to the issue of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification in its relationship to that of truth. Third, I lay out the Boat Lottery Case as presented by Carter and Jarvis and show why they believe that the Swamping Problem (in any of its instantiations) rests ultimately on a mistake in analogical reasoning. Fourth, I show how Carter and Jarvis have misconstrued the analogy provided by their own case, how the threat posed by the Swamping Problem is not based on an error in analogical reasoning, and how the Boat Lottery Case actually serves to bolster the strength of the Swamping Problem. Finally, I provide some additional motivation for the Swamping Problem when construed as a problem for the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification in its relationship to that of truth. My conclusion, then, is that in order to save the epistemic normativity of justification, we need to construe that normativity in independently of truth.

5.1. The Contemporary Swamping Problem

Reliabilism in any of its forms is the theory of epistemic justification that holds that the reliable formation of beliefs is a sufficient condition on those beliefs' thereby possessing at least some epistemic justification. This reliability can be construed in a number of ways and can attach to a number of processes and objects, but the most famous and most common construal of reliability is in terms of the causal-historical reliability of subjectival belief-forming processes when the goal of these processes is the holding of true beliefs.¹ Reliabilism of this sort, called *process reliabilism*, possesses two features relevant to the current investigation. The first feature is the *externalistic* nature of reliability. Whether some belief-forming process is reliable is phenomenally inaccessible to the subject whose belief-forming process it is. The second feature

¹ See, e.g., Goldman (1979). Goldman's *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* article on reliabilism (2011) is also instructive.

is the *instrumental* nature of the epistemic value of reliability. Reliability is valuable only insofar as it tends to *produce, engender, or otherwise bring about* true beliefs.

Since the time of Plato's *Meno*, it has been standard to think that knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. Knowledge, many would say, is the epistemic *summum bonum*, while mere true belief, while perhaps better in most cases than mere false belief, falls far short, in terms of epistemic value, of knowledge. Our epistemic goal ought always to be knowledge. A classical epistemological concern, then, has been explaining what it is about knowledge that makes it epistemically superior to mere true belief. In the *Theaetetus*, Plato seems to be making the claim that knowledge is non-lucky true belief, since it is true belief + *an account*—a story concerning belief-formation that can help ward off mere luckily true belief. On this picture, we might see the value of knowledge as derived from the individual values of true belief and an account. However, we needn't see the value of knowledge in this way. It might, instead, simply be that knowledge, as a state, is more valuable than mere true belief, and that this value can't be explained by referencing the individual components of knowledge.² In fact, it is often taken as an adequacy condition on a theory of knowledge that it be able to explain why or how knowledge is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief.

This is where the problem arises for reliabilism. In a number of recent papers,³ epistemologists have shown that there is a problem when it comes to considerations about the epistemic value of a conception of knowledge in which the justificatory component is both externalistic and instrumentally valuable. According to reliabilist theories, knowledge is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief precisely because reliable belief formation is

² This picture is amenable to recent conceptions of knowledge, inspired by Williamson (2000), in which knowledge is conceptually more basic than any of its components, and hence, we might think, in which the epistemic value of knowledge cannot be explained in reference to the epistemic values of any of its components.

³ E.g., see Jones (1997), Swinburne (1999), Zagzebski (2003), Kvanvig (2003; 2010), and Pritchard (2009a, 2009b).

epistemically valuable. However, if a belief is true, then it is unclear how any epistemic fact or process could add *additional* value to that true belief. If justification added additional value because of its relation to truth, then a true belief would be valuable because it is true and a justified true belief would be valuable because it is true and because its justification is valuable, and its justification would be valuable because of its relation to truth. That is, the worry goes, we would be double-counting the value of truth. This is the Swamping Problem: The true belief is epistemically valuable in such a way as to *swamp* any additional value that might be derived from a justificational process's relation to truth.

The swamping problem is specifically a problem for externalistic theories of justification because truth, on any theory of justification, is epistemically inaccessible to the subject in that whether a belief is true is not the sort of thing a subject can determine first-personally. If justification is *also* externalistic, and if justification is supposed to inherit its value from its relation to truth, then there is not even the possibility of referring to some sort of phenomenal or first-personal good, such as a subject's ability to first-personally direct her own beliefs, in order to explain the value of justification. For example, Kvanvig (2003) thinks that the epistemic value of knowledge is greater than the epistemic value of mere true belief because of an *internalistic* state/process of *understanding*. Perhaps this is plausible (I won't investigate this proposal further here as it is outside of the scope of this chapter and of this dissertation), and perhaps this proposal could escape the Swamping Problem precisely because of the internalistic nature of understanding. However, such a proposal is not one in which a reliabilist could find comfort.

Zagzebski has illustrated the Swamping Problem with an analogy to an espresso maker. Imagine that you are considering the value of an espresso maker *qua* object that makes espresso. Suppose that you are told that the espresso maker reliably makes delicious espresso—99/100

times, it will produce a high-quality product. Now imagine that you pull a shot of espresso and the espresso is, indeed, of a very high quality. Why is it that the espresso is of a high quality? Presumably it has something to do with the taste, texture, and consistency of the espresso itself. Is the espresso's quality, *qua* espresso, increased because it came from a reliable machine? It seems not. What matters for the quality of what's in the cup is precisely what's in the cup, not the reliability properties of where it came from.

To drive this point home, let's extend the analogy: Imagine that you are considering the comparative values of two different espresso makers *qua* objects that make espresso. Suppose that you are told that the espresso maker on the left reliably makes delicious espresso—99/100 times, it will produce a high-quality product. The espresso maker on the right, however, is very unreliable—99/100 times, it will produce a low-quality product. Now imagine that you pull a shot of espresso from each and taste them. As expected, the machine on the left produced a high-quality product. Unexpectedly, however, the machine on the right also produced a high-quality product. Merely in terms of the product itself, is one cup of espresso better than the other? It would seem not. Again, what matters for the quality of what's in the cup is precisely what's in the cup, not the reliability properties of where it came from.

Let's go further: Imagine, again, that you've got the two espresso makers from the previous example. This time, when you pull shots from each, both espresso makers produce a very low-quality product. While this is expected from the unreliable machine on the right, it is unexpected from the reliable machine on the left. Is one cup of espresso better than the other? Again, it would seem not. And again, what matters for the quality of what's in the cup is precisely what's in the cup, not the reliability properties of where it came from.

A number of solutions to the swamping problem have been proffered.⁴ These solutions generally rely on making the distinction between the tokens of epistemic processes and their types, and claiming that justification adds value to *types* rather than directly to *tokens* (although tokens may inherit this value from types). But this solution generally misses the point of the Swamping Problem. The problem is not one of explaining how specific psychological processes might have value, but instead of explaining how a specific sort of knowledge has more epistemic value than does mere true belief. While we might value a line of espresso makers by a certain company because the individual units in that model are generally very reliable in terms of the quality of espresso they output, that does nothing to increase the quality of the specific espresso in this specific cup at a specific time. The Swamping Problem asks whether we can make sense of the value of tokens of knowledge, but it does not ask whether we can make sense of the epistemic value (if there is any) of belief-forming processes themselves. If the answer from the proponent of some epistemic theory is *no, we cannot make sense of the value of tokens of knowledge*, then that is a strike against the plausibility of that theory.

5.2. Carter's and Jarvis's Schematic Formulation and Extension

Carter and Jarvis (2012) present the swamping problem as an inconsistent tetrad:

1. Knowledge is more epistemically valuable than is mere true belief.
2. Any epistemic value conferred on a belief merely by that belief having some non-factive property is instrumental value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
3. If knowledge is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief, then there is a non-factive component of knowledge that, in instances of knowledge, adds epistemic value.

⁴ See, e.g., Goldman & Olsson (2009) and Olsson (2007).

4. If the value of a property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then it can confer no additional value.

Let Ve be a function that inputs properties of a belief, and outputs the epistemic value contributed by those properties. Let K be the property of being knowledge, and T the property of being true. Let C be some arbitrary non-factive component of knowledge. We can reason as follows:

- (i) C adds only instrumental epistemic value relative to the further epistemic good of truth. (by [2])
- (ii) Therefore, $Ve(T\&C) = Ve(T)$. (by [4])
- (iii) Therefore, no non-factive component adds epistemic value in instances of K . (by Universal Generalization)
- (iv) Therefore, $Ve(K) = Ve(T)$ (by [3])⁵

In summary, the thought is this: reliability is a non-factive property of belief formation such that a belief can have been reliably formed and yet not be true. But if the value of knowledge (i.e., a belief with all of the properties required for knowledge—it's important to remember this so as not to confuse the value of a belief with the value of a specific process causally antecedent to belief) is supposed to rely on the value of a process that itself is supposed to rely for its value on a component of the knowledge itself. This is not to say that knowledge *is not* epistemically valuable or that it not epistemically valuable at least in part because of truth—it is only to say that the epistemic value of truth cannot somehow be increased by diverting that value through the belief-formation process.

This is to reject (4), above. Of course, since (1)-(4) is an inconsistent tetrad, the inconsistency could also be resolved by rejecting any of (1)-(4). Almost no epistemologist would reject (1). As Carter and Jarvis note, even if someone were to reject (1), all this would show is that knowledge is epistemologically uninteresting. Further, the Swamping Problem will re-arise

⁵ Carter and Jarvis (2012) 2-4. Square brackets merely remove the letter 'S' that the authors had inserted from in front of each of the premise numbers.

for whatever we ultimately think is the *summum bonum* of epistemology. (2) can be rejected, but not without modifying the picture of knowledge that we're working with. However, even if we do reject (2) and replace the epistemic good of true belief with some other epistemic good, the Swamping Problem will re-arise for whatever epistemic good we replace true belief with. If (3) is rejected, then we'll need some deeply implausible picture of epistemic value and its relation to truth, belief, justification, and knowledge. So rejecting any of (1), (2) or (3) doesn't seem to solve the problem at all. Rejecting (1) or (2) changes the specific epistemic components involved in the Swamping Problem, but doesn't solve the problem itself. Rejecting (3) just seems to change the subject.

But things get worse: As Carter and Jarvis note, reliabilism is not the only theory of knowledge that attempts to explain the additional epistemic value of knowledge over mere true belief in terms of some non-factive property added to truth and belief, where the non-factive property is claimed to be epistemically valuable in terms of its relation to truth. Almost all theories of knowledge explain the additional value of knowledge over mere true belief in terms of some justification-like component and further explain the epistemic value of this justification-like component in terms of its relation to truth. What this means is that almost all theories of the value of knowledge, including those with internalistic justificational components, fall victim to the Swamping Problem.

And now here's when things become directly relevant to the project of this dissertation: It's not just the epistemic value of *knowledge over mere true belief* that falls victim to the Swamping Problem. The epistemic value of *justification at all* also falls victim to a precise analogue of the Swamping Problem. This can be made clear by considering three things. If justification is

supposed to inherit its epistemic value from its relation to truth, then, according to Swamping Problem considerations:

- a. There is no way to explain the epistemic value of justified true belief (regardless of whether this justified true belief is also knowledge) over mere true belief.
- b. There is no way to explain the epistemic value of justified false belief over mere false belief.
- c. There is no way to explain the epistemic value of the possession of justification in the absence of belief.

To see why, consider again Zagzebski's espresso maker analogy, but modify the analogy so that the goodness of the espresso is analogous with truth and the *color* of the espresso maker is analogous with justification. Stipulate that most good espresso is made by red espresso makers and most red espresso makers make good espresso. Further stipulate that the only sort of intrinsic goodness that we're concerned with is the goodness of the espresso itself. Still, good espresso made by red makers is no better than good espresso made by non-red makers (the analogue with (a)). Bad espresso made by red makers is no better than bad espresso made by non-red makers (the analogue with (b)). Finally, red machines that are sitting there, not currently making espresso, are no better than non-red machines that are sitting there, not currently making espresso (the analogue with (c)).

This move from Carter's and Jarvis's extension of the Swamping Problem to my extension of their extension, specifically to the purported epistemic value of justification in terms of truth, is of the utmost importance to the project of this chapter as well as to the overall project of this dissertation. Accordingly, at the risk of belaboring the point, I want to be very careful in my formulations here. Carter and Jarvis have shown that any non-factive component of knowledge that is supposed to inherit its epistemic value from the epistemic value of truth cannot actually contribute to the increase in the overall value of knowledge. They have further shown

that changing “truth” to “knowledge” such that the non-factive component of knowledge under discussion is now supposed to inherit its epistemic value from the epistemic value of knowledge itself, rather than truth, cannot solve the problem—in fact, we might reasonably think that it makes the problem even worse. From these conclusions, I have extended their argument to cover the purported epistemic normativity of any non-factive thing that is supposed to inherit this epistemic normativity from the epistemic normativity of truth. My claim is that we can’t make sense of the purported *additional* or *independent* value of this non-factive thing in either the presence or the absence of truth. Applying this directly to the case of justification, then, the conclusion is that if justification is supposed to inherit its epistemic value from truth, then justification adds no additional epistemic value to a belief or to a subject possessing a belief, regardless of whether the belief is true or false, and regardless of whether the subject forms a belief subsequent to her possession of justification or not.

The conclusion directly relevant to the current chapter and this dissertation as a whole is this: According to Swamping Problem considerations, the epistemic value of justification can’t be made sense of according to the Standard Picture.

5.3. The Boat Lottery Case and a Proposed Solution

Carter and Jarvis present an explanatory analogy for their argument in terms of a lottery for a free boat:

[C]onsider a case of a lottery where the winning ticket (drawn at noon on Friday) wins a boat. To make the example clean, suppose only one ticket wins. Let b-value be value related to winning the boat. On Thursday, our sole ticket has some positive instrumental b-value because having it is a means to winning the boat. On Friday, if we show the winning ticket, then...our sole (winning) ticket now adds no positive b-value. The idea underlying the Swamping Thesis: our already won boat in conjunction with the ticket that won us that boat is no more b-valuable than the already won boat itself.⁶

⁶ Carter & Jarvis (2012) 5

The ticket is valuable precisely because it is a means to an end, the end being the intrinsically valuable boat, or our intrinsically valuable possession of the boat. Once noon on Friday comes around, the drawing occurs, and we present our ticket, whether it's a winner or a loser; however, it seems as though the ticket loses any value it might have had on Thursday. Consider: If we won the boat and have already presented our ticket, we now have a boat—the ticket is of no use to us in terms of getting us a boat. If we did not win the boat and have already presented our ticket, we now have no boat, someone else has the boat and there's nothing we can do about that, ticket-wise—the ticket is of no use to us in terms of getting us a boat. Therefore, since the ticket's value is only instrumental in terms of boat-getting, once the facts have been settled regarding who gets the boat, our ticket is no longer of any value.

Notice, then, how this is precisely analogous to my extension of the Swamping Problem to justification and truth. The truth-values of propositions are not determined by justification for or against the truth of those propositions. Propositions are either true or false entirely independent of the epistemic justification possessed by subjects.⁷ If it is claimed that justification is epistemically valuable because of its relation to truth, then it is unclear where this value is supposed to come from. If I hold a true belief, this is analogous to having won the boat. If I hold a justified true belief, this is analogous to having won the boat and having held on to my ticket. Just as I don't get any additional boat-value by holding on to my ticket after I've won the boat, I don't get any additional epistemic value by having a justified true belief over an unjustified true belief. Similarly, if I hold a false belief, this is analogous to not having won the boat. If I hold a

⁷ Of course, there are a few things I'm ignoring here. I'm ignoring the possibility of propositions without truth-values, if there are such things. I'm also ignoring the possibility of logical/semantic systems in which there are greater than or fewer than two truth-values. I'm further ignoring the possibility of propositions whose truth-values are trivially determined by justification for or against the truth of those propositions, e.g., propositions about whether there is justification for those very propositions. Ignoring these things is done merely for the sake of simplicity of exposition—what I say here could be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to any of the aforementioned possibilities. Finally, I should note that I'm ignoring epistemic pictures of truth such as Michael Dummett's intuitionism (See Dummett (1959)).

justified false belief, this is analogous to not having won the boat and having held on to my ticket. Just as I don't get any additional boat-value by holding on to my ticket after I've failed to win the boat, I don't get any additional epistemic value by having a justified false belief over an unjustified false belief. And just to extend this to my final possibility: If the boat lottery is canceled such that no one wins the boat (analogous to my suspending belief, even in the face of justification), then my holding on to my ticket still affords me no additional boat value—my having justification affords me no additional epistemic value.

The analogy seems clear and decisive. As things stand, then, the conclusion of the analogy, when transferred back over to the case of epistemic value, calls for the rejection of at least one of the four members of our original inconsistent tetrad:

1. Knowledge is more epistemically valuable than is mere true belief.
2. Any epistemic value conferred on a belief merely by that belief having some non-factive property is instrumental value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
3. If knowledge is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief, then there is a non-factive component of knowledge that, in instances of knowledge, adds epistemic value.
4. If the value of a property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then it can confer no additional value.

For our purposes, here is that tetrad modified specifically to address justification and truth:

- 1*. The possession of justification is more epistemically valuable than the non-possession of justification.
- 2*. Any epistemic value conferred on a belief or subject merely by that belief or subject having some non-factive object/property is instrumental value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
- 3*. If the possession of justification is more epistemically valuable than the non-possession of justification, then there is a non-factive component of the possession of justification that, in instances of the possession of justification, adds epistemic value.

- 4*. If the value of an object/property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then it can confer no additional value.

And since (4) and (4*) just seem to follow directly from (1)/(1*), (2)/(2*), and (3)/(3*), along with some minimal reasoning, it seems as though the only solution is to reject one of the first three member of each of the tetrads. However, according to Carter and Jarvis, our problems don't actually arise from the falsity of any of (1)/(1*), (2)/(2*), or (3)/(3*), but instead from the minimal reasoning that we use to connect (1)/(1*), (2)/(2*), and (3)/(3*) with (4)/(4*). That is, the final member of each of the tetrads does not follow from the first three.

Consider the boat lottery analogy again. According to Carter and Jarvis, we've gotten the analogy wrong if we think that knowledge is akin to having the boat in our possession, or at least akin to having displayed the winning ticket after the drawing has been completed. The reason for this, they say, is that *possessing knowledge* is not a mere state or the terminus of a succession of states or of a process, but is, instead, an ongoing process with no terminus. Since this is the case, they claim, knowledge is more appropriately akin to having the winning ticket in-hand after the drawing has been completed but before the ticket has been presented to the lottery official. In this moment, the boat has been won but the ticket still possesses instrumental value. Similarly, the possession of justification is still instrumentally valuable even after a subject possesses knowledge because the justification continues to allow for and facilitate the upkeep of the subject's process of knowing.

Carter and Jarvis extend this: A subject who justifiably believes falsely is akin to a person who holds a losing ticket for the boat lottery but who is unaware that her ticket has lost, perhaps because she wasn't present at the drawing and is waiting for the results on the evening news. The ticket is still instrumentally valuable for that person in the same way that justification is still

instrumentally valuable for the person holding a false belief. Once the holder of the losing ticket learns from the nightly news that she has not won the boat, that she, in fact, holds a losing ticket, then the ticket loses its instrumental value. Analogously, once a subject learns that her justified false belief is false, then her justification loses its epistemic value.

Extending all of this to my extension of the Swamping Problem to the relation between the epistemic value of justification and that of truth: According to the line of reasoning proposed by Carter and Jarvis, justification itself is instrumentally valuable because it facilitates coming to believe truly and continuing to believe truly. Further, justification is instrumentally valuable in this way even if a subject has come to believe falsely based on that justification. The only time false belief has an effect on the value of justification is when the subject comes to recognize that she is believing falsely, at which point, she loses her justification because of this recognition in any case. That is, there is never a time when a subject recognizes that she falsely believes and also possesses justification for that false belief. Finally, even when a subject possesses justification and has decided, in the face of this justification, to suspend belief, the justification is instrumentally epistemically valuable because, since coming to believe is an ongoing process, she might, because of her justification, eventually come to believe truly.

This solution effectively abandons (4)/(4*), while also claiming that (4)/(4*) does not follow logically from the previous three members of the tetrad. Hence, (1)/(1*), (2)/(2*), and (3)/(3*) can be retained.

5.4. Problems with the Proposed Solution

While the solution initially might seem plausible, there are a number of serious problems that make it untenable. I will here ignore the disanalogy between winning a boat and coming to believe/believing when the latter is considered as a process rather than a state. Clearly neither

winning a boat nor the process of coming to give the winning ticket to the lottery official is relevantly analogous to the ongoing process that Carter and Jarvis claim coming to believe/believing is. Further, I think it is important to note that the solution proposed by Carter and Jarvis reconceives of the object the epistemically good of justification attaches to. In the traditional presentation of the Swamping Problem, the explanandum is the value of knowledge itself. In the solution proffered, the explanandum is the value of the process of coming to know or knowing *of the subject* and not *of the object itself*. Of course, this reconception is to be expected, given that Carter and Jarvis claim that there is no such thing as *knowledge qua epistemic object*, but instead only *something subjects do called knowing/coming to know*.

While there are, in fact, many problems with Carter's and Jarvis's proposed solution, I will here focus only on the three most serious ones, problems that bear directly not only on the Swamping Problem as formulated in the literature, but also on the extensions of the problem that I've presented in Section 5.2 of this chapter.

The first problem for the solution proposed by Carter and Jarvis is that it's not a solution to the Swamping Problem at all. The Swamping Problem is the problem of figuring out how knowledge can be more valuable than mere true belief, given that it seems as though the value of whatever is added to true belief in order to get knowledge is swamped by the value of truth. Carter and Jarvis's solution doesn't address this problem at all. Instead, their solution addresses the problem of how we might be able to think of current justification as instrumentally valuable, even if we already truly believe or possess a true belief. Their solution, as we've seen, is to claim that current justification is valuable because it sustains current true belief and allows for and facilitates future true belief. But this goes no way toward addressing the central issue of the Swamping Problem. Consider Lucy the Lucky Believer. It just so happens that everything Lucy

believes is true and that she has never possessed justification for any of the true things she's believed. Further, Lucy will continue luckily to believe true things even without justification for the rest of her life. According to Carter and Jarvis, if Lucy some day comes to possess justification for something she already luckily believes and would have continued luckily believing even without the justification, then her epistemic lot is somehow improved—it is more valuable. But how can this be so? Her justification in this case has nothing to do with her situation as a believer of true things. Perhaps justification is often instrumentally valuable because it sustains and promotes true belief. But this has nothing to do with why a present state/process of knowing is more valuable than that present same state/process, divested of whatever it is that turns mere true belief into knowledge. It is this latter question that the Swamping Problem presents, hence Carter and Jarvis have simply changed the topic.

The second problem is closely related to the first. Even if we allow for the change of topic from the Swamping Problem to the problem of figuring out how justification can be instrumentally valuable if a subject already truly believes, Carter and Jarvis haven't provided an answer to this question either. The solution they provide is one that considers present justification as a facilitating/enabling condition for present true belief, continued true belief, and future true belief—let's call these three together *diachronic true believing*. In order to consider whether justification adds value to diachronic true believing at any particular time, t_n , we need to keep diachronic true believing fixed across some specific stretch of time, t_{n-1} - t_{n+1} and see whether, by adding justification in at t_n we get more epistemic value at any point from t_{n-1} - t_{n+1} . If the intrinsic epistemic good is diachronic true believing, as it is in the Carter and Jarvis picture, then adding justification in at t_n will get us no more epistemic value at any point from t_{n-1} - t_{n+1} . How could it? All of the epistemic value possible is already instantiated, because diachronic true

believing is already instantiated. In effect, the purported instrumental epistemic value of justification is swamped by the intrinsic epistemic value of diachronic true believing. Carter's and Jarvis's mistake lies in a confusion about the situations we ought to consider. Instead of two situations, one in which there is justification + diachronic true believing and one in which there is diachronic true believing but no justification, they would have us consider one in which there is justification + diachronic true believing and one in which there is neither justification nor diachronic true believing. Clearly, the former of this pair is more epistemically valuable, but that has nothing at all to do with the presence of justification—it is instead because of the presence of diachronic true believing. It matters not at all if we stipulate that without justification there would be no diachronic true believing. It is the *amount and source of epistemic value* that we're concerned with here. This is analogous to precisely the Swamping Problem for the value of knowledge that Carter and Jarvis fail to address.⁸

The third problem is that Carter and Jarvis have effectively ruled out even the possibility of externalistic justification, which is the sort of justification—in the form of reliabilism—that generated the Swamping Problem to begin with. While I think that Carter and Jarvis have proved that the Swamping Problem is not only a problem for reliabilism but also for any non-factive property/object that is purportedly instrumentally valuable in relation to truth, this does not show that there is no such thing as externalistic justification. How could it? In fact, Carter and Jarvis have in effect stipulatively ruled out even the possibility of externalistic justification by claiming that it is *phenomenal properties* of the relation between a justifier and the truth of the related

⁸ Here is a whimsical analogy: Suppose that I ask you whether you prefer pizza with mushrooms as a topping or with no mushrooms as a topping. You tell me that you're not sure and that you'd like to try each in order to decide. First I give you a slice of the pizza with mushrooms on it, which you agree is very delicious. Next, I give you no pizza at all, which you agree is certainly less delicious than the pizza with mushrooms on it—in fact, it's not delicious at all. I then conclude that you prefer pizza with mushrooms to pizza with no mushrooms. "Wait just a minute!" you would protest. "While I think that pizza with mushrooms on it is delicious, certainly more delicious than no pizza at all, I don't yet have any evidence that I prefer pizza with mushrooms to pizza without mushrooms—you haven't let me try pizza with no mushrooms on it!"

belief that determines whether that that justifier is justificatory at all. If I am aware that my belief is false, then I no longer possess justification. If I am unaware of the truth-value of my belief, whether that belief is true or false, then I still possess justification. There is no way to square these claims with an externalist theory of justification that maintains that there will sometimes or even often be times when I will possess justification and yet have no conscious access to my possession of this justification.

Carter's and Jarvis's proposed solution, then, not only doesn't offer a workable answer to the Swamping Problem, it further demonstrates the strength of the problem itself. Even when the Swamping Problem is reconceived (or misconceived) as a problem for the value of justification in relation to true belief rather than as a problem for the value of knowledge in relation to true belief, the Swamping Problem again rears its head. The question remains, then: How is it possible to explain the value of something over the value of something else when the value of the first thing is supposedly entirely dependent on the value of the second? This is not only a problem for the value of knowledge, but, as Carter and Jarvis have (perhaps unwittingly) shown, a problem for the value of justification at all.

5.5. A Revisionary Solution

Let's review the propositions of the original tetrad and its justification-specific modified form:

1. Knowledge is more epistemically valuable than is mere true belief.
2. Any epistemic value conferred on a belief merely by that belief having some non-factive property is instrumental value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
3. If knowledge is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief, then there is a non-factive component of knowledge that, in instances of knowledge, adds epistemic value.
4. If the value of a property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then it can confer no additional value.

And:

- 1*. The possession of justification is more epistemically valuable than the non-possession of justification.
- 2*. Any epistemic value conferred on a belief or subject merely by that belief or subject having some non-factive object/property is instrumental value relative to the further epistemic good of true belief.
- 3*. If the possession of justification is more epistemically valuable than the non-possession of justification, then there is a non-factive component of the possession of justification that, in instances of the possession of justification, adds epistemic value.
- 4*. If the value of an object/property possessed by an item is only instrumental value relative to a further good and that good is already present in that item, then it can confer no additional value.

(4)/(4*) does, I think it is safe to say, follow from the previous three. Which, then, of (1)/(1*), (2)/(2*), or (3)/(3*) is false, then? My preferred answer is (2)/(2*). My reason is twofold: First, I think that rejecting either of (1)/(1*) or (3)/(3*) would be seriously problematic. Second, I think that there is a plausible (albeit revisionary) way to reject (2)/(2*).

As Carter and Jarvis briefly mention, and as I gestured at above, rejecting (1)/(1*) has one of two consequences. Either it shows us that knowledge/justification are not epistemologically interesting states/objects/properties and that we should continue doing epistemology, but in the absence of knowledge/justification, or it shows us that we should stop doing epistemology altogether because its central notions, knowledge and justification, are entirely uninteresting. It seems to me as though the first consequence collapses into the second, especially in the case of justification. If epistemology is doing anything at all, it seems to me, it is talking about the rational relations between our mental states and the not-merely-causal things that bring about and sustain those mental states. That is to say, if epistemology is doing anything at all, then it is talking about something that is properly construed as justification. To throw out

justification would be either to reduce or modify epistemology to psychology or to phenomenology—both interesting fields in their own right, but not epistemology.

At this stage of my overall argument in this dissertation, I am hesitant to say that I have *reasons* to reject this option: but I do have *explanations* for rejecting it. First, to throw out epistemology would be to throw out a historically very important component of philosophy as a discipline and practice. Second, the point of this dissertation is to see whether some sense can be made of justification, and hence, whether (1*) is true. To reject (1*) now would be to decide prematurely that the project of this dissertation is a failure.

(3)/(3*) seems almost definitionally true. Justification is not factive. Whatever gets added to true belief to make it knowledge is not factive. In fact, even if we were to change these definitions so that these things *were* factive, that doesn't seem as though it would solve the Swamping Problem. It then seems clear that we'd be stuck with the problem of trying to figure out how the value of something that entails truth isn't merely token-identical to the value of truth itself.

That having been said, I think the clearly best solution to the Swamping Problem is to reject (2)/(2*). For our purposes, this would mean rejecting the Standard Picture, the claim that justification is epistemically valuable solely in relation to truth. This in turn would mean *either* that justification is epistemically valuable in relation to some other epistemically valuable property *or* that justification is intrinsically epistemically valuable.

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I've argued that justification is not valuable in relation to truth. My argument is an extension of the classic Swamping Problem as it has appeared in recent literature in epistemology. If there is a problem with explaining how knowledge is more epistemically

valuable than mere true belief, then there is also a problem with explaining how justification is epistemically valuable at all when justification's value is construed as instrumental and related to the epistemic good of truth. I presented this argument via a recent exploration of the Swamping Problem in a paper by Carter and Jarvis and further showed that far from presenting a solution to the Swamping Problem, as they claim to do, they both misunderstand the scope of the problem and unintentionally highlight its undiminished strength. My proposed solution to the problem is to deny the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity: it is not in virtue of its instrumental relation to truth that justification is epistemically valuable. Instead, it is either in virtue of justification's instrumental relation to some other epistemic good that justification is epistemically valuable or else because justification is simply intrinsically epistemically valuable.

In the next chapter, I present an existentially inflected argument against the possibility of the instrumental value of justification. If what I have said in this chapter is correct, then by the end of the next chapter, it should be clear that if justification is epistemically valuable, that value is intrinsic to justification itself. The task will then be to determine precisely how it is that this justification is supposed to function.

Chapter 6. The Existential Problem for the Instrumental Value of Justification

In the previous chapter, I presented a version of the classic Swamping Problem for the value of knowledge as a problem specifically for the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity. That picture, we will remember, holds that justification is epistemically valuable, and hence epistemically normative, precisely because of justification's relationship to truth—justification is merely instrumentally epistemically valuable in terms of truth. In other words, the epistemic normativity possessed by justification is inherited from the more fundamental epistemic normativity of truth. In that chapter, I showed that if the Standard Picture is correct, there seems to be no way to account for the epistemic value or normativity of internalistically valuable states. The consequence of this would be that there is no way to explain why justified true belief is more epistemically valuable than mere true belief, why justified false belief is more epistemically valuable than mere false belief, or why the possession of justification, regardless of subsequent belief, is epistemically valuable. This conclusion is unacceptable. Accordingly, I ended the previous chapter by counseling that we throw out the Standard Picture and conceive of justification either as instrumentally epistemically valuable in terms of some epistemic good other than truth or as intrinsically epistemically valuable.

The goal of the current chapter is to show that any attempt to conceive of justification as instrumentally epistemically valuable is doomed to failure. That is, the thesis of this chapter is that if justification is epistemically valuable, then this epistemic value must be intrinsic epistemic value. The central argument of this chapter is derived ultimately from Kant, but was given its fullest recent articulation by Wittgenstein and (other) Existentialist philosophers. The argument rests on an epistemic problem relating to theories of instrumental value: If it is the case that some

thing, X, is valuable only in terms of its ability to bring about some other thing, Y, then it must be possible for a subject to have some way of determining whether she is engaged with X in the proper way so as to bring about Y. As an example: If my car is valuable only in terms of its ability to get me to work, then it must be possible for me to have some way of determining whether I'm using my car in a way such that it will get me to work. However, once the necessity of this determining ability is recognized, we are off on a vicious regress. If X's value in relation to Y requires some further object, Z, which is the recognition of when X is being used correctly in relation to Y, then Z's ability to do its job, to relate X and Y in the appropriate manner, requires some further object, Z+1, which is the recognition of when Z is being used correctly in relation to X and Y, and so on. This is the problem (of grounding rules for applying concepts in judgments) for which Kant's schematism is introduced as a solution, the problem (of grounding rules for making practical self-commitments) for which Kierkegaard's leap of faith is also introduced as a solution, which Wittgenstein regarded as a regress of rules-needed-for-applying-rules problem, and which Sartre dramatically calls *abandonment*.¹

The fact that any picture of the instrumental epistemic normativity of justification—whether that picture is one in which the ultimate intrinsically valuable epistemic object is truth or something else—entails a vicious regress, can be responded to in one of two ways: Either we conclude that justification cannot possibly be epistemically normative at all or else we conclude that the epistemic normativity of justification must be intrinsic to justification itself. My preferred solution is the latter one. As I noted in Chapter 5, the project of this dissertation is to see whether and how justification is epistemically normative, so I am committed to investigating

¹ This summary is very quick for those not already familiar with existentialist philosophy and its connection to Kant and Wittgenstein. While I fill in details relevant to the current project later on in this chapter, there are also a number of helpful secondary sources that address this connection. See, e.g., Bell (1987), Ginsborg (2015), and Hanna, "Wittgenstein and Kantianism" (MS).

all proposals for the nature and source of that epistemic normativity before giving up and concluding that justification is not epistemically normative. As I further noted in Chapter 5:

If epistemology is doing anything at all, it seems to me, it is talking about the rational relations between our mental states and the not-merely-causal things that bring about and sustain those mental states. That is to say, if epistemology is doing anything at all, then it is talking about something that is properly construed as justification. To throw out justification would be either to reduce or modify epistemology to psychology or to phenomenology—both interesting fields in their own right, but not epistemology. (103-4)

I call the central argument of this chapter an *existential argument* and the problem that generates the argument an *existential problem* for two reasons. The first is that, as I've already noted, the problem was given a recent full articulation in the writings of a number of post-Kantian Existentialist philosophers. In fact, I think that it is possible to see the motivating goal of most of the famous Existentialists and proto-Existentialists (e.g., Nietzsche) as finding a plausible solution to this problem. The second, and deeper, reason, however, is that the problem is not exclusively an *epistemic* problem in that it is a problem for how we can discover or determine when we've engaged with a piece of justification correctly, but even further, an *existential* problem in that it is a problem for determining how we, as self-consciously rational, moral, worldly creatures are going to conceive of ourselves and how we are going to structure our actions and our lives in response to this self-conception.

This all might seem unnecessarily high-minded and somewhat beside the point for typical discussions of epistemology. A subsidiary goal of this chapter, as well as of the positive proposal I offer in Chapters 9 and 10 for the source and nature of the epistemic normativity of justification, is to show that epistemic concerns are ultimately concerns regarding our most fundamental selves, regarding what it is to be one of us. Just as many moral philosophers conceive of morality in such a way that a loss of our specifically moral capacities would result in a loss of our specifically personal, rational human properties, I want to build a case for

conceiving of epistemology in such a way that a loss of our specifically epistemic abilities would result in a loss of our specifically personal, rational human selves. This picture of epistemology, decidedly Kantian in nature (although it also traces its roots back to Aristotle's ethics, as is evident in contemporary "virtue epistemology"²), is the natural consequence of the dual recognition of the epistemic normativity of justification and of the falsity of the Standard Picture. Like contemporary "virtue epistemology," I hold that epistemology is an intrinsically normative discipline, and that rational human subjects and their communities are the ultimate grounds of epistemic value. But unlike virtue epistemology, and more like Kant, Kierkegaard, and Wittgenstein, I hold that it is the self-legislating, self-committing, self-constituting, freely-willed *acts* of such subjects from which epistemic value originally flows.

To reiterate, then, the goal of this chapter is to show that a picture of the epistemic normativity of justification in which that normativity is conceived of along merely instrumental lines is false. The chapter proceeds as follows. In Section 6.1, I lay out a necessary epistemic condition on the normativity of internalistic justification, what I call the Epistemic Minimal Responsibility Thesis or EMRT. EMRT can be seen merely as a specification and elaboration on the definition of internalistic justification and its motivating conditions from Chapter 1. It is a consequence of EMRT that insofar as some justifier is epistemically normative, we are in an epistemic position to understand and properly interpret the normative consequences of that justifier, i.e., we can properly tell what it is justification for. In Section 6.2, I present what I call an *unresolvable interpretive ambiguity* in our practices regarding the epistemic normativity of

² For Aristotle, *eudaimonia*, often translated as *happiness*, but more precisely translated as *rational human flourishing*, is the both intrinsically morally valuable and is the source of all other moral value. The virtues themselves, those traits of character that are good for anyone to have, manifested in habitual action, that lie in the mean between the extremes of excess and deficiency, are contentfully determined in terms of the final cause for human persons: *eudaimonia*. As such, what we are essentially, according to Aristotle, is epistemic beings, beings whose very nature is bound up with and determined by the epistemic standards of rationality. See Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* in Aristotle (2001) and Greco & Turri (2011).

internalistic justification. This ambiguity, I show, results in a practical or pragmatic stagnation in which it is impossible for us to decide how to proceed epistemically. That is, as a result of this unresolvable interpretive ambiguity, even when we possess justification, it is impossible for us to decide how we epistemically ought to respond to this justification. I identify the phenomenon underlying this unresolvable interpretive ambiguity—what I call the *necessity of normative interpretation*. According to the necessity of normative interpretation, even when we are in possession of a normative item, such as an epistemic justifier, the correct course of action is still interpretively underdetermined. That is, before we can make sense of the epistemically normative content of a justifier in order to believe in accordance with our justification, we must engage in an interpretive act. In Section 6.3, in order to further explicate the unresolvable interpretive ambiguity, I present the ambiguity as it appears in Wittgenstein's so-called rule-following paradox and regress-of-rules arguments. In Section 6.4, I lay out three proposals for attempting to address the necessity of normative interpretation in such a way that we can regain the normative objectivity apparently threatened by this phenomenon. I show, however, that none of these proposals is satisfactory. In Section 6.5, I explicitly present the direct confrontation between the unresolvable interpretive ambiguity present in all instrumentalist theories of epistemic normativity and the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity. In this section, I drive home the argument for the thesis of this chapter: There is no way to make sense of the epistemic normativity of justification in terms of an instrumental relation between justification and some other epistemic good, regardless of how that other epistemic good is conceived. Finally, I show how the conception of justification as an intrinsic epistemic good has an existential dimension to it: It is in virtue of our self-conception as seekers of justification that we can make sense of a picture of justification in which justification is intrinsically epistemically valuable.

Before beginning, however, I want to make sure that the notion of *instrumental epistemic normativity* when it is applied to internalistic justification is maximally clear. Some object, X, is instrumentally valuable in way W iff it is related in some appropriately instrumental way to some other object, Y, where Y is intrinsically valuable in way W. To be *appropriately instrumentally related* is generally taken to mean *to facilitate or bring about* such that X possesses instrumental value because of its ability to facilitate or bring about Y's intrinsic value. The instrumental value of X, then, is *inherited* from the intrinsic value of Y in such a way that it is due to Y's intrinsic value and to X's appropriately instrumental relation to Y that X has instrumental value. So it is a value-value relation that underlies the relation between the instrumentally valuable and the intrinsically valuable. Further, it is important to keep in mind the necessarily phenomenally accessible nature of the value/normativity of epistemic justifiers of the internalistic picture we're working with. If X is an internalistic justifier and X's epistemic value is instrumental in nature, then the connection between X's epistemic value and Y's epistemic value must also be phenomenally accessible to X's possessor. This phenomenal accessibility is necessary in order to do justice to the guiding intuitions behind our internalistic picture: Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension (see Chapter 1).

6.1. The Epistemically Minimal Responsibility Thesis

Let us begin by considering some norm or normative theory issuing in specific rules, dictates, commands, or propositions expressing normative bindingness. Now, further consider some subject or subject who is properly bound by these norms, rules, dictates, etc., whereby there are true propositions such that the subject occupies the subject place of the proposition and the verb is deontic or at least expresses some normative force. In these causes, the subject *ought* to act in a certain way, or at least, if the subject does not act in a certain way, she has not acted as well as

she could have acted.³ This means that a subject is *responsible* in a certain way for her conduct in relation to the specific norms by which she is bound. However, it is hard to see how someone could be responsible for something without very specific *epistemic* constraints on that responsibility. I call these constraints the Epistemically Minimal Constraints for Responsibility and the thesis expressing their connection to responsibility, and hence to normativity, the Epistemically Minimal Responsibility Thesis (EMRT):

For any normative theory, N, issuing specific norms n_1 - n_n , if N is normatively binding on some subject, S, it must be the case (i) that S can become aware of the fact that she is bound by N and (ii) that S can become aware of what it would take to satisfy n_1 - n_n .

EMRT, in turn, can be proven by means of the following *reductio* argument:

1. Suppose that EMRT is false, i.e., there is some normative theory, N, issuing specific norms n_1 - n_n , such that N is normatively binding on some subject, S, and either it is not the case (i) that S can become aware of the fact that she is bound by N or it is not the case (ii) that S can become aware of what it would take to satisfy n_1 - n_n .
2. If EMRT is false, then subjects' actions (in at least one sphere) are liable to assessments of rightness and wrongness (betterness and worseness, etc.) for reasons that are entirely opaque to those subjects.
3. If subjects' actions are liable to assessments of rightness and wrongness for reasons that are entirely opaque to those subjects, then from the subject's point of view, there is no reason for her to act (or to have acted) one way rather than another.
4. If, from the subject's point of view, there is no reason for her to act (or to have acted) one way rather than another, then the subject's normatively assessable actions are arbitrary.
5. If a subject's normatively assessable actions are arbitrary, then it is impossible for subjects to care about normativity.

Therefore,

³ Notice here that I have expressed the claim in the preceding sentence as a mere conditional and *not* as a bi-conditional. * What this means is that those violating a norm have not acted as well as they could have acted, but it might not be the case that those who have not acted as well as they could have acted are thereby violating a norm.

* The truth-conditions for this conditional are those of a subjunctive conditional rather than those of a material conditional. I don't want to here get into the very controversial territory of what those truth-conditions specifically are.

6. It is impossible for subjects to care about normativity.

But,

7. It is absurd for it to be impossible for subjects to care about normativity, since the only things that *matter*, and hence, the only things that subjects *care about* are things insofar as they are related to normativity (i.e., people care about things because they think that there is reason to care, or it is better to care, or something like this).

Therefore,

8. EMRT is true.

It is important to notice that EMRT is silent on the debate between reasons internalism and reasons externalism, and equally silent on the debate between those who think that there can be reasons that you do not possess (or can't possibly possess) and those who deny that thesis. The thought is merely that if there are facts that *would be* or *are* normatively relevant to some action, project, domain of inquiry but that it is *in-principle* impossible for a subject to either possess or understand those facts, then those facts, whether we want to call them *reasons* or something else, cannot be normatively binding on a subject.

EMRT is an expansion on, a specification of, and a restatement of the two guiding norms regarding the nature of internalistic justification that I presented in Chapter 1. These norms, which I called Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension, were formulated as follows:

Reasons-Responsiveness

When a person holds a particular belief, then she ought to be able to provide what she takes to be the good reasons why she holds that belief, either to others when reasons are demanded of her or to herself when she questions her own beliefs.

Reasons-Apprehension

When a person possesses a reason, then she ought to be able to understand both *why* and *how* it is supposed to be a reason for what it is supposed to be a reason.

The thought is simply that a person cannot be normatively bound by something unless she is able to tell that she is bound by that thing and further able to tell what it *means*, in practical terms, to be bound by that thing. Even if someone thinks that there can possibly be normative items that are epistemically inaccessible in some way that runs contrary to EMRT, however, those sorts of normative items won't be of concern to us in the present dissertation. The reason is that herein, we are specifically concerned with internalistic justification formulated as a thesis that incorporates Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Apprehension. Recall that this formulation of internalistic justification looks like this:

A subject, S, has an internalistic justification for a belief B if and only if (1) S possesses an internalistic justifier, IJ, for a belief, B, strictly due to S's potential phenomenal access to IJ and its relation to B, and (2) S is thereby in a position to become aware (2i) of her possession of IJ, (2ii) that IJ is a justifier for B, and (2iii) how it is that IJ is a justifier for B.

As things stand, then, EMRT seems entirely warranted and justified by the guiding norms of internalistic justification as well as by the definition of internalistic justification that I settled on in Chapter 1.

6.2. An Unresolvable Epistemic Ambiguity

How is it that you have justification? That is, what process are you a part of or what activity do you engage in such that you are able to have justification? The standard picture today is that whatever is truly normative is necessary, and knowable only a priori, i.e., knowable in a way that is strictly underdetermined by contingent sensory evidence or experience. But, for the sake of incorporating all possible minimally plausible views, let's expand our conception of the possible sources of normative evidence. Normative evidence, we can claim, can come to us either a priori or a posteriori, and let's, to make things easier, leave out the caveat that the normative is strictly necessary.

So the story is this: Via either an a priori or an a posteriori process, or some process that combines the two, you come to possess justification, which justification is normative in that it (i) is both epistemically better, *ceteris paribus*, for you to have it than for you to not have it and (ii) generates epistemic obligations for you. This is about as broad as an epistemic story can be, given that the only logically possible alternative, that there is no process by which you acquire moral justification—you just *have it* somehow—seems not to be a properly epistemic story at all. That is, the only possible alternative is a just-so story, and one that does no explanatory work.

Hence, justification *comes to us* in such a way that when we possess a justifier, we've gotten that justifier—captured it, come into contact with it. It would seem that insofar as you and I both get hold of the same epistemic justifier, then we would both understand the justifier in the same way, and hence, be normatively bound by the justifier in the same way such that we would know what to do, epistemically, in response to our possession of that justifier. However, this simple story turns out to be too simple. Mere possession of a justifier is not yet enough to know how to proceed, normatively, in response to the possession of that justifier. To see why, consider the following: You and I both look at the same thing, in the same circumstances, under the same epistemic conditions, from epistemically relevantly the same point of view, etc. Or: You and I both consider the same thing, in the same circumstances, under the same epistemic conditions, from epistemically relevantly the same point of view. We both report the same description of what we are considering: p. We both claim to be in the same evidential or justificational mental state with respect to p: M. But then, we claim to recognize opposing normative forces and generated epistemic duties as a result of being in M: A and not-A. In order to make the problem acute, let's stipulate that this is not a problem with one or the other of our cognitive apparatuses: We are both healthy, appropriately functioning persons with relevantly the same amount of

background knowledge about the situation and relevantly the same amount of practice (which, let's stipulate, is substantial) dealing with relevantly similar situations.

The only difference between us, then, is that you think you ought to do one thing, A, as a result of your justificational mental state, M, and I think that I ought to do another thing, not-A, as a result of my justificational mental state, also M. To concretize the case, let's say that you think, as a result of being in M, that you ought to believe that the cat is on the mat and I think that I ought to believe that it is not the case that the cat is on the mat. That is, you take your justifier, M, to positively normatively connect you to belief in the proposition that the cat is on the mat and I take my justifier, M—the very same justifier in terms of phenomenal and semantic content—to negatively normatively connect me to belief in the proposition that the cat is on the mat.

It seems as though something has gone wrong with one of us here. But what has gone wrong? *Ex hypothesi*, we have the same mental states but come to different conclusions regarding our epistemically normative situation. If this situation is plausible, and I see no reason why it is not, then there must be some epistemic and normatively relevant step in between the possession of a particular justificational mental state and the conclusion we come to regarding the normative content of that mental state. That is, since possession of a justifier and the determination of what to do, normatively, in response to that justifier can vary independently of one another, there must be some fact or condition that explains why, in one case, possession of a justifier can seem to be normatively connected to one action while in another case, possession of the very same justifier can seem to be normatively connected to some other, perhaps contrary, action.

What I want to do now is to argue that *interpretation* of justification is necessary for epistemic value only if that value is merely instrumental. But no interpretation is needed if the normativity of justification is intrinsic, since to possess that justification would be already to understand and possess the full normative force of the justification.

Consider two people, one who is a collector of treasure maps and one who is a collector of treasure. For the former, possession of a treasure map is itself valuable. For the latter, however, possession of a treasure map is not itself valuable—it is the treasure that is valuable, and in order for the map to become valuable, the map must be able to be used to bring about the presence of treasure. In terms relevant to the project of this dissertation, then, if justification is merely instrumentally valuable in terms of some further epistemic good, then a possessor of justification needs to further figure out how to use justification in order to bring about true beliefs. If, on the other hand, justification is intrinsically valuable, then normativity, epistemic value, is already present in the justification, resultant true belief or no.

How, then, can a person move from possession of a merely instrumentally normative object to possession of its intrinsically valuable counterpart? It seems as though there is a necessary *interpretive* step such that a person needs to determine precisely how to bring about the relevant intrinsic good. Even if two people possess exactly the same justifier, that does not guarantee that they will come to the same conclusion regarding what they thereby ought to do in response to their possession of that justifier. This is no problem if justification is already intrinsically valuable. However, it necessitates an extra interpretive step if justification is merely instrumentally valuable. Without this interpretive step, it is not clear how we can claim that justification is instrumentally valuable at all. A subject must further *interpret* the justifier in order to fully determine how she ought to act in response to its possession. Accordingly, it is

possible, for any justificatory mental state, that that state is interpreted, in order to determine its normative content, in wildly divergent ways.

Notice that I haven't said that the interpretations are equally correct or acceptable or valid, just that they are possible. If I am right about this, and the preceding thought experiment seems to show that I am, then there is always a necessary step that we perform in between the possession of a evidential mental state and the possession of its normative content—an interpretive step. I call this the *Necessity of Normative Interpretation (NNI)*, and it can be formulated as follows:

Mere possession of a normative item, such as a justifier, is not sufficient for a subject to come to a belief about how she ought properly to respond to that justifier. The reason for this is that all normativity must be interpreted so as to connect the content of the normative item with the apparently correct course of action in response to that normative item.

Let us consider, for example, Bonjour's classical foundationalist account of internalistic justification. According to Bonjour, justificatory states are states of direct apprehension of relevant facts and mental states. As such, to possess a justifier is to be in one of these states of direct apprehension. However, merely being in one of these states of direct apprehension doesn't seem sufficient for determining how the possessor of the state is supposed to behave in response to her possession of the state. That is, we can imagine two people in relevantly similar states of direct acquaintance who nonetheless non-accidentally act in contrary ways because they come to believe that the proper response to their states of direct apprehension is to act in these ways. What explains our ability to imagine this possibility is our tacit understanding that justificatory states can be interpreted in more than one way. This is our recognition of the truth of NNI.

There are interesting parallels between NNI and contemporary discussions regarding peer disagreement. The central phenomenon calling out for explanation in discussions regarding peer

disagreement is that it seems that it is possible for epistemic peers (i.e., people whose epistemic capacities function in relevantly similar ways and who are also in relevantly similar evidential and doxastic states) to nonetheless disagree over relevant facts. That is, it seems possible for epistemic peers to come to divergent conclusions on the same set of issues. A simple and attractive proposal for making sense of peer disagreement is merely to deny the appearance and to claim that insofar as two people are epistemic peers, they will not disagree over relevantly related issues, and insofar as two people do disagree in such a way, they are not epistemic peers. However, this solution seems perhaps too simple. One way to preserve both the appearance and the intuition that something is amiss when apparent epistemic peers disagree is to locate the explanation for the disagreement in the realm of interpretation. It seems possible for epistemic peers to come to different conclusions if they interpret their epistemic justificatory situations in differing ways. And it further seems as though there is nothing perverse about continuing to call them *epistemic peers* even though they engage in divergent acts of interpretation.

6.3. Wittgenstein and the Regress of Rules Problem

It will aid understanding to look at NNI as it is presented by Wittgenstein in the famous “rule-following paradox” in the *Philosophical Investigations*:

This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule. The answer was: if every course of action can be brought into accord with the rule, then it can also be brought into conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here.

That there is a misunderstanding here is shown by the mere fact that in this chain of reasoning we place one interpretation behind another, as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of yet another lying behind it. For what we thereby show is that there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an interpretation, but which, from case to case of application, is exhibited in what we call “following the rule” and “going against it”.

That’s why there is an inclination to say: every action according to a rule is an interpretation. But one should speak of interpretation only when one expression of a rule is substituted for another.

That's why 'following a rule' is a practice.⁴

The heart of this passage is twofold: First, rules are intensional objects, while actual performances either in accordance with those rules or not are extensional objects. The upshot of this is that since rules are necessarily infinite in that they cover any and all possible performances, any performance that is apparently a following of the rule might in fact not be because it might be the case that the as-yet unverified components of the performance will not be determined by the rule. This puts us in a position of radical ignorance when it comes to evaluating *another's* performance—it seems as though we can never tell, from the performance alone, whether any particular rule is actually being followed.

Second, and more interesting for my current purposes, is that for any rule, R_1 , if a subject is going to follow that rule, she must first interpret the rule in order to know how to follow it correctly, hence in order to know which performances are licit, and which are illicit according to R_1 . But this interpretation can be done correctly or incorrectly: thus is it guided by a second rule, R_2 . However, in order to follow R_2 , it must first be interpreted... And then we're off on a vicious regress of rules, "vicious" because it seems as though in order to ever even *start* following a rule, we will have needed to run through an infinite number of interpretive steps first. But, of course, we haven't done that.

⁴ Wittgenstein (2009), §§201-2

It's worth noting, before I continue, that since perhaps the dominant interpretation of this passage was provided by Kripke,⁵ we should spend a moment coming to terms with why Kripke's strict verificationist interpretation, while interesting in its own right, is neither the one I want to forward nor, almost certainly, the one intended by Wittgenstein. According to Kripke, our ignorance of whether a rule is being followed entails not just skepticism about particular performances, but full-blown meaning skepticism. Kripke's thought is that in order to share meanings, members of a language-community must be able to verify that words and statements are being tokened correctly. But since, according to Wittgenstein, we can never verify that another is using words and statements according to the proper rules, then we can never verify their correct tokening. Therefore, no community can possibly share meanings. So meaning skepticism is true.

This conclusion, and the general verificationist argument strategy, are familiar from Quine's "gavagai" arguments for the possibility of radical translation,⁶ and Goodman's "new riddle of induction."⁷ However, note Wittgenstein's precise words:

That there is a misunderstanding here is shown by the mere fact that in this chain of reasoning we place one interpretation behind another, as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of yet another lying behind it. For what we thereby show is that there is a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an interpretation, but which, from case to case of application, is exhibited in what we call "following the rule" and "going against it". (§201)

⁵ Kripke (1982)

⁶ Quine (2013)

⁷ Goodman (1955)

Wittgenstein himself anticipates and refutes Kripke's interpretation, long before Kripke.

According to Wittgenstein, certain acts just are examples of getting it right according to a rule, no *further* interpretation necessary. These acts, publicly verifiable, if that's something you're looking for, are both regress-stoppers and normativity-generators. However, the specifics of Wittgenstein's proposed solution aren't my concern here.

What is important to notice in Wittgenstein's regress-of-rules problem, as it relates to NNI, is this: Insofar as the possession of some object requires the bringing-about of some further object, interpretation is required in order to determine how properly to bring about that further object. However, this interpretation itself is only a successful interpretation insofar as it actually does bring about that further object, and hence, this interpretation itself requires the bringing-about of some further object. And now we're off on a regress. In the terms of this dissertation: If justification is merely instrumentally valuable in terms of some further epistemic good, then interpretation is required in order to determine how to bring about that further epistemic good, given justification. However, this interpretation is itself merely instrumentally valuable in terms of some further epistemic good, and hence, interpretation at a meta-level is required in order to determine how to interpret appropriately at the object-level. And a regress of interpretations of interpretations is instituted. This regress is vicious, precisely in the case of justification, because the possibility of *successful* interpretation is required in order for justification to be instrumentally normative at all. But the possibility of successful interpretation itself relies on the further possibility of successful interpretation of interpretation. Since this regress never terminates, the necessary conditions on the instrumental epistemic normativity of justification are never satisfied, and hence, it is impossible for justification to be instrumentally epistemically valuable.

6.4. Three Proposals for Addressing NNI

In this section, I will consider three proposals for addressing NNI. These proposals are what I call the epistemic proposal, the skeptical proposal, and the nihilistic proposal. In the end, I will find each of these proposals essentially lacking.

6.4.1. The Epistemic Proposal

Interpretation seems, first and foremost, to be an epistemic issue. When we interpret correctly, we get things right in a relevantly similar way to when we believe correctly. Since the rules for belief and the norms governing acceptable and unacceptable acts of believing are *epistemic* rules and norms, we ought to determine whether there are rules for interpretation that we could appeal to when engaging in any interpretive act. If there are such rules, then interpretation is not such a problem after all. Note that if it is possible for us to *appeal* to epistemic norms, then these norms must be epistemically accessible to us in such a way that we can (i) tell that we are bound by these norms and (ii) tell what successfully following these norms would look like. These strictures are, of course, just EMRT (i.e., the Epistemically Minimal Responsibility Thesis, which holds that subjects can't be bound by norms that are in-principle epistemically inaccessible to those subjects).

What would it mean for there to be epistemic norms regarding correct interpretation? It would mean that there are true normative claims, or normative facts, regarding how we ought to interpret justification. So when I am to engage in a process of interpretation, I am bound by these epistemic norms, and I further can and should and do appeal to these norms in order to interpret correctly. The problem here should be immediately evident. If it is the case that it is epistemic norms that tell me how correctly to interpret epistemic justification, then these norms themselves (as guaranteed by EMRT) will require interpretation. How do I know when I have followed them

correctly? How do we settle disputes over how to correctly follow them? This proposal does nothing but push the interpretive problem back one step, from the original moral evidence to new, epistemic-norm-related moral evidence. The carpet is too big for the room and no matter how many times we push a bump down, a new one will arise again in a new place.

Notice that it also won't work to say that it is epistemic norms all the way down. In order to solve any problem of interpretation, we appeal to yet another epistemic norm. This would make the process of interpretation not only *potentially* infinite, but *actually* infinite. And this infinite regress is vicious since in order to perform the first interpretive act correctly, we would need to perform a second one, and then a third, *ad infinitum*. If explanation comes to an end somewhere, then so does interpretation.⁸

As a bit of an aside: As just noted, there is a distinction to be made between potential and actual infinite interpretation. Foucault, in "Nietzsche, Marx, Freud,"⁹ suggests that the hermeneutic techniques initiated by these three thinkers have made interpretation an infinite task. This is owing to the fact that interpretation can be completed (i.e., can go no further) only if there is nothing further to interpret either because (i) something uninterpretable has been reached or (ii) the origin of the string of interpretations has been reached. But Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud have shown, says Foucault, that interpretations require interpreters, *who themselves cry out for interpretation*. So, for example, in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*,¹⁰ we're told that the signs in dreams are already interpretations, the proper understandings of which can be achieved only by interpreting the dreamer (the interpreted). And, of course, if this process could be completed (which is doubtful), the therapist herself is an interpreter who must now submit to interpretation,

⁸ Interpretation and explanation are both forms of justification, the action. When we interpret, we justify the result via the action. When we explain, we justify the antecedent explanandum.

⁹ Foucault (1999)

¹⁰ Freud (2010)

and on and on. This is *potential* infinite interpretation rather than *actual* infinite interpretation, since we can rest content, at any level, with the interpretation provided *even though we know that more interpretation is possible*. Potential infinite interpretation in this sense is not vicious since, *ex hypothesi*, interpretation is *already occurring*. Were this infinite possibility viciously regressive, no interpretation would be possible at all. So what Foucault is pointing out already presupposes an adequate answer to the question we are struggling with in this chapter—the possibility of interpretation at all.

In sum, the epistemic proposal is untenable.

6.4.2. The Skeptical Proposal

“Skeptical” has an epistemological etymology, and that is how I will use the term here, despite the fact that it is sometimes meant to mean “nihilistic” (I’ll be examining a nihilistic proposal momentarily). To adopt a skeptical solution is to adopt a solution according to which a subject cannot know whether she is interpreting correctly or not. Such knowledge is essentially beyond her ken. A skeptical proposal necessitates not only an agnostic attitude toward correct interpretation (“I will withhold judgment regarding whether I am interpreting correctly or not because I do not know”) but further a *radically* agnostic version of such an attitude (“I will withhold judgment regarding whether I am interpreting correctly or not, not only because I do not know, but also because I recognize that it is impossible for me to know”).

In the terms of the discussion as I have set them up, this solution fails. It violates EMRT. This is enough to abandon the skeptical proposal.

But there is another, deeper, reason to be skeptical of such a proposal. Interpretation is an act of both justification and of *commitment*. When I interpret, I perform an action that is essentially commissive in that I bind myself to the results. Acts of believing are similar. It is

impossible to perform an act whereby you come to believe that-p without thereby committing to p (in some sense). “Taking a pro-attitude toward” is a broad and helpful way to think about this commitment. You take ownership of, you endorse, you even set yourself up as willing to defend, the result of your own act of interpretation.¹¹

If, as I claim, skepticism begets agnosticism begets radical agnosticism, then you are in no cognitive place to commit to the results of your interpretations. You cannot, at once, take ownership of, endorse, and set yourself up as willing to defend an interpretation that you also take a full-knowledge radical agnosticism toward. To do so would be to affirm that you both endorse the results of your interpretation, while also simultaneously refusing to affirm that you have any good reason to think that the results of your interpretation are correct.

Skepticism and mere ignorance are two separate things. The skeptic fully acknowledges her ignorance while the merely ignorant person simply does not know what is going on. It might be possible for the merely ignorant person to interpret, not know whether it’s a good or proper interpretation, and then go on to take a pro-attitude toward that interpretation, *since* it’s the case that she does not know that her interpretation is unjustified or unjustifiable. But this person has broken a number of epistemic norms, such as doing your due epistemic diligence with respect to the things you endorse, reflecting on your epistemic processes, etc., that are not directly related to interpretation.

The conclusion: The skeptical proposal is also untenable.

6.4.3. The Nihilistic Proposal

The most effective refutation of any argument for the non-existence of phenomenal consciousness is to understand the argument. Understanding is a process with phenomenal

¹¹ What I say here sounds very much like Brandom’s account of beliefs as commitments in Brandom (1998).

components, and as such, it would be impossible to understand an argument for the non-existence of phenomenal consciousness without possessing phenomenal consciousness.¹²

The nihilistic proposal claims that there is no such thing as correct interpretation because no interpretation is correct because all interpretations are incorrect because there is no such thing as a norm or standard or rule of correct interpretation. Kripke's "skeptical" interpretations of Wittgenstein's regress-of-rules argument and rule-following paradox (see Section 6.4 above) is actually a nihilistic interpretation and proposal. It is important to notice that the nihilist proposal does not run afoul of EMRT (the Epistemic Minimal Responsibility Thesis). EMRT is conditional *on there being norms, rules, and standards*. If there are no such things, then EMRT goes unviolated.

So what would count in favor of the nihilist proposal? First, a severe sort of empiricism verging on or accepting verificationism could provide support for this proposal. Kripke reads Wittgenstein as a verificationist, in order to come to the nihilistic conclusion. Quine, the most radical empiricist in the Anglo-American tradition, via the famous, interrelated arguments that crisscross his corpus (those for verificational holism, the radical indeterminacy of translation, conceptual relativity, and against the analytic/synthetic distinction, to name four of the best known), arrives at a similar nihilistic conclusion. Meanings and interpretations go hand-in-hand, and as Quine wittily remarked, in rejecting the very idea of objective intensions, "[m]eaning is what essence becomes when it is divorced from the object of reference and wedded to the word."¹³ So much for correctness of interpretation. Now, of course, this is not to say that I *agree*

¹² Of course, to claim that phenomenal consciousness exists is not to claim that it is a natural kind, a social kind, an irreducible non-physical kind, a non-multiply-realizable brain process or supervenient on a non-multiply-realizable brain process or any of the things that people who claim that phenomenal consciousness doesn't exist are actually arguing for. It is, simply, to claim that phenomenal consciousness exists—the most obvious truth in philosophy.

¹³ Quine (1951)

with this line of argumentation (I don't), but just to say that such a line of argumentation, *were it successful*, would count in favor of the nihilistic proposal.

Second, a failure to find any alternate positive proposal *might* provide support for the nihilistic proposal. I say *might* because we may, even in the face of a total lack of a positive proposal, in good faith reject the nihilistic proposal if we have some good independent reason to think that the nihilistic proposal is false.

That reason is this: There is justification, evidence exists, and, at least sometimes, we ought to do something, or believe something, because of the way things seem to us. We all already believe this, we all already act this way, and it is verging on the inconceivable what the world would look like if there were no such thing as moral justification. And that is what's at stake with the nihilistic proposal. If the nihilistic proposal is true, if there is no right way and no wrong way to interpret evidence, then moral justification generates no norms for us, no rules, no prescriptions, and hence, since moral justification is essentially normative, there is no moral justification.

So the nihilistic proposal is no proposal at all for *solving* the problem we're dealing with. It is a way of giving up on the problem while also radically restructuring our epistemological and our moral lives. So let's leave this proposal as a threat and a promise for what awaits us if we can't find an adequate solution.

6.5. The Existential Dimension of Justification

The argument thus far is this: When the normativity or value of epistemic justification is conceived in a merely instrumental sense, then interpretation is required in order to bring about the related intrinsic epistemic good. Without an ability to bring about the related intrinsic epistemic good, epistemic justification could have no legitimate claim to being instrumentally

valuable. However, in order for interpretation to function properly in order to bring about the intrinsic epistemic good related to the merely instrumental good of justification, further interpretation is necessary. The reason this further interpretation is necessary is that interpretation itself is a merely instrumental epistemic good, the correct deployment of which requires its own interpretation. We are now off on an infinite and vicious epistemic regress such that it becomes impossible to determine how appropriately to respond to the presence of epistemic justification when that justification is conceived as merely instrumentally good. Attempting to solve this problem by appealing to further epistemic norms merely pushes the problematic nature of one epistemic issue back onto another epistemic issue—that of correctly employing epistemic norms in order to bring about the intrinsic good(s) related to justification and interpretation. Attempting to solve this problem by adopting either a skeptical or a nihilistic “solution” ends up undercutting the entire project of determining how justification works; skeptical and nihilistic proposals merely throw up their hands and say “It doesn’t!” This is NNI: the problem of the normative necessity of interpretation for any merely instrumentally normative thing.

As I have already noted, I see the central issue of this chapter not merely as an epistemic or phenomenal issue, but further, and more deeply, as an existential issue. To see why, it helps to consider how Sartre presents NNI:

The existentialist... finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist, for there disappears with Him all possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven. There can no longer be any good a priori, since there is no infinite and perfect consciousness to think it. It is nowhere written that “the good” exists, that one must be honest or must not lie, since we are now upon the plane where there are only men. Dostoevsky once wrote “If God did not exist, everything would be permitted”; and that, for existentialism, is the starting point. Everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist, and man is in consequence forlorn. For he cannot find anything to depend upon either within or outside himself. He discovers forthwith, that he is without excuse. For if indeed existence precedes essence, one will never be able to explain one’s action by reference to a given

and specific human nature; in other words, there is no determinism—man is free, man is freedom. Nor, on the other hand, if God does not exist, are we provided with any values or commands that could legitimise our behaviour. Thus we have neither behind us, nor before us in a luminous realm of values, any means of justification or excuse. We are left alone, without excuse.¹⁴

Sartre's thought is this: On the traditional conception of God and of our relation to him, God provides us with unmediated direction—he issues commands that are at once fully understandable and fully understood. So on the traditional conception, God plays the role of human reasoner for humans. There is no need for us to weigh evidence, to deliberate, to decide for ourselves what course of action seems appropriate in a given situation. God has already determined all of this and inserted it into our minds for us. All we need to do is follow God's commands and we will act correctly. However, this traditional conception of God is no longer plausible given not only our epistemically impoverished situation when it comes to knowledge of such a spatio-temporally transcendent being, but also given our recognition of our own situation as one of radical freedom. Once we recognize that there is never, ultimately, any epistemically accessible definitive reason to act in one way rather than another in order to achieve some end, then we recognize not only that we are *abandoned* by any possible divine laws or lawgiver, but also that we are ultimately free to act as we want and ultimately responsible to our employ of that freedom.

If we think that it is possible for us to respond appropriately to merely instrumentally valuable justificational states without having to justify that response itself, then we have failed, according to Sartre's picture, to recognize our radical freedom. Instrumental value alone does not come prepackaged with its own correct standards of employ; to understand the instrumentally valuable is not yet to understand what it would be to act appropriately in response to the

¹⁴ Sartre (2000) 32-3

instrumentally valuable—further (infinite) interpretation is required. The picture of justification as merely instrumentally valuable is the same as a picture of morality in which what is required of us is that we follow God’s commands. Once we recognize our abandonment and subsequent radical freedom, we also recognize that in attempting to follow God’s commands, we are really only following our own interpretations. Similarly, once we recognize that to possess merely instrumentally valuable epistemic justificational states is not yet to understand how to act properly in response to those states, we also recognize that in attempting properly to respond to those states, we are really only following our own interpretations.

This leaves us with two options. The first is to throw up our hands and to adopt either a skeptical or a nihilistic conception of the epistemic normativity of justification. Since justification is epistemically valuable only in relation to some further epistemic good, and since we can never follow any non-subjective interpretational standards for bringing about that good, there is truly no such thing as justification. The second is to abandon the final vestiges of the Standard Picture and to claim that the epistemic normativity of justification is intrinsic to justification itself, that possessing justification is an epistemic good not in terms of some further epistemic good, but intrinsically, tout court, full stop.

This second option has an existential dimension to it akin to the existential dimension of taking responsibility for our own radical freedom. When the epistemic value of justification is untethered to some further epistemic good, justification becomes recognizable as something that fundamentally structures our natures as self-conscious rational human persons. The answer to the question, “Why is justification epistemically valuable?” will now be something like, “Because we are the sorts of creatures who justify, who require of ourselves that we have justification, and who require of others that they possess justification.” There is no further response possible when

justification is intrinsically valuable. It is valuable because it is, in relation to the possible possessors of justification: persons. Derrida sums up this self-conception picture of the intrinsic value of justification nicely:

It is from the moment one surrenders to the necessity of divisibility and the undecidable that the question of decision can be posed: and the question of knowing what deciding, affirming — which is to say, also deciding — mean. A decision that would be taken otherwise than on the border of this undecidable would not be a decision. Thus the gravest decision — the Wager, the Sacrifice of Isaac — the great decisions that must be taken and must be affirmed are taken and affirmed in this relation to the undecidable itself; at the very moment at which they are no longer possible, they become possible. These are the only decisions possible — impossible ones. Think here of Kierkegaard: the only decision possible is the impossible decision. It is when it is not possible to know what must be done, when knowledge is not and cannot be determining that a decision is possible as such. Otherwise the decision is an application, one knows what has to be done, it's clear, there is no more decision possible; what one has here is an effect, an application, a programming.¹⁵

In sum, then, determining whether some valuable thing is intrinsically or merely instrumentally valuable tells us not only about the thing itself, but also about how we conceive of ourselves as human persons—what it is that constitutes our unique sorts of lives. Insofar as it seems impossible, due to the arguments presented in this chapter, that the epistemic value of justification is merely instrumental in nature, and insofar as it seems eminently plausible that what we are as epistemic creatures is determined in-part by our striving after justification for its own sake, then the case for the intrinsic epistemic value justification has been made.

6.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I argued that due to the threat of a vicious epistemic regress, it is not possible to conceive of epistemic justification as instrumentally epistemically valuable. This vicious regress, structurally similar to that of Wittgenstein's regress-of-rules problem, is generated by the fact that to understand something that is instrumentally valuable is not yet to understand how

¹⁵ Derrida (1995) 147-8

appropriately to respond to that thing. What is needed is further interpretation in order to determine how appropriately to respond. However, interpretation, as a merely instrumentally valuable thing itself, also requires further interpretation—and now we are off on a regress. In response to this vicious regress, I have suggested that it is entirely plausible that epistemic justification is intrinsically epistemically valuable in that what it is to be one of us is to value justification for its own sake. This existential conception of justification avoids the vicious regress that threatens instrumentally valuable pictures of justification.

It is important to notice the difference between the following three claims: “The epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to the epistemically normative character of truth or of true beliefs,” “The epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to truth or to true beliefs,” and finally, “The non-normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to truth or to true beliefs.” When I claim that to have shown that the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity is false, all that follows with regard to the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification is the first of these three claims, that the epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to the epistemically normative character of truth or of true beliefs. It very well might be, and in fact, I think it probably is, the case that the character of epistemic justification and the character of truth or of true belief are non-trivially related to one another in some way or another—what is false is merely that justification is *epistemically normative* precisely because of its connection to the epistemic normativity of true belief or of truth.

In Chapter 5 and in this chapter, then, I have come at the issue of the truth of the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normative from two different directions. In the Chapter 5, I showed that *truth* cannot play a constitutive role in the epistemic value of justification. In this chapter, I

showed that epistemic justification must be intrinsically valuable if valuable at all. Accordingly, justification is a foundational, intrinsically valuable, structuring aspect of our phenomenological and epistemic lives. However, internalistic justification is still *somehow* related to the world around us—it is not as though once we have proven that justification is intrinsically valuable and that this value is unrelated to the value of truth, we are given license to ignore the world as it presents itself to us. In Chapter 7, I look at the specifically justificational phenomenal relation between ourselves and the world. That is, I look at the world *as it is given* to us in justificatory states of phenomenal consciousness, in order to determine how our phenomenal interactions with the world play an epistemic role in our justificatory lives.

Chapter 7. The Givenness of Justification

So far in this dissertation, I've argued for four interrelated theses about the nature of internalistic justification:

1. Internalistic justification is necessarily radically phenomenally accessible to its possessor such that its possessor can tell both that she possesses it and how its content is related to what it justifies. (Chapters 1, 2, and 3)
2. Internalistic justification is necessarily epistemically normative such that, *ceteris paribus*, it is epistemically better to possess it than not to possess it. (Chapters 3 and 4)
3. The phenomenal and normative components of internalistic justification are necessarily constitutively interrelated such that the phenomenal and normative components not only (at least partially) determine one another, but are further (at least partially) constituted by one another. (Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4)
4. The Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity for internalistic justification is false, in that the epistemically normative character of internalistic justification cannot possibly be determined by or explained in terms of internalistic justification's potential connection (conceptual or otherwise) to the instrumental (or for that matter, non-instrumental) epistemic normativity of truth, i.e., the correspondence-relation between beliefs and worldly facts. (Chapters 5 and 6)

The truth of these four theses should leave us somewhat worried about the fate of an epistemology of internalistic justification. According to the Standard Picture, we can make sense of the epistemically normative component of internalistic justification in terms of a further mind-world relation: that of correspondence between beliefs and worldly facts. Since one of our primary *practical* goals is a successful navigation of the world, a picture that sees our primary *epistemic* goals as aiding this successful navigation is intuitively plausible. That is, according to the Standard Picture, true belief, justification, and getting around the world are all part of a package of goods that rely on or are at least necessarily related to a connection between minds (and their possessors) and the world in which those minds (and their possessors) are situated. However, the fall of the Standard Picture seriously calls into question our basic understanding of ourselves as world-bound creatures, and the duties and responsibilities that come along with such

worldliness. If the epistemic normativity of justification is entirely unrelated to the epistemic normativity of true belief, then we are threatened with an epistemic schism between the mind and the world. That is, with the fall of the Standard Picture, the question of how minds and the world can be related to one another in an epistemically robust way becomes urgent.

But why care at all about the mind-world connection when it comes to epistemology? Why not just assert that if justification is epistemically relevant to our self-conscious phenomenally accessible normative lives, that relevance is not based on a connection between mind and world? Why not just hold that justification matters to subjects' epistemic lives but that mattering is in no way related to the connection between those subjects' mental lives and the larger non-mental world in which they live, move, and have their being?

Internalistic justification seems ineliminatively to be about or at least related to how we take the world to be, how things are, in the world, from our perspective. Both classical internalist foundationalists and seemings theorists build a kind of phenomenally accessible intentional directedness or intentional openness to the world into their justificational theories. Internalistic justification seems to be intimately related to how we are struck *by the world itself* or how we take *the world itself* to be. Thus, Tolhurst, in an early account of seemings, states:

The real difference between seemings and other states that can incline one to believe their content is that seemings have the feel of truth, the feel of a state whose content reveals how things really are. Their felt givenness typically leads one to experience believing that things are as they seem as an objectively fitting or proper response to the seeming...Because seemings have the feel of being grounded in and revelatory of their objects, we apprehend the formation of the corresponding belief to be epistemically proper or appropriate and hence take belief to be called for in response to these experiences.¹

¹ Tolhurst (1998) 298-9

Similarly, Huemer notes:

[P]erceptual experiences represent their contents as actualized; states of merely imagining do not. When you have a visual experience of a tomato, it thereby seems to you as if a tomato is actually present, then and there. When you merely imagine a tomato, it does not thereby seem to you as if a tomato is actually present...[In] experience, it seems to one that something satisfying the content of the experience actually exists, here and now.²

And BonJour commensurately says:

[I]f the act of direct apprehension or immediate acquaintance is in no way assertive or judgmental in character, if it has no content that amounts to or approximates the proposition or thesis that the person's experience has one set of features rather than another, then any clear reason for demanding epistemic justification for such a state vanishes. If such an awareness has as its content no claim or assertion that is even capable of being true or false, then the notion of epistemic justification, as understood so far, simply does not apply to it.³

I have sharply criticized both classical internalist foundationalism and seemings theories (even going to far as to assert that it's unclear how the latter are justificational theories at all).

However, even if these theories are *false*, that doesn't show that they aren't responding to a real phenomenon. In the quotations above from Tolhurst, Huemer, and BonJour, something similar is being described—the *as if actual* quality of the phenomenal and semantic contents of internalistic justificatory states. This *as if actual* relation is both conceptually and phenomenally constituted by an underlying mind-world relation.

Accordingly, if the fall of the Standard Picture entails the epistemic irrelevance to internalistic justification of a mind-world relation, then we have only two options, each of which is unpalatable in its own way. The first option is to entirely revise our picture of internalistic justification, of an epistemology partially constituted by the demands of internalistic justification, and of ourselves and internalistic-justification-mongering creatures. While *some* theoretical revision in the face of the fall of the Standard Picture is acceptable (in fact, my

² Huemer (2001) 78-9

³ BonJour (2003) 19

positive picture in Chapters 9 and 10 is *somewhat* revisionary), a wholesale revision threatens the very notion of the relevance of epistemology to our practical lives and our first-personal self-conception. The second option is to abandon internalistic justification as uninteresting and irrelevant to justification-simpliciter, to epistemology, and to our self-conception as epistemic creatures. As I have already noted, this is the strategy of some reductionistic and scientific philosophers, especially those influenced by Quine's arguments in favor of a naturalized epistemology. As I have also already noted, however, the resultant epistemological picture—severely externalistic and naturalistic—threatens the very idea of epistemology as a normative philosophical discipline rather than a merely descriptive experimental-psychological discipline. Insofar as we are interested in saving epistemology at all, we ought to resist this second option.

As I noted in the previous chapter:

It is important to notice the difference between the following three claims: “The epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to the epistemically normative character of truth or of true beliefs,” “The epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to truth or to true beliefs,” and finally, “The non-normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to truth or to true beliefs.” When I claim that to have shown that the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity is false, all that follows with regard to the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification is the first of these three claims, that the epistemically normative character of internalistic justification is unrelated to the epistemically normative character of truth or of true beliefs. It very well might be, and in fact, I think it probably is, the case that the character of epistemic justification and the character of truth or of true belief are non-trivially related to one another in some way or another—what is false is merely that justification is *epistemically normative* precisely because of its connection to the epistemic normativity of true belief or of truth. (134)

I do not think that the fall of the Standard Picture entails or even supports the abandonment of a picture of internalistic justification as entirely divorced from a relation between minds and the world. On the contrary, on my view, once we have recognized the falsity of the Standard Picture, we can begin to fully appreciate how it is that the phenomenology and epistemic normativity of internalistic justification are related to a picture of ourselves as necessarily world-bound, situated

creatures. The goal of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for a positive picture of ourselves and of our epistemic lives as phenomenally and intentionally related to the world around us via a fundamental phenomenal/intentional relation of givenness between the world and us. The world presents itself to us in a certain way, and it is this self-presentation on the part of the world, along with our mental/epistemological/phenomenal uptake of this worldly self-presentation, that underlies the phenomenal and epistemically normative nature of internalistic justification.

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, I present the concept of the given and of givenness as they appear in Wilfrid Sellars's canonical critique of what he call the "Myth of the Given." The main take-away of Sellars's critique is what has been dubbed by recent philosophers the "Sellarsian Dilemma." The dilemma is taken to be a problem for justificational theories that are both foundationalist and internalist in nature—precisely the topic of this dissertation. Either, the dilemma holds, foundational justificatory items are conceptually articulated judgment-like or else doxastic items or foundational justificatory items are conceptually unarticulated non-judgmental or non-doxastic states such as BonJour's direct awarenesses. If foundational justificatory items are conceptually articulated, then they are justificatory items that stand in need of further justification, for they require the (justification-demanding) activity of conceptual application. If, on the other hand, foundational justificatory items are conceptually unarticulated, then it is unclear how they are able to play a justificatory role at all, given that the paradigm of justificatory relations is those inferential relations that argumentative premises stand in with respect to conclusions. I end this section by briefly rehearsing a few problems with the Sellarsian conception of justification.

Second, I lay out two arguments against a conceptualist conception of justification as it has been presented by philosophers such as John McDowell and other influenced by Sellars's

criticism of givenness. Since McDowell and others believe that Sellars's criticism of the notion of givenness is decisive against nonconceptualist accounts of justification, they take their project to be to articulate the only other possible account of justification: one that is conceptualist through-and-through. My arguments come at conceptualist theories of justification on two levels. The first argument aims to show that conceptualist justification is internally inconsistent, hence incoherent, because it fails to satisfy its own epistemological preconditions. In essence, if we conceive of justification along Sellarsian lines, then it is not just nonconceptualist theories of justification that are untenable, but conceptualist theories as well. The second argument aims to show that conceptualist justificational *programs* are rationally unmotivated, because they are based on fallacious dialectical moves.

Third, I present the substantive positive component of this chapter: an explication and explanation of the phenomenal and epistemological concept of givenness. The given, I hold, should be interpreted along the lines of what Christopher Frey (2013) has called *phenomenal presence*, and Robert Hanna (forthcoming: 2015) has called *the grip of the given* a phenomenally transparent mode of presentation of the constitutive object of justificational states of awareness. Conceiving of givenness along the lines of phenomenal presence not only accommodates our pretheoretical phenomenal data regarding internalistic justification, but it also has a number of positive consequences. I lay out five of these consequences and explain their benefits.

Finally, I return to the central concept of this dissertation, epistemic normativity, in order to show how the given, conceived along the lines of phenomenal presence, can provide a theoretical foundation for internalistic epistemic normativity. In Chapters 1-4, I developed the concept of internalistic justification so that it will meet the intuitive epistemic and phenomenal demands placed on such a concept. However, as we saw in Chapters 5 and 6, this concept of

internalistic justification is at odds with the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity when it comes to epistemic justification. My work in the final section of this chapter will point the way in the direction of a fully fleshed out theory of the source and nature of the normativity of internalistic justification. Such a theory is an abandonment of the moribund Standard Picture, but is also one that will meet the epistemic and phenomenal demands placed on it without falling victim to any of the missteps of the Standard Picture. This chapter as well as Chapter 8 thus set the stage for the positive theoretical proposal that I develop in full in the final two chapters of this dissertation.

7.1. The Sellarsian Critique of Givenness

One way to see the life-long philosophical project of Sellars is as an attempt to synthesize the problems presented by and the understandings possible of two questions:

1. What is the relation between our first-personal, subjective, phenomenal selves, embedded in ethical, existential, aesthetic, epistemic practices (what Sellars calls the *manifest image* of the human being in the world) and our third-personal, objective, material selves as described by our best empirical science (what Sellars calls the *scientific image*)?⁴
2. What sorts of descriptions of personal epistemic states can play the specifically normative roles apparently required of those states in terms of licensing, prohibiting, and requiring specific further epistemic actions and states?⁵

Sellars's solution is at once *intellectualist* and *reductionist*: intellectualist, by way of the hyper-conceptualization and hyper-inferentialization of mental states, and reductionist, by holding that "science is the measure of all things." All mental states that can play normative roles are conceptually articulated such that they can and do stand in inferential relations with other mental states, which inferential relations are the necessary and sufficient framework for the normativity

⁴ See, especially, Sellars (1962).

⁵ See, especially, Sellars (1997).

of the mental. The intricacies of this proposal needn't concern us here. What is important to note is the necessarily conceptually articulated and inferential nature of everything that is normative.

The reason for the necessarily inferential nature of justification is that according to Sellars, the paradigm form of justification is the reason—the sort of thing that can be linguistically captured—and hence, since reasons perform their justificatory work by standing (either implicitly or explicitly) as premises in deductive or inductive arguments, reasons, and hence justification, must rely on a theoretically antecedent inferential framework. This claim is at the heart of Sellars's most famous metaphor: the logical space of reasons:

The essential point is that in characterizing an episode or a state as that of knowing, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says.⁶

Despite his proposed scientific reductionist answer to the first question above, Sellars's intellectualist answer to the second question, then, seems decidedly anti-reductionist. In fact, he notes that:

[T]he idea that epistemic facts can be analyzed without remainder — even “in principle” -- into non-epistemic facts, whether phenomenal or behavioral, public or private, with no matter how lavish a sprinkling of subjunctives and hypotheticals is, I believe, a radical mistake — a mistake of a piece with the so-called “naturalistic fallacy” in ethics.⁷

I'll leave aside whether we can make sense of this apparent inconsistency, perhaps in terms of a distinction between ontological/metaphysical reduction and conceptual/explanatory reduction. In any case, Sellars's main points in the passages I have quoted are nicely summed up by

McDowell:

In taking experiences to put their subjects in a position to have knowledge of the kind that is a standing in the space of reasons, we risk falling into the Myth of the Given. But we can avoid the risk if we hold that in the experiencing itself, capacities that belong to their subject's rationality are in play: capacities that their possessor could exercise...in

⁶ Sellars (1997) §36

⁷ Sellars (1997) §5

deciding what reason requires her to think about this or that. That is what it means for capacities to be conceptual in the relevant sense: they are capacities whose content is of a form that fits it to figure in discursive activity.⁸

According to this Sellarsian critique, the picture of internalistic justification presented by the classical foundationalists⁹ falls victim to what has become known as the Sellarsian Dilemma.

This picture of justification has four interrelated components:

1. In order for something to be able to play the epistemic role of a justifier, that thing itself must be justified.
2. “Justification” is a process that occurs via inferential relations between justifier and justified item.
3. The only things that can provide justification are conceptually articulated items.
4. The justificational inferential relations that stand between justifiers and justified must be phenomenally accessible.

(1) relies on a conception of justification that is structurally similar to the picture of causation in causal versions of the Cosmological Argument.¹⁰ Justification transfers between items in such a way that it moves from a justified item to an unjustified item, and this movement imbues the formerly unjustified item with justification (without the first justified item thereby losing its justification). Justification, then, is a property of items that are themselves *justification-apt*, but not themselves *justification*. (2) relies on a conception of justification whereby the paradigm justificatory relations are those entered into by the premises and the conclusion of an argument.

Premises either entail (in the case of a deductively valid argument) or probabilify (in the case of

⁸ McDowell (2013c) 42

⁹ Since I’ve already noted the severe theoretical problems with seemings-theories (and gone so far as to question whether they are actually theories of epistemic justification at all, given that they don’t seem to be able to play either the phenomenal or the epistemological roles that theories of justification are supposed to be able to play), I won’t spend time here showing precisely how even seemings-theories would be vulnerable to Sellarsian criticism when justification is construed along Sellarsian lines. Very briefly, though: Seemings are conceptually articulated items—they are propositional attitudes—and hence, are judgmental in nature. Accordingly, they are, according to the Sellarsian picture of justification, unjustified “justifiers”—items whose content cries out for justification (since the process of conceptualization is a process demanding of justification) but who stand unjustified, all while purporting to be able to perform justificatory work themselves. See chapter 4 above as well as Hasan (2013) for this Sellarsian critique of seemings-theories.

¹⁰ See, e.g., the Second Way of Aquinas’s Five Ways in Aquinas (2014).

an inductively strong argument) their conclusion, and the mode of justification-transfer between premises and conclusion is inferential. Accordingly, thinks Sellars, all justificational relations are inferential. (3) is a consequence of (2) and a specific picture of inferential relations whereby such relation can only stand between truth-apt items—items with truth-values. Propositions are the paradigm truth-apt items and propositions are necessarily conceptual items. Accordingly, thinks Sellars, only conceptually articulated items can be justifiers. (4) is a consequence of the conception of internalism that we've been working with in this dissertation—a conception on which justification is sensitive to the normative demands of both Reasons-Responsiveness and Reasons-Accessibility.¹¹

(1)-(4) together are taken by Sellars and his followers to generate a dilemma for the classical internalist foundationalist. Either:

- SD1. Purportedly foundationally justified items are conceptually articulated (as per (3)). However, conceptual articulation, or conceptualization, is a mental/epistemic activity that can be performed either correctly (if the concepts indeed appropriately apply to what they are applied) or incorrectly (if the concepts do not appropriately apply to what they are applied). In order for correct conceptualization to occur, a subject requires internalistic justification to show her how to conceptualize appropriately. But if a purportedly foundational justificatory item requires further justification, then it is not, in fact, foundational. Hence, if our version of internalist foundationalism is true to (3), then there can be no foundational justificatory items, and hence, foundationalism is impossible.
- SD2. Since (3) seemed to generate problems in (SD1), give up (3): Purportedly foundationally justified items are conceptually unarticulated. These items do not themselves require further justification since, because they are conceptually unarticulated, there is no further mental/epistemic act that requires justification. However, since, in view of (2), the only way that one item can provide justification to another is via an inferential relation standing between the two items, and since inferential relations can stand only between truth-apt items, all of which are conceptually articulated (paradigmatic among them: the proposition), these purportedly foundationally justified items, conceptually unarticulated in nature, cannot provide justification for another other item. But foundationally justified items are not only justified without need of further justification, but can also serve as a

¹¹ See chapter 1 above.

justificational foundation by imbuing other items with justification. Hence, if our version of internalist foundationalism rejects (3), then there can be no foundational justificatory items, and hence, foundationalism is impossible.¹²

Whether we accept or reject (3), then, we end up with the result that foundationalism is impossible, or *at least* that there are no such things as foundationally justified items.

The Sellarsian picture of justification that generates Sellars's critique of foundationalism, a critique centered around the Sellarsian Dilemma, is far from the only coherent or even plausible picture of internalistic justification. (3) is required only because of (2), and (2) is far from obviously true. As I noted in Chapter 3, there are a number of justification-like relations that seem to hold between conceptually unarticulated items and conceptually articulated items: relations like correspondence (between a proposition and the world), or explanation (also between a proposition and the world). If these relations are unproblematic, then it is difficult to see how a justificational relation that holds between belief and the world could be inherently problematic.

There are other ways to reject (3), however—ways that are more in line with my positive project in this dissertation. Let us consider how we generally think about internalistic justification. Justification is not (perhaps: only) a *property of beliefs*, but instead, a property of an object, set of objects, or mental state. When I *see* that the cat is on the mat and am thereby justified in believing that the cat is on the mat, my seeing that the cat is on the mat not only *provides* justification for my subsequent belief, it *is* that justification. It provides justification by *being* justification. When I wonder how I am justified in believing that the cat is on the mat, I can refer to my *visual state*—it is that state that *is* justification for my belief. Beliefs might

¹² See BonJour (1978, 1985) for the most famous presentations of the Sellarsian Dilemma.

further inherit a property of *being justified* because of their relation to justificational states, but this property is not itself *justification*.

On the picture of justification-as-inference that Sellars provides, there is an equivocation between *justificational processes* and *justificational items*. A justificational process works by showing how a justificational item is relevant to a particular belief. So when I see the cat on the mat, subsequently believe that the cat is on the mat, and then infer that the cat is not behind the car, the inferential relation that stands between the belief that the cat is on the mat (plus the implicit premise that the cat cannot be both on the mat and behind the car) and the belief that the cat is not behind the car *justifies* the latter belief by showing that the *justifier* that *justified* the former belief thereby also justifies the latter belief. It is not strictly *justification full-stop* that occurs via inferential relation, but instead *justification-transfer* or *the process of justifying*. Justification, however, qua mental state, need not be conceptually articulated in order to play this role. In fact, this is exactly the picture of foundational justification presented by both Bonjour and Fumerton.

The conclusion, then, is that Sellars and his followers are able to criticize internalist foundationalism only if they presuppose a deeply improbable picture of what it is for a justifier to be foundational.

7.2. Against Conceptualist Justification

A number of reasons have been given for supposing that there is such a thing as nonconceptual justification.¹³ However, comparatively little time has been spent showing that conceptualist pictures of justification themselves are problematic. In this section, I will present two arguments

¹³ See the essays in Gunther (2003) as well as Schear (2013).

against conceptualist theories of justification. The first argument strikes against the coherence of conceptualism, and the second strikes against the rational motivation for conceptualism.

7.2.1. Conceptualism Is Incoherent

Conceptualism, as a thesis about internalist justification, is the thesis that internalistic justifiers are always either conceptually articulated or require the exercise of the justification-possessor's conceptual capabilities. As I noted in Chapter 1, conceptualism broadly construed, i.e., regarding any and all mental goings-on, can be divided into two theses, one regarding mental states and processes, and one regarding mental contents themselves. The former thesis, known in the literature as *state conceptualism*, holds that there are no mental states that do not involve the exercise of the subject's conceptual capabilities. The latter thesis, known in the literature as *content conceptualism*, holds that there are no mental contents that are not conceptually articulated. When we apply state and content conceptualism to the specific domain of internalistic justification, we can arrive at the following two theses:

State Conceptualism (Internalistic Justification)

For any properly internalistically justificatory mental state possessed by a subject, the possession of that mental state requires the exercise of the subject's conceptual capabilities.

Content Conceptualism (Internalistic Justification)

For any properly internalistically justificatory mental state possessed by a subject, the contents of that mental state (semantic, phenomenal, etc.) are conceptually articulated.

The most prominent contemporary defender of conceptualism in both of these versions is John McDowell, whose arguments in *Mind and World* (1996) as well as in the various essays contained in *Having the World in View* (2013a) and *The Engaged Intellect* (2013b) and in his contribution to Schear (2013), presents a picture of internalistic justification in which

justification relies on inferential relations between propositions or proposition-like entities. Since it is only conceptually articulated contents that can stand in inferential relations to one another, the properly justificatory contents of internalistic justifiers as well as well as (by a quick argumentative step that it is unnecessary to rehearse here—see McDowell in Schear (2013)) the justificatory mental states themselves are conceptually articulated. Hence, both state and content conceptualism are true. An argument for that claim:

1. The components of the mind-world interaction required for internalistic justification that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are either entirely conceptually articulated or else not entirely conceptually articulated.
2. If the components of this mind-world interaction that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are entirely conceptually articulated, then there are two options: Either (i) the process of the conceptual articulation of these components is justified by further conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers or else (ii) the process of the conceptual articulation of these components is not justified by further conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers.
3. If the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers is justified by further conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers, then a vicious infinite epistemic regress of conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers results.
4. Any epistemic theory that results in a vicious infinite epistemic regress is untenable.
5. Any justificatory theory that holds that the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers is justified by further conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers is untenable.
6. If the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction is not justified by further conceptually articulated internalistic justifiers, then either (i) the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction is unjustified or else (ii) the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction is justified by conceptually unarticulated internalistic justifiers.
7. Any justificatory theory that holds that the process of the conceptual articulation of the components of the mind-world interaction is unjustified is untenable.

8. If the components of the mind-world interaction required for internalistic justification that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are not entirely conceptually articulated, then one of those components is conceptually unarticulated.
9. Any justificatory theory that holds that the components of the mind-world interaction required for internalistic justification that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are entirely conceptually articulated is absurd.
10. The components of the mind-world interaction required for internalistic justification that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are not entirely conceptually articulated.
11. If the components of the mind-world interaction required for internalistic justification that are directly phenomenally and normatively relevant to the contents of internalistic justifiers are not entirely conceptually articulated, then conceptualism regarding internalistic justification is false.
12. Conceptualism regarding internalistic justification is false.

To put this schematically:

- | | | |
|------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1*. | $p \vee q$ | (law of excluded middle) |
| 2*. | $p \supset (r \vee s)$ | (premise) |
| 3*. | $r \supset t$ | (premise) |
| 4*. | $t \supset \perp$ | (premise) |
| 5*. | $r \supset \perp$ | (from 3, 4) |
| 6*. | $s \supset (u \vee w)$ | (premise) |
| 7*. | $u \supset \perp$ | (premise) |
| 8*. | $p \supset w$ | (from 2, 5, 6, 7) |
| 9*. | $w \supset \perp$ | (premise) |
| 10*. | q | (from 1, 8, 9,) |
| 11*. | $q \supset \neg x$ | (df. 'conceptualism') |
| 12*. | $\neg x$ | (from 11, 12) |

The argumentative strategy here, interestingly, is the same as that behind the traditional Sellarsian dilemma. The thought is that any mental process or state that is judgmental, propositional, or conceptual in nature that is justificatory in nature, i.e., that can provide

justification, must itself be justified, since judgmental, propositional, or conceptual mental processes can go either right or wrong, and hence, are in need of justification. However, *ex hypothesi*, conceptualism is committed to the claim thesis that there are no justifiers that are not conceptual in nature. Hence, we end up with one of the following: (i) a vicious infinite regress of conceptual “justifiers” (in scare-quotes because, since there is no source of justification, none of these putative justifiers is actually capable of providing justification), (ii) a putatively unjustified justifier (impossible, according to conceptualism), or (iii) a version of conceptualism that embraces nonconceptual justifiers (a conceptual contradiction). Hence, according to its own standards, conceptualism is not only false, but necessarily false—impossible.

7.2.2. Conceptualism Is Unmotivated

The case for conceptualism is generally negative in nature. It states that there is one and only one way for justification to take place—inferentially—and that this sort of justification cannot be made sense of in nonconceptual terms. Sellars calls putatively nonconceptual justifiers “mongrels” because they are supposed to be both justificatory and nonconceptual—two properties that, according to Sellars’s scheme, cannot be co-instantiated. The negative case for conceptualism, then, relies on the either implausibility or impossibility (conceptualists claim both) of nonconceptualism. When it comes specifically to talk about epistemic justification, this means that if the case for nonconceptual justificational states or contents is implausible or if such objects are impossible, then this lends credence to a picture of justification in which justificational states and their contents are necessarily conceptual. This dialectical argumentative strategy looks something like this:

1. View X is the historical view, and is also tied to a number of other plausible and historically vaunted views.
2. But View X is implausible or impossible.

3. The only alternative to View X is View Y.

Therefore,

4. We ought to accept View Y.

However, recently, nonconceptualist philosophers have shown that there are a number of historical, dialectical, and conceptual confusions surrounding the conceptualist interpretation of nonconceptual mental states and contents.¹⁴ As a result of these confusions, (2) in the conceptualist dialectical argumentative strategy above is unmotivated. Conceptualists such as McDowell have responded to this claim by noting that it does not entail the falsity of conceptualism. Conceptualism, claims McDowell, can make sense of the apparently nonconceptual justificational states and contents (now, confusions removed, conceived of as not only possible, but plausible) in conceptualist terms. Accordingly, the existence of apparently nonconceptual justificational states and contents is not *incompatible* with conceptualism. Says McDowell:

Experience discloses the way things are, whether or not its subject has the means to make those aspects of its content explicit in judgments or assertions. And in either case, having it disclosed to one in experience that things are a certain way is already an actualization of capacities that are conceptual in the relevant sense. That things are a certain way can be there for a subject to know, in her experience, whether or not she has resources for explicitly judging (or saying) that they are that way; and to avoid the Myth of the Given we have to suppose its being there for her to know draws on capacities that belong to her faculty for knowledge of that distinctive kind, capacities that belong to her rationality. Making the content in question explicit – even if the subject first has to acquire means to do that – does not make the content newly conceptual in any sense that is relevant to my claim. It was conceptual already.¹⁵

But this response on the part of McDowell entirely misses the point of the nonconceptualist charge that there are justificatory states and contents that are not conceptually articulated. Sellars

¹⁴ These confusions date back to misreadings or misunderstandings of Kant, which were uncritically embraced and elaborated upon by subsequent philosophers. For a whirlwind tour of the history of these misunderstandings and misrepresentations of Kant, see Hanna (2011), §1.

¹⁵ McDowell (2013c) 43

initially motivated the contemporary conceptualist program not by claiming that conceptualism was possible (as McDowell is doing in the above quotation), but by claiming that any alternative was impossible:

[T]o be the expression of knowledge, a report must not only have authority, this authority must in some sense be recognized by the person whose report it is. And this is a steep hurdle indeed. For if the authority of the report “This is green” lies in the fact that the existence of green items appropriately related to the perceiver can be inferred from the occurrence of such reports, it follows that only a person who is able to draw this inference, and therefore who has not only the concept green, but also the concept of uttering “This is green” – indeed, the concept of certain conditions of perception, those which would correctly be called ‘standard conditions’ – could be in a position to token “This is green” in recognition of its authority. In other words, for a *Konstatierung* [observation] “This is green” to “express observational knowledge,” not only must it be a symptom or sign of the presence of a green object in standard conditions, but the perceiver must know that tokens of “This is green” are symptoms of the presence of green objects in conditions which are standard for visual perception.¹⁶

What motivates Sellars’s conceptualist project, then, is simply justificational internalism combined with the theoretical necessity for a subject to always be able to provide further reasons to justify her beliefs. The second condition is problematic in that it confuses semantic and justificational dependence (see Ch. 2, Section 2.3), but that condition is not of immediate concern here. What is of concern is Sellars’s robust internalism, internalism of the sort that we have been working with in this dissertation. This internalism requires not only that a subject’s justification necessarily possess constitutive phenomenal properties, but also that the subject be able to understand the content of her justification so as to be able to determine how, exactly, it justifies what it purports to justify. In order to make sense of new arguments and phenomenal data surrounding claimed nonconceptual justifiers, McDowell has needed to claim that these apparently nonconceptual justifiers are covertly conceptual such that while, when subjects

¹⁶ Sellars (1997) §35

possess justification, they might not be aware of their conceptual nature and might further not be able to express their conceptual contents, they are nonetheless conceptually articulated.

But not only is this move deeply methodologically suspect (McDowell is now essentially claiming that the proof for conceptualism is by way of the existence of invisible, but still *possible*, conceptualized contents), it entirely gives up the Sellarsian motivation for conceptualism. If the subject need not be conscious of inferential relations or conceptual contents in order for justification to have occurred, then either justification is conceptual but externalistic or internalistic but nonconceptual. Yet the entire point of the “Myth of the Given”-style argument is to show that the demands of justification require justificational internalism and that this internalism requires *having performed conceptually-articulated inferential justificational moves*. In other words, Sellars’s motivation is internalist, whereas McDowell’s solution is externalist. When we remove the frequent question-begging references to the “Myth of the Given” and the unsupported claims that we are theoretically required to presuppose or defend conceptualism, there is no longer any positive case for conceptualism to be found in McDowell’s writings.

Of course, the conceptualist might abandon the Sellarsian tradition altogether and adopt a sort of externalism when it comes to justification. This move is *possible*, but the question is whether it is *supportable*. The original motivation for conceptualism as a *revisionary alternative* to the prevailing nonconceptualism at the time of Sellars’s writing was that nonconceptualism couldn’t make sense of the phenomenal and epistemological data. But not only can a properly formulated nonconceptualism make sense of the phenomenal and epistemological data. It is also unclear, while remaining within the relevant problematic, how conceptualism can make *any* sense of the phenomenal and epistemological data. As such, conceptualism, as a theory that is

almost entirely motivated by the apparent implausibility of its nonconceptualist rival, loses its motivation when its rival is shown to be plausible.

And here is one last point, as a postscript to this discussion: Even if the conceptualist were to retreat to a version of externalism, that move would make conceptualism irrelevant to the discussion of justification as it has progressed in this dissertation—as an internalistic item.

7.3. Givenness as Phenomenal Presence

I've spoken of givenness as a sort of mind-world connection in which the world *presents* itself to the subject and in which the subject's apprehension of the world is nonconceptual (and hence non-judgmental, non-doxastic, and non-propositional). But this is all still vague, and perhaps even misleadingly metaphorical—speaking of the world as if it were a subject of some sort. My goal in this section is to get clear on the notion of givenness that classical foundationalists claim is the source of internalistic epistemic justification and which Sellars and his followers believed themselves to be reacting against. It is this givenness that is the mode of presentation of internalistic justification such that justifiers themselves are *given* to the subject. Further, it is a sort of active openness to the world—"active," due to factors of intentionality and attention to be examined in Chapters 8 and 9—on the part of the subject that, when combined with the givenness of the world, results in the phenomenal presence of epistemic justification.

Presentation, in the sense employed here, is often contrasted by philosophers with *representation*.¹⁷ However, the exact nature of *representation* is often unclear. Sometimes it is used to mean something like *Lockean Idea*, the sort of thing that phenomenally stands between the subject and the world. Sometimes it is used to mean something like *phenomenally accessible*, *conceptually articulated*, *judgmental state*. Sometimes the *phenomenally accessible* part from the

¹⁷ E.g., see Drummond (2012).

previous formulation is dropped. So as things stand, given the unclarity of the term *representation*, it is unwise to attempt a definition of *presentation* in terms of representation or even to attempt to relate them to one another as either distinct or identical. Accordingly, I will build the definition of *presentation* from the ground up.

Consider some justificational state, say the sight of the words currently in front of you or the smell of a flower or the intuition of one and one equaling two. Now consider the proper objects of that justificational state, the things contained within the state or the things the state is about. What is the phenomenal connection between you, the possessor of the justificational state, and the objects of that state? According to a picture presented by Frey (2013) and Hanna (forthcoming: 2015), what all of these justificational states have phenomenally in common is that their proper object are *as if other* than the phenomenal perspective on those objects and *never as if about the self* or about the phenomenal perspective on those objects. Here is G. E. Moore expressing an early version of that very idea:

But it is hardly likely that if philosophers had clearly distinguished in the past between a sensation or idea and what I have called its object, there should have been no separate name for the latter. They have always used the same name for these two different 'things' (if I may call them so); and hence there is some probability that they have supposed these 'things' not to be two and different but one and the same. And, secondly, there is a very good reason why they should have supposed so, in the fact that when we refer to introspection and try to discover what the sensation of blue is, it is very easy to suppose that we have before us only a single term. The term 'blue' is easy enough to distinguish, but the other element which I have called 'consciousness'—that which sensation of blue has in common with sensation of green—is extremely difficult to fix. That many people fail to distinguish it at all is sufficiently shown by the fact that there are materialists. And, in general, that which makes the sensation of blue a mental fact seems to escape us; it seems, if I may use a metaphor, to be transparent—we look through it and see nothing but the blue; we may be convinced that there is something but what it is no philosopher, I think, has yet clearly recognised.¹⁸

Frey formulates this as follows, in what he calls *phenomenal presence*:

¹⁸ Moore (1903) 446

(i) The sensuous elements that one phenomenally appreciates in an experience are always appreciated as *other*. (ii) The sensuous elements that one phenomenally appreciates in an experience are never appreciated as being, being instantiated in, or being about *the self* qua experiential subject (or a state/mode thereof).¹⁹

Hanna similarly explicates the idea as follows, in terms of what he calls *The Grip of the Given*:

[T]o stand within The Grip of the Given is to be so related to things and other minded animals in the manifestly real world, and thereby to have a grip or handle on the positions and dispositions of things and other minded animals in the world, via essentially non-conceptual content, that we are poised for achieving accurate reference, true statements, authentic knowledge, consistency and valid consequence in logical reasoning, effectiveness in intentional performance, goodness of means or ends, rightness in choice or conduct, and consistency and coherence in practical reasoning—in short, we are poised for achieving any or all of the highest values of our cognitive and practical lives. Or otherwise put, to stand within The Grip of the Given is to be well-situated for epistemic and practical justification.²⁰

The thought is this: We open ourselves up to a phenomenally accessible world that appears other than us, not a proper component of phenomenal experience itself, but accessed phenomenally.

Even the sense datum theorist, then, would need to admit that even though sense data are, *ex hypothesi*, instantiated in the self, and even though experiences are hence primarily intentionally directed at the self (and only secondarily, if at all, intentionally directed at distal objects), sense data have the odd property of at once being possessed by an experiencing subject while being experienced as outside of and other than the subject. In Heideggerian terminology, the world is *disclosed* to us via our phenomenology. In what follows, I will focus specifically on Frey's version of this sort of phenomenal transparency, merely for ease of explication.

Frey is careful to make the distinction between (i) some phenomenal object's being presented to us as other and as being distinct from the self, and (ii) the phenomenal perspective from some object's being public, objective, mind-independent, or external to the subject. While

¹⁹ Frey (2013) 76. I should note that Frey is concerned primarily with *sensuous* experience rather than with *awareness of justification* broadly construed, which awareness could also include as proper objects those of introspection, memory, and intuition. Everything Frey says, however, is applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to awareness of justification broadly construed.

²⁰ Hanna (forthcoming 2015) 153

initially it might seem as though something's being other than the subject entails its being public, objective, mind-independent and/or external to the subject, this is not strictly the case. Consider, for example, an extreme version of mentalistic solipsism that claims that all proper objects of experience are spatially located within the mind of the experiencer. According to this mentalistic solipsism, none of the proper objects of experience are objective, mind-independent and/or external to the subject, unless those terms are redefined. However, the subject in such a picture would still experience these objects as phenomenally present in Frey's sense—as other than and not intentionally directed at the subject. Says Frey:

To undergo a sensuous experience is (in part) to appreciate an element *as other* or *as before one*; it is (in part) to appreciate a manifest opposition between *the self*—that before which the other is present—and *the other*—that which is present before the self. But phenomenal presence does not consist in the instantiation of some relation, say, *experience e presents y to z* by members of two distinct kinds, namely, *other* and *self*. The distinction between self and other is rather an oblique communication of sensuous experience's basic and intrinsic phenomenal structure. Sensuous experiences are phenomenally articulate unities and to appreciate something as other is to appreciate its invariant position within this bipartite, phenomenal articulation.²¹

Frey's picture of phenomenal presence is essentially correct as a picture of the givenness of internalistic justification. For the rest of this section, I will spell out a number of the implications of the truth of the thesis of *givenness as phenomenal presence*, which I'll abbreviate as *GAPP*.

The first implication of GAPP is that there is never any experience of the self as an object of phenomenal awareness. This implication is fortuitous, in view of the fact that philosophers who have engaged in phenomenal investigations in search of the phenomenal self have always come back empty-handed. We can check these results ourselves immediately. Awareness is always awareness of objects, states of affairs, facts, but never, in the same sense of "awareness,"

²¹ Frey, *op. cit.*

awareness of ourselves or awareness of ourselves as the experiencers of objects, states of affairs, facts. Of course, we should not make the mistake of confusing our experientiable physical bodies with our *selves*. Further, we should not make the mistake of confusing our phenomenal embodiment (what it is like to be an embodied mind) with an experience of our *selves*. The reason for this implication is that according to GAPP, all phenomenal awareness is awareness of objects as if other than and non-identical with a self. But if we were able to become aware of our selves, then we would be aware of some object that was simultaneously self and non-self—we would be enmeshed in phenomenal contradiction.

How, though, can it be possible to be aware of something as other than and non-identical with a self if it is not possible to become aware of the self? The second implication of GAPP is that while we can never become aware of a phenomenal self, all objects of phenomenal awareness are presented *as if to a self*. Objects as they are phenomenally present come bearing the mark of the phenomenal preconditions of being *for us* and having *spatial and temporal unification*. This is essentially the same as the Kantian thesis of the transcendental original synthetic unity of apperception:

The **I think** must **be able** to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something be represented in me that not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing for me... Thus all manifold of intuition has a necessary relation to the **I think** in the same subject in which this manifold is to be encountered. But this representation is an act of **spontaneity**, i.e., it cannot be regarded as belonging to sensibility. I call it the **pure apperception**, in order to distinguish it from the **empirical** one, or also the **original apperception**, since it is that self-consciousness which, because it produces the representation I think, which must be able to accompany all others and which in all consciousness is one and the same, cannot be accompanied by any further representation... For the manifold representations that are given in a certain intuition would not all together be **my** representations if they did not all together belong to a self-consciousness; i.e., as my representations (even if I am not conscious them as such) they must yet necessarily be in accord with the condition

under which alone they **can** stand together in a universal self-consciousness, because otherwise they would not throughout belong to me.²²

What this means is that objects of awareness are presented to us as being for us, and as unified with other presentations of objects. As a number of phenomenologists and epistemologists have noted (famously: Hume), there is no properly phenomenal component of experience that unifies objects in space and time such that we can be actually aware of some component of our phenomenology that unifies, e.g., the head of the cat with the tail of the cat as one spatially extended object rather than two spatially independent objects, or this cat now with that cat later as one temporally extended cat rather than two temporally independent cats. A necessarily structuring a priori precondition (in Kant's terminology, a *transcendental* component) of our phenomenal awareness of the cat, or of any object, state of affairs, fact, is that in its *mode of presentation*, it is both unified in space and time and presented as *for us*.

The third implication of GAPP, which I've already mentioned, is that phenomenology is a *mode of presentation* rather than an *object of phenomenal awareness itself*. Consider a window frame, with the windowpane itself removed. When you are standing inside the house, the rectangular hole in the side of the house acts as a mode of presentation through which you can see (and presumably hear, smell, touch) objects outside the house. The hole itself is not an object that is presented to you, something you can hear, smell, touch, but is instead merely a *way* of accessing the things you can hear, smell, touch. In this way, to think of phenomenology as

²² Kant (1999) B132-3. It is worth recognizing, given the presentation/representation terminological distinction I noted at the beginning of this section, that *Vorstellung*, the term that Guyer and Wood have translated as *representation*, has none of the indirect realist connotations that *representation* does in English. *Stellung*, meaning *position, placement, emplacement, or situation*, when combined with the prefix *vor*, meaning *before, in front of, against, or ahead of*, denotes an object as it is positioned or placed before or in front of the subject, an object whose situation (manner of being situated) is against or ahead of the subject. In this way, *Vorstellung* is not only compatible with, but seems to call out for an analysis in terms of phenomenal presence.

something of which we can be aware is to make category mistake.²³ Modes of presentation, though, come along with structural preconditions. As we've just seen, there are at least two structural preconditions of phenomenal presence: the objects, states of affairs, facts are present *for us* and are unified in space and time. Just as our window frame that is missing its window has a shape and a depth, and hence can present only those objects to us that are the right size and distance away from the house, phenomenology can present objects only along with its structuring preconditions. A number of philosophers who are proponents of the view that experience is *transparent* or *diaphanous* have expressed something similar to this. As Michael Tye notes:

If you are attending to how things *look* to you, as opposed to how they are independently of how they look, you are bringing to bear your faculty of introspection. But in so doing, you are not aware of any inner object or thing or event. When you introspect your visual experience, the only particulars of which you are aware are the external ones making up the scene before your eyes. You are not aware of those objects *and* a further inner object or episode. Your awareness is of the external surfaces and how *they* appear. The qualities you experience are the ones the surfaces apparently have. Your experience is thus transparent to you. When you try to focus upon it, you 'see' right through it, as it were, to the things apparently outside and their apparent qualities. But when you introspect, you are certainly aware of the phenomenal character of your visual experience. On the basis of introspection, you know what it is like for you visually on the given occasion. Via introspection, you are directly aware of the phenomenal character of your experience. By being aware of the external qualities, you are aware of what it is like for you. This is not to say, of course, that you *infer* the phenomenal character of your experience from your awareness of the external qualities. Obviously, no *reasoning* is involved. Still, by attending to what you experience outside, as it were, you know what it is like inside. So, your awareness of phenomenal character is not the direct awareness of a quality of your experience. Relatedly, the phenomenal character itself is not a quality of your experience to which you have direct access.²⁴

Tye's recognition that "no *reasoning* is involved" in episodes of phenomenal presence brings out the fourth implication of GAPP. Phenomenal presence itself is state-nonconceptual in that being in a state of phenomenal presence, i.e., having some justifier *given* to the subject,

²³ This even though even the most careful among us sometimes carelessly speak of the *manifold of the objects of phenomenal presence as our phenomenologies*. Such carelessness is *merely linguistic* and should not beguile us into thinking that a phenomenology itself is an object of phenomenal presence.

²⁴ Tye (2002) 139, cited in Frey (2013)

involves the exercise of none of the subject's conceptual capacities. This does not mean, however, that conceptually articulated objects such as beliefs cannot be the objects of phenomenal presence, cannot be given to a subject as justifiers in states of phenomenal presence. Phenomenology as itself a mode-of-presentation—especially when understood as Frege's *Art des Gegebenseins*, a “mode of givenness”—and phenomenal presence as the way that mode presents phenomenal objects to a subject, are nonconceptual mental states. Hence, they can play the role of the given, or of “presenting” the given (the terminological distinction makes no theoretical difference) in internalistic justificational theories. Let us recall why this is necessary: If foundational justifiers are not themselves nonconceptual in the appropriate way, then our possession of them will call out for further justification, and hence will undercut their claim to being foundational. This point was recognized by Sellars: but the appropriate solution in terms of givenness was deemed by him to be impossible. As we have already seen, however, his claim of impossibility was based on a misunderstanding of givenness and the nature of the nonconceptual.

The fifth and final implication of GAPP that I want to highlight is that the *for us* character of phenomenal presence as a mode of presentation can explain the “forcefulness” or “assertiveness” that internalistic justification is claimed to have. Let us recall from earlier in this chapter that philosophers such as Tolhurst, Huemer, and Bonjour have all identified a phenomenally relevant feature of internalistic justification—that it demands or insists (metaphorically) that its contents be taken as true or actual. An important distinction to make here is between Tolhurst's explication of this phenomenon as one in which internalistic justifiers have the feel of *truth* and Huemer's explication of the same phenomenon as one in which internalistic justifiers present their contents as *actualized*. Since truth (as correspondence) is a property of conceptually articulated objects, we should be careful about using the term *truth* to

explicate the notion of forcefulness or assertiveness.²⁵ *Actualization* or *reality* are equally good terms that don't bring with them the threat of undermining the nonconceptualist project.

Phenomenal presence as a *mode of presentation* of objects brings along with itself and with its proper objects the *for us* character of the presentation of those objects. This entails not only the Kantian ability to accompany any awareness with the "I think," as mentioned above, but also with the sort of felt impulsion toward a resultant belief. It is this felt impulsion that is essential for recognizing a state as justificatory (even if the state's content has been defeated by some other justificatory awareness).

7.4. The Normativity of Givenness

In the previous section, I showed that construing givenness, the essential property of foundational justification, along the lines of phenomenal presence (a thesis I've called GAPP) has five consequences that are beneficial to the current project:

1. The self is not a phenomenal object in that it never shows up as an object of phenomenology.
2. All given objects, i.e., all objects as phenomenally present, are presented in phenomenology *as if to a self* or *for the subject*.
3. Phenomenology is itself a *mode of presentation*, or "mode of givenness," rather than a phenomenal object itself.
4. Phenomenology and phenomenal presence are state nonconceptual capacities/activities in that their exercise requires no activation of a subject's conceptual capabilities.

²⁵ I should note that certain theories of truth that hold that conceptually unarticulated items can be true might still count as *correspondence* theories in a suitably broadened sense of *correspondence*. The traditional picture of correspondence holds that the relation obtains in part in virtue of the conceptual structure of propositions being isomorphic to the factual structure of the world. However, a picture of correspondence that is broadened to include content-content resemblance relations could maintain that nonconceptual contents could correspond to the nonstructural factual contents of the world insofar as there is some suitable resemblance relation between the two. Heidegger's (2008) conception of truth as world-disclosure or unconcealment is the prime example here. See also Wrathall (2010) for an exposition of Heidegger's views on truth. I am limiting discussion here to traditional versions of correspondence as a theory of truth.

5. The *for the subject* character of phenomenology and phenomenal presence can explain the force or assertiveness of justificatory states.

In the positive picture of GAPP, however, I've so far left out what is perhaps the most important component of justification: its epistemic normativity. In this final section, I will very briefly show how GAPP as well as its relevant consequences, (1)-(5), can point in the direction of an acceptable theory of the nature and source of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification. This section will set the stage for the picture of intentionality and its relation to phenomenology and normativity that I present in the Chapter 8, and these two chapters combined will give way to my fully formed positive proposal in Chapters 9 and 10.

How is it that we know that we ought to believe something? A simple answer is that the evidence is in favor of that thing. A more elaborate answer is that the weight of our internalistic justification is on the side of belief in that thing. An even more elaborate answer is that the phenomenal content of our internalistic justification (metaphorically) points in the direction of belief in that thing. And the most elaborate answer I'll give here is that we can tell, first-personally, given our consciously accessible and self-consciously analyzable phenomenal states, states whose content is given to us in a presentationally forceful manner, that our internalistic justification impels us to believe that thing.

But what exactly are we talking about here? I've left this notion of the phenomenal force, assertiveness, or impulsion of internalistic justification at the level of metaphor for three reasons. The first reason I've done this is that this is the way it's talked about in the literature. Philosophers take themselves to be (metaphorically) describing an actual phenomenon, one that we can become directly aware of by attending to our phenomenologies. I presented quotations from three such philosophers in the first part of this chapter. There is no reason, these

philosophers seem to think, to do much more than gesture at this phenomenon, since the goal of so gesturing is merely to point it out, to make it salient—in the terminology of early Wittgenstein, to “show” it, but not “say” it. I’ve left the notion of the phenomenal force of internalistic justification at the level of metaphor because everyone else has as well.

The second reason I’ve done this is because I agree with Huemer that analysis of a perfectly respectably metaphorically articulated concept is an unfruitful prospect. In response to criticism from Tooley, Huemer says:

Michael Tooley is noticeably frustrated by my failure to analyze the notion of its *seeming* or *appearing* to one that P. One reason I have not tried to do so is that as far as I can tell, philosophical analysis has never succeeded. Despite the popularity of the school of linguistic analysis in twentieth-century philosophy, I cannot name a single analysis of any philosophically interesting term that has not been refuted. There are interesting reasons for this lying in the nature of concepts, which I will discuss in future work. Some may claim a few alleged successes (philosophers are especially likely to cite their own analyses), yet I think almost any philosopher will agree at least that the overwhelming majority of concepts have never been correctly analyzed, and the overwhelming majority of attempts at analysis have failed. Philosophers should take caution before treading upon a territory so littered with failed theories.²⁶

While I think there might be some limited philosophical use for conceptual analysis, I agree with Huemer’s central contention that nothing of importance to philosophical understanding can be gained from attempting to analyze an already intelligible and useful concept into its (purported) conceptual components.

The third reason I’ve done this gets to the heart of the matter: I think the best chance we have for locating the interconnection of the phenomenal component and the normative component of internalistic justification is to be found in this sort of phenomenal force, this impulsion to believe. “Best chance” is perhaps pragmatically misleading, as I think that the case for considering the phenomenal force of internalistic justification to be the point at which

²⁶ Huemer (2013) 328

phenomenology and normativity meet, to be both simple and powerful. When I believe something because of my possession of internalistic justification, that belief was phenomenally helped along, brought about, effected by one thing: primitively felt phenomenal force. Either it is the case that my internalistic epistemic practices are wildly misguided such that what moves me to belief from an internalistic perspective has no normative business doing so, or else the primitively felt *phenomenal* force of internalistic justification is also the primitively felt *normative* force of internalistic justification. This intersection of phenomenology and normativity will be a central component of the positive story I tell in Chapters 9 and 8.

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined the notion of givenness as it relates specifically to the phenomenal and epistemic issues surrounding the target of this dissertation, the normativity of internalistic justification. I came at the issue of givenness in a traditional way: via the critique of its possibility by Sellars and his followers. I showed that not only does Sellars's conception of epistemology misconstrue the notion of foundational justification, it also further creates an internal contradiction for the preferred theory of the Sellarsians: conceptualism regarding justification. Given (i) the Sellarsian misconstrual of internalist foundationalism, (ii) the self-defeating nature of the Sellarsian project, and (iii) the overall lack of motivation for conceptualism generally, I concluded that the search for a plausible conception of the phenomenal/epistemic character of nonconceptual justification was appropriate. I found such a conception in the classical phenomenal picture (inspired by Husserl and Heidegger, at least implicitly) of givenness as phenomenal presence. This picture, recently resuscitated by Frey and Hanna, possesses the resources to make sense of our justificational intuitions along properly internalistic lines without falling victim to Sellars-style criticisms. It also has a number of

beneficial consequences, of which I presented five that will help structure the discussion for the remainder of the dissertation. I ended by explaining why I think that the best place to look for the specifically phenomenal components of normativity and the specifically normative components of phenomenology in internalistic justification is in the primitively felt phenomenal force (the assertiveness or impulsion) of internalistic justification.

However, there is still a component missing from this story, a component that was introduced in Chapter 1. It is not enough, let us recall, merely to have essential phenomenal access to normative items whose phenomenal character and normative force are directly related to subsequent beliefs. The subject must also be *attending* to the relevant features of her phenomenology in such a way that she makes phenomenally salient to herself the properly justificatory components of her phenomenal contents. One of the main points of this chapter was to answer the demand to ground internalistic justification in an epistemically robust mind-world relation. The sort of attention that is required for internalistic justification seems to be a component of such a relation. What else is needed, it seems, is some account of how we can become properly *directed* at the given objects that are present in our phenomenologies, which we attend to when we're doing our epistemic duties. In the next chapter, I take up the demand to relate phenomenology and intentionality in a way that can support attending, normativity, and nonconceptual internalistic justificatory states of phenomenal presence.

Chapter 8. The Identity of the Phenomenology and Intentionality of Justification

So far in this dissertation, I've shown that the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity regarding internalistic justification is false in that there is no way to make sense of an instrumentalist view of the epistemic normativity possessed by internalistic justification. In the previous chapter, I also showed that phenomenally accessible justificational states, i.e., internalistic justifiers, are necessarily nonconceptual mental states in which justificational relevant content is *given* to us. It is this conceptual mental state, imbued with its given content, that is both phenomenally accessible and epistemically normative in the way required for internalistic justification. However, as I noted at the end of the previous chapter, I have not yet discussed a central component of internalistic justification: intentionality.

The point of this chapter is an analysis of the sort of intentionality required for internalistic justification. Recall that the primary motivating goal of a picture of internalistic justification that includes a nonconceptual openness to a given world is to secure the relationship between the mind and the world required for justification. Without such a mind-world connection, a justificational theory will be at best solipsistic and at worst unable to explain how a subject's justificational states have anything at all to do with the beliefs and actions they purportedly justify. In this chapter, I secure the final component of such a mind-world connection: intentionality. Intentionality, in terms of justificational states, is the *aboutness* of those states, the connectedness between those states and their worldly contents. Without an explanation of the intentionality of justificational states, there would be no explanation for the relation between the justificational states themselves and their justificatorily relevant contents. I have put this point in terms of the relationship between state and content rather than between

state and object or content and object due to the discussion of the phenomenal presence of givenness in the previous chapter. According to the picture defended in the previous chapter, the contents of justificatory states just is the objects of those states—there is no phenomenal content over and above the intentional objects of the states.

Even further, however, without an explanation of the intentionality of justificational states, there would be no possibility for *conscious attention* to play any role in the justificatory process. Consider your phenomenology as you read these words. Insofar as you are internalistically justified in your belief that you are reading words on a page, there is some component of your phenomenal state that is justificationally relevant to your belief—this is just what it is to possess internalistic justification for a belief. However, your phenomenology is *focused* in a certain way—it is focused on the very words about which you thereby possess a justified belief. You can shift your focus from the words to the page or from the page to whatever objects lie beyond the page. In one way, this makes certain parts of your phenomenology salient while making others fade from salience. Further, this salience is both *phenomenal* and *justificational*. To refocus your phenomenology is also to bring different objects into *justificational* salience as well. However, in a more precise way, shifting your focus changes your phenomenology as well as your justification. Things are different for you, as a subject, when you're focused on the page than they are when you're focused on the words on the page, and this difference is relevant to justification. This is the importance of *attention* to phenomenology, and further, to justification. The way to make sense of this ability of ours to refocus our phenomenologies, to modify our attention in ways that are justificationally relevant, is explainable in terms of the intentional relations between internalistic justificational states and their intentional contents.

Intentionality, in the sense relevant to internalistic justification, must have a robust phenomenal component such that not only must the subject have phenomenal access to any justificational relevant intentional states and contents, she must also have phenomenal access to the relationship between these intentional states and contents and the normative justificatory force of her phenomenology. The reason for this robust phenomenal component of the intentionality of internalistic justification is that without such a phenomenal component, our picture of the intentionality of internalistic justification would run afoul of the definition of internalistic justification. Recall that in order for a subject to possess internalistic justification, she must have phenomenal access to each and every of the components of her justificational state that are relevant to justification. Hence, in Chapter 1, I formulated the concept of internalistic justification as follows:

A subject S has an internalistic justification for a belief B if and only if (1) S possesses an internalistic justifier, IJ, for a belief, B, strictly due to S's potential phenomenal access to IJ and its relation to B, and (2) S is thereby in a position to become aware (2i) of her possession of IJ, (2ii) that IJ is a justifier for B, and (2iii) how it is that IJ is a justifier for B.

However, if the robust phenomenal component of the intentionality of justificational states were missing, then component (2iii) of this definition would be missing—a subject would not be in a position to be come aware of how her internalistic justificational state was properly justificational, since she would not be in a position to evaluate one of the constitutive components of that state: its intentionality.

In her recent paper, “The Access Problem,” Michelle Montague articulates and defends a specific version of what's come to be known as the thesis of Phenomenal Intentionality (PI):

For any subject, S, and any intentional state or content, I, of S, necessarily, there is some phenomenal state or content, P, of S such that I (in some way) depends on and is determined by P.

I have left PI sufficiently broad here to cover the many different versions of the thesis that have been articulated or defended in the literature. Here is a sampling of those versions of the PI thesis, from weakest to strongest: (i) The instantiation of any intentional state strongly supervenes on the instantiation of a related phenomenal state. (ii) The content of any intentional state strongly supervenes on the content of a related phenomenal state. (iii) The content of any intentional state is (at least partially) constituted by the content of a related phenomenal state. (iv) The content of any intentional state is identical to the content of some related phenomenal state. (v) Any intentional state is identical to some phenomenal state.

Montague's PI thesis is a version of (ii). This thesis, which Montague calls the Matching View (MV), is as follows:

For any subject, S, and any intentional content, C, the specific properties of C are determined by and instantiated in virtue of the instantiation of M, a relation of matching that holds between a phenomenal state of S and the putative intentional object(s) of C.

The impetus behind MV is intuitive: In order to be intentionally directed at something, the intentionally directed subject must be able to have some idea what she is intentionally directed at. That is, intentional directedness is not epistemically opaque to a subject, nor is intentional directedness a possibly lucky relation such that, in either way, an intentional connection can be made totally (in principle) unbeknownst to the subject.

Notice that this intuitive impetus for MV already flies in the face of externalistic or non-PI theories of intentionality, such as causal theories or teleosemantic theories, in which it is phenomenally inaccessible states of subjects that are responsible for intentionality. While I think that PI is true, and that necessarily, there is no intentionality without concomitant phenomenology, I won't here argue for or defend PI per se.

The point of the current chapter is to argue that MV cannot adequately explain the relationship between intentionality and phenomenology in a way that is compatible PI generally or with an internalistic justificatory picture. Instead, I will offer a new interpretation of PI that can make sense of the deep connections between phenomenology, intentionality, and normativity that are required for internalistic justification. This interpretation, what I call IPI, or the Identity of Phenomenology and Intentionality, is as follows:

There is a token identity between phenomenology and intentionality such there is one relevant state: a justificational intentional phenomenal state whose relevant justificational contents are both intentional and phenomenal.

IPI, I show, is the only thesis of the relation between phenomenology and intentionality that can explain the possibility of internalistic justification.

The intuitional impetus behind IPI is the same as that behind MV—in order to be intentionally directed at an object, a subject must be able to tell which object she is intentionally directed at. However, IPI is distinct from MV in that it attempts to explain intentional directedness neither *in terms of* phenomenology, nor *in terms of* a matching relation between phenomenology and a corresponding intentional object. Neither intentionality nor phenomenology is metaphysically or conceptually prior to the other. My critical thesis here is that the central notion of MV, the matching relation, cannot do the work with which it has been tasked, i.e., it cannot ground intentional relations. Once we recognize the central problem with the matching relation, and exorcize this problem from any theory of PI, we are left with the framework of IPI. I will drive this point home by showing a number of cases that MV cannot made adequate sense of and then showing how IPI can make sense of them.

This chapter proceeds as follows. In Section 8.1, I lay out and explicate the Matching View (MV) as an initially highly plausible and theoretically useful picture of the thesis of

phenomenal intentionality. However, as I note, the central concept of MV, that of *matching*, remains opaque in Montague's explication of the view. There are two ways that we might conceive of the matching relation: either in terms of a *conceptual* isomorphism (or something functionally similar to isomorphism) between mental contents and intentional objects or in terms of a *nonconceptual* isomorphism (or something functionally similar to isomorphism) between mental contents and intentional objects. In Section 8.2, I lay out MV as a thesis built around a specifically *conceptual* interpretation of the matching relation. I show, however, that such a conceptual interpretation of the matching relation has serious problems that prevent it from being able to perform the role required of it by MV. In Section 8.3, then, I lay out the other alternative: MV as a thesis built around a specifically *nonconceptual* interpretation of the matching relation. Rather than faring any better than a conceptual interpretation of the matching relation, however, the nonconceptual interpretation fares much worse. Without concepts in play to stand in isomorphic relations to one another, it is unclear how a nonconceptual interpretation of the matching relation can plausibly be called a version of *matching* at all. In Section 8.4, I lay out a further problem for MV, one that isn't directly related to the conceptual nature of the matching relation: MV, it seems, is viciously metaphysically circular in that it attempts to make sense of intentional directedness in terms of phenomenal states whose specific contents are the objects of intentional directedness themselves. That is, phenomenal states must *already* be intentionally directed in order to have the specific contents required by MV to ground that very intentional directedness. Intentional directedness is thus explained in terms of itself, with an unnecessary detour through phenomenology to boot. In Section 8.5, I reintroduce the notion of *phenomenal presence* from the previous chapter in order to set the stage for my preferred interpretation of the thesis of phenomenal intentionality: the identity of phenomenology and intentionality (IPI). In

this section, I consider an argument presented by Jean-Luc Marion, which attempts to show that there can be phenomenal states without corresponding or concomitant intentional objects. I show that Marion is mistaken in this contention, and hence, that not only does intentionality require phenomenology, phenomenology requires intentionality as well. In the final section, I consider three proposals for the necessary relationship between phenomenology and intentionality. Only one of these proposals, IPI can perform both the phenomenal and the intentional work required by a theory of internalistic justification.

8.1. The Matching View of Phenomenal Intentionality

According to Montague, “The fundamental idea behind [PI] is that thinking of an object essentially involves conceiving of it in some manner, or characterizing it in some fashion, and that reference to the particular manner involved is essential for determining which object is being thought of.”¹

To *conceive of something in some manner* is a technical notion. Clearly, in a weak sense, whenever we think about something, we think about it in some way or another. The MV thesis is much stronger than this. First, the way-of-thinking must have a necessary phenomenal component. Second, some feature of the phenomenal component must necessarily determine the intentional object(s) of the state. Third, while non-phenomenal components might play a role in fixing the intentional object by underlying or making possible the connection (being partial conditions on the possibility of intentionality), the intentional connection strongly supervenes on phenomenal content/properties.

¹ Montague (2013) 28

MV follows Russell (1912) and Evans (1982) in holding that “discriminating knowledge” or a “discriminating conception” is required in order for there to be a match.² That is, a subject must be able to tell which object she is intentionally directed at if she is able to be intentionally directed at that object at all. This claim is initially unclear in that “knowledge” is ambiguous between propositional knowledge (i.e., a specific sort of mental state) and ability knowledge (i.e., a specific sort of skill). Further, it is unclear what it would be to be able to discriminate between the intentional target and all other objects. The most plausible reading I can give to this condition is that in a particular circumstance, were the intentional object actual and the sort of thing that a subject could walk right up to and touch, she could do so and put her finger on the object. So discriminating knowledge is a sort of ability in a particular circumstance. This is in line with Montague’s focus on Evans’s conception of *demonstrative* discriminating knowledge.

The central thought of MV is that demonstrative discriminating knowledge is possible only when and insofar as there is some sufficient degree of match between phenomenology and reality. Put another way, phenomenology-world matching is inherently relevant to demonstrative discriminating knowledge. Put yet another way, too much mismatch between phenomenology and world breaks down a subject’s ability to discriminate demonstratively between objects, and this, in turn, blocks the possibility of intentional connection.

It’s not the case, however, that *any* mismatch at all is sufficient for a failure of intentional connection. For example, if something has, let’s stipulate, 100 visual properties, and my phenomenology correctly matches 99 of them, then it is almost certain that this match is sufficient for intentional connection. Montague goes into some detail discussing the amount of mismatch that is sufficient for a failure of intentional connection. Here, I want just to grant that *if*

² See Hanna (1993) for what I take to be a decisive refutation of this view. While there are small details that Hanna and I disagree on, the overall spirit of his argument there and mine here are similar.

matching/mismatching is a criterion of intentional success/failure, then some principled line can be drawn between intentionally benign cases of mismatch and intentionally problematic cases.

8.2. The Problem with Conceptual Matching

In this section, I outline what I call “conceptual matching,” that is, the notion of matching whereby the match occurs between structural properties of conceptual contents or states and those of facts or objects.

The commonsense picture of matching is between conceptual contents (including propositional contents more generally) and facts. If my phenomenology contains the conceptual contents of CAT, MAT, and the relation ON, and it is a fact that the cat is on the mat, then my phenomenology matches the world. Further, if it is phenomenology, in terms of matching, that determines intentional success and intentional object, then I am intentionally directed at the cat who is on the mat insofar as the conceptual contents of my phenomenology match the facts. Call this *conceptual matching*.

I want to leave aside potential problems of exactly how it is that concepts and facts can match one another here.³ Let’s just assume that there is some sort of isomorphism that can possibly obtain between concepts and facts such that a match in Montague’s terms can be achieved when the conditions are right. This isn’t quite so implausible as philosophers like Rorty would have us believe. Both facts and conceptual contents are internally structured items, the latter semantically and the former in terms of the objects and relations that constitute the fact. This sort of structure-structure comparison allows for the possibility of structural isomorphism, which could be the foundation of a sort of matching robust enough for MV. Clearly, for the view of conceptual matching, there must be a phenomenology of concept deployment such that when

³ Although see Rorty (1989b) for an interesting argument against the possibility that the non-mental world contains structural items that could possibly stand in isomorphic relations to conceptually structured mental items.

the subject applies concepts in experience she can be aware of the concepts in a phenomenal sort of way.

I also want to leave aside for the purposes of my discussion here whether it is the intensional content, or extensional content, or both, of a concept that a subject has phenomenal access to when she deploys concepts. I also want to leave aside whether the match between concept and fact is a match between the intensional content, extensional content, or both, and the fact. In any case, there are nine possibilities of the combination between a subject's conceptual awareness and matching conditions that could be produced by varying one or the other of these conditions, produced below in a table:

	Match Requires: Mere Intensional Isomorphism	Match Requires: Mere Extensional Isomorphism	Match Requires: Intensional + Extensional Isomorphism
Subject's Conceptual Awareness: Merely Intensional	<i>Match: Possible</i>	Match: Impossible	Match: Impossible
Subject's Conceptual Awareness: Merely Extensional	Match: Impossible	<i>Match: Possible</i>	Match: Impossible
Subject's Conceptual Awareness: Intensional + Extensional	Match: Impossible	Match: Impossible	<i>Match: Possible</i>

Clearly, the matching conditions and the subject's conceptual awareness must be the same in order for a match to even be possible. Let's assume that a match is possible.

Sometimes, says Montague, things go well for us phenomenally and our phenomenology matches the facts. On the concept matching view, this means that we deploy concepts in a way that we are phenomenally aware of such that minimal matching conditions are satisfied. In these cases, according to MV, an intentional connection is made between the subject and the worldly item(s): facts, objects that constitute facts, states of affairs, etc.

Other times, however, things do not go well for us, and while we deploy concepts, minimal matching conditions are not met. In these cases, either we do not successfully deploy concepts and are merely aware of nonconceptual phenomenal content, or else we deploy concepts, but not ones whose content provides for a match. I will address the nonconceptual possibility in the next section.

When concepts are deployed we are phenomenally aware of the content of those concepts, but if that content is not sufficient for a match, then what has happened? Ex hypothesi, we are phenomenally aware of the content of these concepts, so it is not that our phenomenal abilities are off-line.

The commonsense answer is that the object that we are directed at does not match the concepts that we've deployed. But this answer can't possibly be right. According to MV, we can be directed at an object only if a match is made. Since no match between concept and object is made, then we can't appeal to the properties of a potential but non-actual intentional object (meaning, an existing object that is not an intentional object but could be if the right conditions are met, not an intentional object that does not exist).

To illustrate: Imagine that there are two objects physically before me, X and Y. X has property A and Y has property B, and A and B are such that it is necessary, in order to make an intentional connection with X or Y, A or B must have counterparts, A* or B* in a subject's conceptual awareness (respectively). I look out in the direction of X and Y and deploy concepts none of which have A* or B* as a content. So I have not made intentional contact with X or Y, according to MV. However, it cannot be truly said that I have *failed* to make intentional contact, since to *fail* requires to *attempt*, and it is not possible for me to *attempt* to make intentional contact with X or Y without having already made intentional contact with them. This is because

attempting is an intentional state and to *attempt to p* requires intentional contact with the object of the content of p.

There is a distinction to be drawn, then, between *mere intentional non-contact* and *intentional failure*. According to MV, intentional *failure* is impossible. Again, this is because according to MV, intentional failure requires the very intentional contact that has purportedly failed.

Initially this seems unproblematic until we remember that matching isn't merely necessary for intentional success, but also sufficient. This means that whatever matches the phenomenal content of our conceptual deployments is what we make intentional contact with. So let us imagine: I look out into the world, deploy concepts with certain contents, and become phenomenally aware of those contents. Whatever it is that matches my phenomenology is what I've become intentionally directed at. There are three possibilities:

1. I've become intentionally directed at a distal object.
2. I've become intentionally directed at an internal object.
3. I've failed to become intentionally directed at all.

First, it is important to note that from the first-personal perspective, according to MV, I can't tell the difference between (1), (2), and (3). While my phenomenology determines my intentional object, there is no marker in my phenomenology to tell me what that intentional object actually is or whether there is one at all. Notice, however, that this flies in the face of the initial motivation for PI and MV to begin with. Montague claimed that we should attempt to find a theory that provides the resources for us to tell which objects we are intentionally directed at. MV can't do this. This might be enough to abandon MV. But there are further problems.

Second, given that MV defines intentional failure (or non-connection) in terms of a failure of matching and not in terms of a breakdown in the cognitive system, when our phenomenologies are such that we have not made contact with a distal object, one outside of our bodies, even though it might seem to us as though we have, it may nonetheless be the case that we have made intentional contact with an internal object.

MV is a species of PI. If PI is true, then there can be no phenomenology without an intentional object. This means that when our phenomenology fails to match a distal object, it must match something, an internal object. This means that intentional failure or non-connection is impossible. This in turn means that it is impossible for us to misrepresent objects, to misperceive objects, or to get things wrong about objects. Our phenomenology will always match an object that we are intentionally directed at, and accordingly, we're always right.

Third, even further, to question something said in the previous paragraph, how could something seem to us to be a distal object? If there is no distinguishing, based on phenomenology alone, whether intentional contact has been made between a distal object or an internal object, it seems that there is no phenomenal distinction between distal objects and internal objects. But sometimes it seems to me that an object or state is inside of me (for example, pain) and sometimes it seems to me that an object or state is outside of me (for example, that cat on that mat). But correspondingly, it is clear that we would have a hard time, according to MV, explaining how we can be intentionally directed in these different ways. So MV falsifies our phenomenology.

Fourth, sometimes we hallucinate, dream, etc., meaning sometimes we have a phenomenology apparently directed at some object that we are not intentionally directed at at all, since there is no object to be intentionally directed at. However, some hallucinations are so

convincing, some dreams are so vivid, that there is no phenomenal discrimination between a veridical phenomenology and a falsidical phenomenology. Recall, however, one of the primary motivations for PI, that we be able to tell which object we're intentionally directed at.

Now "telling which object is which" can be meant in two ways. First, given two apples, sitting side-by-side, if I am intentionally directed at the apple on the left rather than the one on the right, then there ought to be something about my phenomenology that informs me of this. Second, given an actual apple and a dream apple, I ought to be able to tell whether it's the actual apple or the dream apple at which I'm intentionally directed. But since there is no phenomenal difference between the experience of the actual apple vs. the dream apple, I have no idea that what I'm intentionally directed at MV is true, i.e., *if* it is phenomenology that determines intentionality.

However, the most severe problems with MV are those that have already been articulated by critics of "descriptivist" views of reference. Descriptivism, largely abandoned in light of the objections I will rehearse momentarily, is the thesis that a term, i.e., a linguistic semantic item, that has a single referent has the single referent it has because and only because (necessity and sufficiency) of a definite description associated with that term. The object that uniquely satisfies that definite description is the single referent of the term. Descriptivist theories differ regarding the sort of association between singular term and definite description that is necessary for reference. E.g., According to Russellian versions of descriptivism, all or most singular terms are disguised definite descriptions, in that the semantic content of such a singular term is that of a definite description. However, other descriptivist theories merely maintain that the definite description must be associated *by the subject* with the relevant singular term.

What is important to notice here is that MV is a version of phenomenal-intentional descriptivism (where classical descriptivism is a sort of linguistic-referential descriptivism). Phenomenal states take the intentional objects they do, or are intentionally directed as they are, because of a veridicality relation between phenomenal content and object in the world. According to the classical descriptivist, semantic items take the referents they do because of a veridicality relation (a.k.a. a satisfaction relation) between a definite description and an object in the world. Accordingly, any problems for classical descriptivism that arise because of the necessity and sufficiency of the holding of this veridicality relation will equally arise for MV.

A first problem for classical descriptivism is that no description can ever be sufficiently complete to capture, necessarily, one and only one referent. That is, for any proposed description, there will always possibly be at least two distinct objects that satisfy that description. However, since the goal of a theory of reference is to show how it is possible to refer to one and only one object, descriptivism fails. This manifests itself as a problem for MV in that no phenomenal state will ever be rich enough to pick out one and only one intentional object. There will always possibly be more than one intentional object for any phenomenal state. The problem is even worse for MV than it is for classical descriptivism, however, given that it is possible for our phenomenologies to be qualitatively identical across the cases when we are intentionally directed at an actual object and those when we are intentionally directed at a merely possible object. Accordingly, we must take into account not only the class of actual objects, but also the class of possible objects (an infinite class) when we are determining which objects “match” our phenomenologies.

Notice that it is not possible to sidestep this problem by appealing to the proximity of an object. That is, one would not say that it is this table *right in front of one* that one is intentionally

directed at because of phenomenal match + relevant proximity. The reason for this is that considerations of proximity already require considerations of intentionality. One can't invoke proximity without an antecedent intentional connection to the environment. This would be to put the intentional cart before the phenomenal horse.

A second problem for classical descriptivism is that it is clear that our singular terms could still have referents even if some component of the associated definite description went unsatisfied or even falsified. This is Keith Donnellan's objection to Russell's descriptivism. For example, it seems possible for me to refer to the red ball on the table (*ex hypothesi*, via that definite description) even if the thing on the table is neither red (because it's orange) nor a ball (because it's an orange). This manifests itself as a problem for MV in that it is clearly possible for us to be intentionally directed at objects even if there is some mismatch between phenomenology and intentional object. Montague recognizes this problem and spends a good deal of her essay addressing the question of how much mismatch is too much to ground an intentional connection.

One response to this question is to respond as John Searle has that it is not one specific definite description that ensures reference, but instead, some weighted proper subset of a disjunctive list of components of a definite description. Similarly, a proponent of MV might claim that as long as, say, five phenomenal features match some object, then intentional connection has been made. However, this response seems as ad hoc and arbitrary in the case of MV as it does in the case of classical descriptivism. Why five features rather than four or six? And which five features? And why? And what rules out the possibility that for every object that satisfies all the members of the weighted proper subset, there is another object that satisfies all the same attributes, but differs from the first object in some way not mentioned in the disjunctive

description? Unless convincing answers can be given to all of these questions (and Montague provides no reason to think that they can), such a response is unmotivated.

A third problem for classical descriptivism comes in the form of the famous Gödel/Schmidt counterexample. Suppose that I am attempting to refer to Kurt Gödel, but the only thing I believe about him, and hence, the only definite description I could possibly associate with that name, is *the man who proved the famous incompleteness theorems*. However, further suppose that it was not Gödel, but some gentleman called Schmidt who actually proved the incompleteness theorems. I have now managed, even though I am attempting to refer to Gödel, to refer to Schmidt instead. This manifests as a problem for MV in that I may be trying very hard to think of an object that is right in front of me (although it's unclear exactly what this would mean, given that it seems as though intentional connection is already required for this), but if my phenomenology instead matches some object in Dusseldorf, I am successfully intentionally directed at that thing instead.

A fourth and final problem for classical descriptivism is Kripke's problem of the modal properties of supposed referents.⁴ If the only thing I know about Barack Obama is that he is the President of the United States, then, since definite descriptions that do indeed uniquely determine reference are rigid designators (i.e., pick out the same object in all possible worlds in which that object exists), then Obama is necessarily the President of the United States, i.e., he couldn't *possibly* have lost to Mitt Romney in 2012 or decided to remain a senator, etc. But since this is false, classical descriptivism is false. This manifests as a problem for MV in that if phenomenal match uniquely determines intentional object, then it determines the intentional object across all possible worlds. Accordingly, it is impossible for any intentional object not to have had any

⁴ Kripke (1980)

phenomenally relevant properties that it currently has. E.g., the shoes I'm currently wearing: they're currently blue, therefore necessarily they must be blue. But since this is false, MV is false.

Any of these problems could be solved if the proponent of a conceptual version of MV could appeal to an antecedent intentional connection between mental state and object in order to ground conceptual matching. However, since intentionality is precisely the explanandum that the explanans of matching is aimed at, intentionality can't be enlisted in support of conceptual matching. These problems, as far as I can see, are not solvable by any plausible version of MV. However, these are only problems for the *conceptual matching* version of MV. What about the *nonconceptual matching* version?

8.3. The Problem with Nonconceptual Matching

According to the nonconceptual matching version of MV, it is a match between nonconceptual phenomenal content and the world that grounds intentional connection or directedness.

What would it be for our phenomenal states nonconceptually to match the world? Presumably, it would be for the nonconceptual content of our phenomenal states to stand in some isomorphic relation to the facts of the way things are. When we examined the notion of conceptual matching, I put to one side the issue of how it is possible for conceptual phenomenology to match a world that is presumably not composed of concepts (given that concepts are mental objects). However, we are not able to put the analogous issue to one side when we consider nonconceptual matching.

Montague has us suppose, for simplicity, that perceptual properties are objective features of the world. In one way, such a supposition is possible. In another way, however, it is not. To see, hear, smell, is not just to get one's mind in touch with a property, but to do so *via* a

phenomenal state. Phenomenal states, though, are necessarily first-personal affairs. Accordingly, it would be impossible coherently to suppose that phenomenal states are objective features of the world.

The notion of matching makes sense in terms of conceptual content. It does not, however, make sense in terms of nonconceptual content, at least not in the sense of *matching* that is required for MV—in terms of nonconceptual content, we can talk about degrees of veridicality, but when we do that, what are we comparing to what? Phenomenal states don't exist in the world in the way that cats and mats do. So the necessary component of a nonconceptual phenomenal state, its nonconceptual phenomenal character, is not present in the world in the way that cats and mats are. It is not clear, then, in what way it is possible for there to be a match, and hence, a mismatch, between a nonconceptual phenomenal state and the class of material objects. The class of material objects and the class of nonconceptual phenomenal states are categorically different sorts of things, even if they both exist “in the world.”

Note that it's not possible to solve this problem by appealing to a sort of representationalism that holds that certain nonconceptual phenomenal states non-phenomenally represent states of the world, and this is how nonconceptual matching takes place. Here we can be more precise about what it would mean to say that certain nonconceptual phenomenal states non-phenomenally represent states of the world. Phenomenal states have certain properties that are themselves non-phenomenal, and these properties either match or stand in some sort of one-to-one relationship with the components of material states of affairs. It is not possible to go this route because it undermines the motivation for MV to begin with. According to MV, it is the phenomenal properties of phenomenal states themselves that facilitate the sort of match that grounds intentional connection. Were it the case that phenomenal states had non-phenomenal

properties (e.g., the properties of their non-phenomenal realizer states), a proponent of MV could not hold that it is *these* non-phenomenal properties that are ultimately responsible for intentional connection. To do so would be to make phenomenal states into mere intentional danglers: related to, but unnecessary for, intentional connection.

However, let's suppose that there's some way to solve these problems for the nonconceptual matching view. Standardly, nonconceptual content is taken to consist at least of content that allows for spatiotemporal location of subject and objects. If this nonconceptual content is phenomenal, then there are some phenomenal states that have nonconceptual components whose components allow for the spatiotemporal location of subject and objects. Perhaps, a proponent of MV might say, it is in terms of a match between spatiotemporal position and nonconceptual phenomenology that the intentional connection is grounded.

Unfortunately, this view is subject to severe problems in view of the fact that our spatiotemporal phenomenologies are often quite mistaken, but we would be loath to claim that therefore, intentional connection has not been made. Here are a few of examples.

1. Imagine looking at an object that is at the end of a dimly lit hallway. We as perceivers are very bad at estimating distance in such cases. Accordingly, we will almost certainly misperceive the distance of the object, not in that we don't recognize that it is a distal object at the end of the hallway, but in that we don't correctly recognize its distance from us.
2. Imagine looking at a circular table from a few feet away. While you will recognize it as circular, unless you are floating directly above it, your phenomenology will not be of a circular object. So while you might apply the concept of CIRCULARITY to the table, your nonconceptual spatial phenomenology will be non-circular but instead elliptical, or whatever.
3. Imagine hearing the sound of a bell in a far-away clock tower being struck. Since it will take some time for the sound of the bell to get to you, by the time you hear it, the striking of the bell will be long over. So you will hear the bell now when the bell is making no noise now.

4. Imagine seeing lightning and then hearing thunder. Whether you understand that light and sound travel at different speeds or not, you will represent them as occurring at different times when, in fact, the flash and the bang occur simultaneously.

In each of these cases, you get something fundamentally wrong about spatiotemporal position or properties. However, it seems very odd to claim that you thereby are not intentionally directed at those things that you misrepresent.

Again, were intentionality available to explain how matching is possible, the proponent of nonconceptual MV could simply appeal to an antecedent intentional connection between mental state and object in order to explain how nonconceptual matching works. However, again, since it is matching that is supposed to be explaining intentionality and not the other way around, intentionality can't be enlisted in support of nonconceptual matching.

8.4. Final Worry for MV: Metaphysical Circularity

At its foundation, MV holds that phenomenology is *prior*, in some sense, to intentionality. We needn't see this as *temporally* prior in that there is a time when we are in phenomenal states before which those states have intentional object. It could be the case that, even though phenomenology is prior to intentionality, there is no time at which a phenomenal state does not have an intentional object. Further, we needn't see this as *modally* prior in the sense that it is possible for there to be some phenomenal states that do not have intentional objects.

What this priority is, instead, is a metaphysical or ontological priority—the priority of the *in virtue of* or *grounding* relationships. What this means, then, is that in some way, phenomenology is more fundamental or basic than is the intentional relation. Intentionality is *derived* from phenomenology.

The first problem with this is that the relation MV posits between phenomenology and intentionality is a synthetic rather than an analytic relation. In other words, the following sentence, if true at all, is a synthetic rather than an analytic truth:

For any subject, S, and any intentional content, C, the specific properties of C are determined by and instantiated in virtue of the instantiation of M, a relation of matching that holds between a phenomenal state of S and the putative intentional object(s) of C.

We know that this sentence, the expression of MV, is synthetic rather than analytic given that its negation neither is nor does it entail a conceptual or logical contradiction. But if this is the case, namely, that the statement of MV is synthetic, then it should be possible for us to conceive of a phenomenal state that perfectly matches some distal state of affairs in the world (such that any possible condition on *matching* is satisfied), but at the same time this state doesn't have an intentional object. It should be conceptually or logically possible, that is, to combine the concepts of "phenomenology," "world," "match," and "intentional non-connection." The only reason this combination wouldn't be conceptually or logically possible would be if there were a conceptual or logical contradiction between any of these concepts—specifically, between intentional non-connection and the others. However, since MV is not an analytic truth, there is no conceptual or logical contradiction.

However, it is impossible to conceive of a phenomenology that perfectly matches some state but in which *no* intentional connection is made. Again, this is not because MV is true, since this would only prove MV's truth were MV an analytic truth—rationally cogent inconceivability proves only the truth of analytic truths. So why is it impossible for us to conceive of a phenomenology that perfectly matches some state but in which *no* intentional connection is made?

The answer, I propose, has to do with the conceptual connection not between phenomenology and intentionality (although there may be one of these—see below), but instead between the *matching* relation and intentionality. Matching, in order to make sense at all, needs to be conceived of as some form of isomorphism between two things or states. But this isomorphism is only understandable in terms of intentionality in the first place. MV doesn't posit that it is in terms of a *recognized* match between phenomenology and worldly state that intentional connection is made, but instead, posits simpliciter that there is a match between phenomenology and worldly state such that intentional connection is made. It is not as though the subject needs to step outside of herself in order to see whether her phenomenology matches some state in order for matching to actually occur. Matching occurs whether the subject can tell that it does or not—and we have already seen a number of problems with this idea.

But here's the rub: What does it mean for a mental state to *match* a worldly state if that mental state is not already directed at that worldly state in some way? It's not as though the mental state is a mere picture that may or may not turn out to be an accurate map of the coast of Brazil. When mental states match the world, it is because of their antecedent directedness at some part of the world. However, for MV, intentional directedness is not only *fixed* via matching but also *explained* via matching. But this central claim of MV seems senseless without some antecedent concept of directedness, of intentionality, between mind and world.⁵ Here is another way to put this: The concept of phenomenal matching is fundamentally impoverished without the concept of intentionality. But if X both explains and grounds Y, then Y cannot itself be a constituent of X.

⁵ Clearly, what I say here runs counter to Dennett's unorthodox claims that not only is there no distinction between original and derived intentionality, but further, there is no such thing as original intentionality. Dennett's views on intentionality are in the minority. Further, I find them incomprehensible: Somehow, without the use of intentionality, we attribute intentionality to things that we are (*ex hypothesi*) not intentionally directed at. However, I don't need to wade into this issue here, as no proponent of PI would be a Dennettian. See Dennett (1989).

If this is right, then there is something fundamentally wrong about attempting to explain intentionality in terms of an intentional notion such as matching.

8.5. Intentionality and Phenomenal Presence

There is another way to come at essentially this same point. The classical phenomenologists, most saliently Husserl, Heidegger, and Sartre, noted that there is something very special about the phenomenology of the subjective experience of intentional objects: In such phenomenology, intentional objects are *presented* to us: they are *present* before us, unmediated, and forceful to our minds in such a way that, *ceteris paribus*, we immediately take them to be before us. As I noted in chapter 7, contemporary phenomenal epistemologists and philosophers of mind such as Christopher Frey and Michael Tye have also adopted the terminology of *presentation* or *transparency* to explain intentional phenomenology. To experience, then, just is to have the intentional objects of that experience before one. To attempt to focus on experience is to focus, instead, on the intentional objects of experience.

However, some contemporary phenomenologists, drawing on Husserl, have claimed that it is possible to bracket or abstract away intentionality from experience and to be left with pure phenomenology, stripped of all intentional connections. For example, Jean-Luc Marion, in his *Reduction and Givenness*, makes the claim that what is given to consciousness is not immediately intentional or referential—it is we, the subject, who, antecedent to immediate experience connect what is given to us, to some (implicitly or explicitly) chosen intentional objects. Correctly enough, Marion describes the job of the Husserlian phenomenologist as one of first radically bracketing everything that is contingent to phenomenology:

[T]he phenomenal breakthrough is accomplished by leading back to intuition everything that claims to be constituted as a phenomenon.⁶

⁶ 1998, 17

And intuition, or what is immediately given in experience, in phenomenology itself, cannot itself be bracketed:

[I]ntuition itself cannot be understood as a last presupposition, since it is neither presupposed nor posited nor given, but originally giving.⁷

All that is to say, phenomenology is presentational, original, basic, but also not the ground for anything else. What is presented in phenomenology is not presented *because of* phenomenology, but *through* phenomenology. In the same way as light makes visible what is seen but does not itself ground or explain what is seen, phenomenology is a transparent openness to intentional objects:

Appearing (*Aussehen*) no longer counts as a datum [*une donee*] for the single conscious subject, but first as the givenness of what thus appears: the appearing, through the correlation that merits the full title of "phenomenal," gives that which appears. Or again, that which appears, nothing less than an actual being, appears in person in the appearance, because, according to a necessity of essence (the correlation), it gives itself therein.⁸

To sum up: the essence of phenomenology is phenomenology's mode of presentation or "mode of givenness" as forceful, transparent, presentational, given.

Suppose that all of this is right (as I think it is, and as I will briefly explain in my final section), i.e., suppose that phenomenology is unconditioned givenness such that this givenness can neither be reduced, explained, nor grounded in something else. What would this mean? According to Marion, and this is where I think he makes the same fatal mistake that underlies the Matching View and any version of Phenomenal Intentionality that privileges phenomenology over intentionality, the unconditioned givenness of phenomenology shows that everything, even

⁷ *Ibid.*, 19

⁸ *ibid.*, 32

intentionality, can be bracketed in order to investigate phenomenology alone, pure phenomenology.

But such a bracketing of intentionality in order to investigate phenomenology, is impossible. While it is tempting, perhaps because of the metaphors used to explain the phenomenon of presentation and transparency, to see the givenness of phenomenology, the way in which phenomenology presents its objects to us, as separate from the objects themselves, and hence, as separable from intentionality. The light itself is not bound up with the objects on the other side, and the light can be considered alone, without considering the appearance of objects illuminated by the light. Or similarly: We can imagine objects as they exist *in* space, and we can bracket these objects in order to consider space itself, even though we have never experienced space devoid of objects.

However, while we can consider the properties of phenomenology, we cannot do so without considering objects qua intentional objects as given, presented, transparently available by and through phenomenology. To consider our phenomenology, the properties of our phenomenology, is just to consider potential intentional objects as they are given. Accordingly, while the properties of phenomenology, or phenomenology itself, may not be bracketable, or reducible to something non-phenomenal, this does not entail that everything that is not strictly phenomenology is thereby bracketable.

Phenomenology and intentionality are bound up with one another in such a way that if Phenomenal Intentionality is true, then not only can there be no instances of intentionality without concomitant phenomenology, but also this concomitant phenomenology is not possible without intentionality. This *possibility* is both modal and phenomenal. There is no givenness without objects given.

8.6. The Identity of Phenomenology and Intentionality

Something has gone wrong with the Matching View (MV). As I've spelled things out above, the problem with MV is that the concept of *matching* is highly problematic. This general problem can be broken down into the following sub-problems:

1. It is unclear how a match of conceptual phenomenal content to worldly state or object is possible.
2. Even stipulating that a match of conceptual phenomenal content to worldly state or object is possible, it is unclear how such a match could either be specific or general enough to capture that very intentional object.
3. It is unclear how a match of nonconceptual phenomenal content to material state or material object is possible.
4. Even stipulating that a match of nonconceptual phenomenal content to material state or material object is possible, it is unclear how such a match could either be specific or general enough to capture that very intentional object.
5. It is unclear how matching itself, whether between conceptual or nonconceptual phenomenal content and a worldly state or object is possible without an antecedent intentional relation between mind and world that either is or grounds the matching relation.

So as I've painted things thus far, there's something very wrong with the very idea of matching insofar as it taken to be the thing that grounds intentionality. Moreover, this general problem with matching, I think, is a problem even more broadly with any position or thesis that attempts to *ground* intentionality in phenomenology or to claim that intentional directedness or connection exists or holds *in virtue of* some specific phenomenal state or content.

It is important to recognize that this is not to claim that Phenomenal Intentionality *tout court* is problematic, but only to claim that any version of the thesis which claims that there is a grounding or in-virtue-of relation that stands between phenomenology and intentionality is problematic. What is left, for any proponent of PI who does not want to endorse the thesis that

there is a grounding or in-virtue-of relation that stands between phenomenology and intentionality are these three mutually exclusive theses:

There is a two-way modal connection between phenomenology and intentionality such that justificational intentional states necessarily have concomitant justificational phenomenal states and justificational phenomenal states have concomitant justificational intentional states.

There is both a two-way modal connection and a two-way constitutive connection between phenomenology and intentionality such that necessarily, justificational intentional states both have concomitant justificational phenomenal states and constitutively determine the contents of those phenomenal states and necessarily, justificational phenomenal states both have concomitant justificational intentional states and constitutively determine the contents of those intentional states.

There is a token identity between phenomenology and intentionality such there is one relevant state: a justificational intentional phenomenal state whose relevant justificational contents are both intentional and phenomenal.

However, the first thesis, postulating a mere modal connection between phenomenology and intentionality doesn't do justice to the motivating factors of Phenomenal Intentionality. The thought behind PI is not just that necessarily, with intentionality comes phenomenology, but that necessarily, intentional connection is realized precisely because of a specific phenomenology. Initially, this sounds like a mere *in virtue of* or *grounding* claim; but as we've already seen, the connection between phenomenology and intentionality must be stronger than an in virtue of or grounding relationship, given that phenomenology without intentionality is apparently impossible.

While I think the second thesis fares far better than the first upon analysis, I fear that it is needlessly complicated—that it has multiplied relations and justificatory contents beyond explanatory necessity. Consider: When I am aware of the cat on the mat, what justifies my subsequent belief that the cat is on the mat is precisely the cat, the mat, and the relation they stand in to one another. The state that allows me access to these justificatory items is my

nonconceptual phenomenally present state of givenness that acts as a transparent mode of presentation for the cat, the mat, and the relation they stand in to one another. So this state *either* has two sets of justificatory contents, one intentional and one phenomenal, or one set of justificatory contents, both intentional and phenomenal. The justificatory contents, it seems obvious to say, are the cat, the mat, and the relation they stand in to one another, and these contents are both phenomenally apparent and intentionally relevant. Of course, this does not mean that *all* intentional contents are token-identical with (at least some) phenomenal contents, since it does seem possible to vary one while holding the other fixed. What it does mean is that *justificatory* intentional and phenomenal contents, a proper subset of all possible intentional and phenomenal contents, are one and the same thing.

As such, I suggest that the most fruitful way to conceive of the relationship between phenomenology and intentionality is one of identity. There is no intentionality without phenomenology and intentional character is determined by phenomenal character precisely because intentionality *is* phenomenology. While, conceptually, a distinction can be made between the phenomenal and the intentional (case in point: everything I've said so far, in that I've been talking about the distinct concepts PHENOMENOLOGY and INTENTIONALITY), there is no *metaphysical* difference between the two. The reasons for thinking this are twofold. First, the combination of the truth of the theses of phenomenal intentionality—the thesis that there is no phenomenology without intentionality—and intentional phenomenology—the thesis that there is no intentionality without phenomenology—seems to make the best overall sense of the philosophical data presented so far in this chapter. The combined truth of these theses makes especially good sense of any attempt to metaphysically privilege one or the other of intentionality or phenomenology over the other (as does MV and Montague's consequent view).

However, phenomenal intentionality combined with intentional phenomenology needn't be interpreted as a metaphysical strict identity—it could instead be interpreted as a metaphysically necessary bi-conditionality of phenomenology and intentionality. Second, however, and this is the reason I prefer an identity rather than a metaphysically necessary bi-conditionality, is that the phenomenal, intentional, semantic, and otherwise contents of phenomenal and intentional states seem to be not only determined by one another, but also actively *bound up with* one another. This is not to say that there is not some other *possible* way to interpret the connection between intentionality and phenomenology that makes sense of this data. What it is to do is to invoke a simple and elegant solution to the fact that phenomenology and intentionality seem to go more than just hand-in-hand.

8.7. Conclusion

In the main bulk of this chapter, I've shown that attempting to interpret the intentional directedness of mental states as somehow dependent on and secondary to the phenomenal character of those states is a serious mistake. I've shown this by criticizing what I take to be the best contemporary example of such a view, Montague's Matching View of phenomenal intentionality. Even further than this, I've also given reasons to think that an attempt to interpret the phenomenal character of mental states in terms of the intentional directedness of those states is also a serious mistake. These reasons have come from an analysis of what I take to be the best contemporary example of such a view, Marion's radical phenomenology. My conclusion is that rather than attempting to view phenomenology and intentionality as in some way metaphysically distinct (although necessarily bi-conditionalized), we should view them as token-identical.

At this point in the dissertation, I've explicated and analyzed internalistic justification, argued for the falsity of the Standard Picture, and laid out the fundamental building blocks for a

theory of internalistic justification. What is left to do is to combine those building blocks in a way that can provide us with a genuine theory of internalistic justification that can also do justice to our intuitions regarding an acceptable theory. In the final two chapters, Chapters 9 and 10, I lay out and argue for the plausibility of such a theory. In Chapter 9, I lay out, explicate, and argue for a version of nonconceptual normativity nonempirically present in our phenomenologies that can play the role of the normative given. In Chapter 10, I lay out, explicate, and argue for a picture of the normativity of intentional acts in which it is autonomous intentional acts on the parts of subjects, always poised for interpersonal interaction, that institutes the normativity constitutive of internalistic justification.

Chapter 9. Nonconceptual Normative Phenomenology

The goal of these final two chapters of the dissertation (Chapters 9 and 10) is to lay out the fundamental components of a theory of internalistic justification that does justice to all of the guiding norms and intuitions regarding internalistic justification laid out so far (discussed especially in Chapters 1-4), that avoids the problems possessed by any theory that relies on the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity (discussed especially in Chapters 5 and 6), and that also incorporates the phenomenal and intentional conditions on and components of internalistic justification already argued for (especially in chapters 7 and 8). This chapter and the next, then, jointly constitute the properly *positive* component of this dissertation, and are intended both as a demonstration of the fact that, with the fall of the Standard Picture, internalistic justification is not doomed, and also as a rallying call in favor of a new research program. Accordingly, and to be only somewhat cheeky, were this chapter and the next to be considered apart from the current dissertation as a stand-alone work, that work could be titled *Prolegomena to Any Future Epistemology*.

In this chapter and the next, then, I am proposing the positive outlines of a justificational theory that can do justice to the lessons learned during the negative-critical sections that have made up the bulk of the previous chapters. Correspondingly, it is important to review those lessons in preparation for the explication of my positive theory:

1. Internalistic justification is non-factive in that its possession does not entail the truth of subsequently justified beliefs and in that contents of justification are not guaranteed to be true or veridical.
2. Internalistic justification is necessarily phenomenal and necessarily normative. The phenomenology of internalistic justification is such that when a subject possesses justification, she can tell that she possesses it, she can tell what it justifies, and she can tell how it does the justifying. The normativity of internalistic justification is such that, *ceteris paribus*, it is epistemically better to possess justification than to lack it. This means that justified true beliefs are epistemically better than unjustified true beliefs,

justified false beliefs are epistemically better than unjustified false beliefs, and that the possession of justification independent of a corresponding justified belief is better than the lack of justification independent of a corresponding (unjustified) belief.

3. The phenomenology of internalistic justification and the normativity of internalistic justification are constitutively bound up with one another such that not only do the phenomenal contents of justificational states determine the normative force of those states and vice versa, but also, the normative force of justificational states is phenomenally accessible.
4. The phenomenal *force* of internalistic justification just is its normative force. What authors have called the *assertiveness* or *forcefulness* of internalistic justificatory states is nothing more and nothing less than the normative force or normative content of those justificatory states. There is a type-identity between the phenomenal force of a justificatory state and its normative force.
5. The Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity regarding internalistic justification is false in that not only is the epistemic value of internalistic justification entirely unrelated to the epistemic value of truth, but further, the epistemic value of internalistic justification is intrinsic to internalistic justification itself.
6. Internalistic justificational states are nonconceptual in such a way that a subject's possessing or being in an internalistic justificational state requires the exercise of none of her conceptual powers. Accordingly, there are no concepts that mediate the relation between the subject and the objects of justification, phenomenally, semantically, intentionally, semantically, or normatively.
7. The nonconceptual nature of internalistic justificational states is a sort of openness to the world that has been described as *givenness*. Contrary to the claims of Sellars and his followers, givenness is both conceptually possible and can serve a nonconceptual justificatory role insofar as it is conceived along the lines of *presentational phenomenology*, a transparent mode of access of the world.
8. Givenness *qua* phenomenal presence requires the intentional directedness of states of givenness in order for those states to secure the sort of robust mind-world that is required for internalistic justification. That intentional directedness must itself be nonconceptual.
9. The intentional directedness relevant to internalistic justificational states when those states are conceived along the lines of givenness as phenomenal presence is bound up with the phenomenology of internalistic justificational states such that the properly justificational *intentional* contents of internalistic justificational states are token-identical to the properly justificational *phenomenal* contents of those internalistic justificational states.

While I have shown the *necessity* of intentionality for internalistic justification, I have yet fully to explicate that necessity. So far, what I've said about intentionality's role in internalistic justification is that intentional directedness both allows for a strong mind-world connection and allows for *attention* to play its required role in justificational states. However, the connection is much deeper than a mere necessary relation between intentionality and justification. Central to the positive picture I present in this and the final chapter is the relationship between the intentionality of internalistic justificational states and the epistemic normativity of those states. In fact, in the final chapter, it will be my claim that it is specifically intentional *justificatory acts* on the part of the subject that both explain and constitutively determine the epistemic normativity of internalistic justificatory states. This claim not only ties together all of the constitutive components of internalistic justification in such a way that each component necessarily interacts with all of the others to determine the nature of internalistic justification, it also places the source of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification within the state itself. The resultant picture is one that steers clear of the hazards of the Standard Picture while explaining precisely what this dissertation set out to explain: how justification works.

This chapter is devoted specifically to the nature and functioning of nonconceptual normativity. According to Hanna (forthcoming: 2015), our nonconceptual mental states allow for worldly situated nonconceptual content to play the constitutive role of the normative base for epistemic and moral superstructure of our justificational practices of giving and seeking reasons for our beliefs and actions. This claim is relevantly similar to the picture of givenness that I argued for in Chapter 7. This chapter expands on the claims made in Chapter 7 by explicating the specifically phenomenal nature of the normative components of givenness. That is, this chapter analyzes and explicates the nature and content of the normative force of internalistic justification

in terms of the felt phenomenal force of those states. Another way to put this is that this chapter argues that the way to tie together the nonconceptual nature of internalistic justificatory states and the normativity of internalistic justificational states is via the phenomenal contents of those states. In the next chapter, I'll expand the project of this chapter by locating the source of this nonconceptual phenomenal normativity in the normativity of the intentional directedness of justificational acts.

This chapter proceeds as follows. In Section 9.1, I lay out a number of the historical connections between my positive proposal and a number of philosophers who have made claims similar to the one I am making here. Of special interest to me is the historical relationship between a Cartesian picture of the relationship between mind and world on the one hand, and a picture of that relationship inspired by idealistic philosophers such as Kant and Hegel on the other. In this section, I will show that an uncritical reliance on an (admittedly) intuitive Cartesian philosophical picture, as well as insufficient attention paid to the historical dialectic, is precisely what has led to the almost universal acceptance of the (false) Standard Picture. I will further show that once we jettison the Cartesian mind-world relation in favor of something that can do justice to the phenomenal presence of internalistic justificatory states, then we are accepting a picture of our epistemic lives and of the relation between mind and world that is heavily indebted to the ethical philosophy of Aristotle and also to the phenomenology and fundamental ontology of Heidegger. In Section 9.2, I lay out and explicate two conceptions of normativity, what I call *external normativity* and *internal normativity*. External normativity is normativity that is imposed on us from without, by a set of facts or rules or standards that are phenomenally external to us. Internal normativity is normativity that is imposed on us from within, or self-imposed, via personal or subjective practices that can serve as normativity generators, institutors,

or constitutors. I further show that it is an uncritical reliance on external normativity as the only sort of normativity that generates the specifically normative problems associated with the Standard Picture. In Section 9.3, I lay out and explicate what I call the *existential dimension of normativity*, the component of normativity that is self-generated, self-instituted, or self-constituted, and that is required for any sort of normativity, whether internal or external, to be phenomenally present in the way required by internalistic justification. In the final and longest section, I lay out a phenomenal theory inspired by Kant and Husserl and adopted explicitly by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, according to which constitutive components of our nonconceptual interaction with the world are both normatively and phenomenally forceful in all justificatory states—we (metaphorically) nonempirically *see* normativity when we are in phenomenal states that are able to play the role of internalistic justifiers. This normativity is a component not merely of the objects of awareness of internalistic justificatory states, but also of the *phenomenal presence* of those states. Normativity, hence, comes along as a nonempirical and yet phenomenal structuring condition on any internalistic justificational state. In Kant's terminology, then, normativity is *transcendental* in that it is an a priori necessary condition for the possibility of internalistic justificational states. In Husserl's terminology, it is a structuring condition of the *Lebenswelt*, the lifeworld, the manifest world whose components are rationally ordered in such a way that they can make normative sense to us. In Heidegger's terminology, it is a constitutive component of *being-in-the-world*, our way of existing as fully embedded in and necessarily related to the manifest world not as a subject over and against objects, but as one of many ontologically equally beings.

9.1. The Historical Pedigree of the Proposal

According to the concept of the subject presented in Cartesian epistemology and metaphysics, subjects and objects are dialectically related to one another as contradictories. Otherwise put, subjects and objects are mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive components of the world as we inhabit it. Further, the concepts negatively constitutively determine one another such that to be a subject *is just* not to be an object, and to be an object *is just* not to be a subject. This picture of epistemology and metaphysics fell out of philosophical favor after Kant's devastating critique of its reliance on the doctrine of noumenal realism, the doctrine that the proper objects of human knowledge possess their essential properties intrinsically, nonrelationally, and altogether mind-independently. Kant's central critical claim was that noumenal realism undermines even the possibility of scientific, metaphysical, mathematical, and moral knowledge by building into the proper objects of knowledge properties whose nature entailed a further epistemic property: necessary unknowability. It is not as though Descartes hadn't recognized this problem—it is precisely this problem that motivates the *Meditations*, and, as is well known, the closest that Descartes could get to a solution for how to make the necessarily unknowable knowable was to posit a transcendent being whose infinite power and benevolence were the ground of a nonetheless mysterious epistemic relation between the subject and the known necessarily unknowable world. Of course, Descartes didn't articulate his project in terms of *determining how the necessarily unknowable is knowable*; had he, he would have recognized its futility.

During the 19th and 20th Centuries, the Kantian idealistic response to Descartes, one that conceives of metaphysics in terms of epistemology, i.e., one whose methodological underpinnings move from a presumed knowability of the world to a metaphysics that can support that knowability, nearly completely replaced the Cartesian picture in the continental European

philosophical world. It is a testament to the dialectical power of the Kantian project that responses to Kant, both from philosophers who considered themselves Kantians or Neo-Kantians and from philosophers who considered themselves deeply opposed to some component of the Kantian system, nonetheless nearly entirely accepted the Kantian overthrow of the Cartesian adherence to noumenal realism. Fichte, Reinhold, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, while all deeply critical of Kant in their own ways, nonetheless also all accepted some form of idealism inspired by Kant. Even Nietzsche, who considered himself an anti-Kantian *par excellence*, accepted the anti-Cartesianism instituted by Kant.¹ The phenomenal tradition inaugurated by Husserl is explicitly idealistic (and in some cases, explicitly Kantian²). Heidegger, who can lay claim to being the juncture between phenomenology and existentialism, is an idealist, as is the existentialist tradition inspired by him. Marx, for all of his talk of *standing Hegel on his head* and of grounding a philosophy based solely in material conditions, was both an idealist and the founder of the modern explicitly idealistic conception of ideology.³ The current conception of philosophy in much of Germany and France is also essentially idealistic—contemporary phenomenology, existentialism, social theory, literary theory, cultural theory, and critical theory are all deeply inspired by and indebted to Kant, and retain his anti-Cartesian picture.

How is it, then, that we've ended up, in the Anglo-American philosophical world, with a picture of justification that is explicitly Cartesian, a picture that is not even a rejection of Kant and the post-Kantian philosophical tradition, but instead, more like a mere radical ignorance of the existence of the Kantian overthrow of the Cartesian picture? Our current Cartesianism can be

¹ No doubt, there are philosophers who would dispute this, especially those philosophers who view Nietzsche as a “naturalist” in the way the term is used in contemporary Anglo-American philosophy. However, see *The Gay Science* (Nietzsche (1974)) for decisive evidence of Nietzsche's *phenomenal* rather than *noumenal* realism. An appropriate alternate subtitle for *The Gay Science* could be “Fully Embracing the Manifest World.” I will not engage in further Nietzsche exegesis in this dissertation.

² See Husserl (1970), Moran (2012) and Hanna (2014).

³ See Marx (1978) and Rehmann (2014).

traced back almost entirely to the two philosophers and one dialectical-philosophical moment: Bertrand Russell and G.E. Moore and their reaction against the Neo-Hegelian philosophical picture in which they were educated. Much has been written about Russell and Moore as the founders of Analytic philosophy and as almost criminally negligent interpreters of the idealistic tradition from Kant to Hegel and beyond, so I won't rehearse the entire story here.⁴ As the story has been told (both by those who see Russell and Moore as heroes, and also by those who see them as villains), the initial negative reaction of Russell and Moore to Neo-Hegelian philosophy was not specifically *philosophical* in character, but instead *rhetorical*. Russell and Moore noted (quite rightly) that Hegel and his followers can, at times, be nigh-incomprehensible. Their frustration with the rhetoric of Neo-Hegelianism spawned a *philosophical* critique of the tradition. At the center of this anti-idealistic critique was the assertion that idealistic thinkers had run roughshod over a necessary and very important epistemological-metaphysical distinction: that between subject and object. I say that this was an *assertion* on the part of Russell and Moore rather than a conclusion, since no argument is ever given by either philosopher for the necessity of this distinction. Further, no argument is ever given for the specific conception of the distinction assumed in the work of both: a traditionally Cartesian conception. Even further, as we've seen, it is patently false that the idealistic tradition was simply ignoring or misunderstanding the Cartesian subject-object distinction—they had not only understood it, they believed they had refuted it, or at least left it dialectically behind. The fact that idealistic philosophers, and Neo-Hegelian philosophers specifically, adhered to a philosophical picture that couldn't countenance the Cartesian subject-object distinction was not an oversight on their part—it was a dialectically structuring component of their philosophical tradition. Russell and

⁴ See Redding (2010), Introduction.

Moore, on the other hand, by ignoring the arguments of the idealists and merely asserting that the fact that idealism and Cartesianism were incompatible proved the incoherence of idealism, were simply begging the question against the idealists.

One thing that contemporary Anglo-American epistemology has going for it is its commonsensically intuitive nature. It seems just plain obvious that we are subjects and that what we know are objects and that there's a sharp epistemological divide between the two. We are representers of objects in that we get pictures in our minds of the world and when our pictures match the way the world actually is, things are going well for us epistemically. "The man on the street is a dualist," philosophers will sometimes say about the folk metaphysics of mind. But this is not the only way that the man on the street is a Cartesian—he is also a Cartesian with respect to his picture of the nature of the mind-world connection and with respect to the epistemology and metaphysics that follow from that. That Descartes's philosophical theses are commonsensically intuitive is beyond doubt. Whether they are *true* is another matter. The reinstitution of the Cartesian subject-object distinction on the part of Russell and Moore was cheered by philosophers who found idealistic philosophy (especially that of the Neo-Hegelians) opaque and unintuitive. However, this distinction has never *philosophically* overcome the problems for it raised by Kant, and thus, contemporary epistemologists, while gaining the benefits of an intuitive picture of the mind-world connection, unwittingly inherit all of the problems of that picture that were deemed unsolvable by Kant 250-odd years ago.

One thing that I hope the critical discussion in this dissertation has shown is that a conception of justification that is based on a Cartesian picture of the mind-world relation cannot possibly do justice to the necessary components of a theory of justification. The fallen Standard Picture is Cartesian precisely because it views subjects as metaphysically and epistemically

blocked off from objects in such a way that the only possible reconciliation between the two, that is, the only possibility of getting subjects and objects together, that could ground *knowledge* requires conceiving of justification as a tool for bridging the subject-object gap. How it is possible for justification to play this role, however, is what generates the problems for the Standard Picture. In order to be a relation between two essentially different (and incompatible) things, the subject and the object, justification would need to essentially possess properties of both the subject and the object. This causes an irreconcilable tension within the concept of justification. When, on the one hand, we attempt to lessen this tension by making justification substantially more objective than subjective, we lose the personal value of justification. This is precisely the Swamping Problem—if the *justificational* components of justification are conceived of purely in terms of truth-relatedness, then the value of justification is swamped by the value of truth. When, on the other hand, we attempt to lessen this tension by making justification substantially more subjective than objective, we lose the necessary normative value of justification. This is precisely what I've called the existential problem for internalistic justification—any attempt to claim that mere subjective states can in any way non-accidentally bring about truth or truth-related facts faces unresolvable practical ambiguities for the subject.

Even further, it is interesting to note that despite the widespread adherence to the Cartesian picture of the mind-world relation, Anglo-American epistemologists have over and over been forced to accept things that are at odds with this distinction. This is simply intellectual honesty on the part of these epistemologists. Epistemologists are responding to legitimate theoretical needs in order to try whatever they can to make their justificational theories function properly. It is not *dogmatism* that forces the Cartesian picture of the mind-world relation and the Standard Picture on contemporary epistemologists, but instead, adherence to tradition and to a

set of unexamined assumptions. In order to make a justificational theory plausible, doctrines such as that of the given, of phenomenal presence, and of phenomenal intentionality must be accepted. Otherwise, the claim that our phenomenal states are in some way relevant to justification is incoherent. However, ironically, these doctrines are inherently anti-Cartesian in that they require a sort of openness to the world that not only makes subjectivity transparent to the point where it is unclear what theoretical work the concept of the *subject* is doing, but also make intentional and phenomenal *objects* components of subjectivity to the point where it is unclear what theoretical work the of the *object* is doing.

None of this is to say, however, that to reject Cartesianism and the Standard Picture is to accept idealism of the Kantian, Hegelian, or Heideggerian sorts—it is not *required* that one believe that the mind-world connection is so strong that either the mind’s properties necessarily determine the world’s properties, or that the mind and the world are identical in some way, either rationally (Hegel) or phenomenally (Heidegger). What it is to say, nevertheless, is that conceptions of the relation between mind and world that see subjects as *essentially different* from the world in such a way that we need to *bridge the epistemological and metaphysical gap* before we can even begin our epistemological theorizing are doomed. If we are going to make sense of ourselves and our relation to the world in a way that retains both *justification* and *worldliness*, then we need to be willing to accept a picture of justification that, on the Cartesian view, would be considered nothing more than *mere subjectivity*. So, then, we have a Moorean choice to make: Which is more plausible, that Descartes was fundamentally correct about the relationship between mind and world (as in “The Refutation of Idealism” and “Proof of an External World”), or that we are at least sometimes justified in our beliefs and actions (as in “A Defense of Common Sense”)?

9.2. Two Conceptions of Normativity

Once we have denied the Standard Picture and embraced the fact that the epistemic normativity of justification is *sui generis*, intrinsic to justification and not explainable in terms of the epistemic normativity of any other epistemic item, a natural place to look for the source of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification is the practical action of rational human animals, or human persons. Human persons act in certain ways, and because of these actions, justification either occurs/arises or fails to occur/arise. The reason to look for the source of justification in the practical action of persons is threefold. First, justification seems to be the sort of thing we *get* or *track down*. Even if we are lucky enough to have it bite us on the nose, we still have to *grab hold of it*, epistemically speaking, in order to make use of it. This getting, tracking down, and grabbing hold of are all sorts of actions that we engage in insofar as we are engaged in our epistemic lives. Second, as Brandom has noted, building on a Sellarsian point, we are the sorts of creatures who engage with justification by using it to formulate reasons for our own beliefs and actions and to demand reasons for others' beliefs and actions. There is an essentially practical component to justification such that a picture of justification that left out whatever we're up to when we *justify*, when we are engaged in the process of *justification*, would seem essentially impoverished. Third, the essence of our problem with the Standard Picture was phenomenal—there was no way to wed normativity and phenomenology in such a way as to meet the necessary conditions of the Standard Picture. Practical action, however, is phenomenally accessible to us in such a way that if we perform our minimal epistemic due

diligence, we can tell the content of our practical action.⁵ The most widely accepted metaethical theory that attempts to ground normative facts/truths in practical action is *constructivism*.

Constructivism as both a normative-ethical theory and a metaethical theory⁶ involves the relativization of either the specifically normative contents of normative facts, truths, or reasons (on the normative-ethical view) or of the specifically ontological, metaphysical, and epistemological facts or truths regarding ethical facts to actual or hypothetical idealized reasoning processes of individuals or groups.⁷ Consider perhaps the most famous version of constructivism, Rawls's account of political justice.⁸ According to Rawls, the Original Position is not merely a *thought experiment* that shows us how to structure the ideally just society, but also the supervenience base for the property of justice itself. It is because of (supervenience-wise) the facts of the hypothetical idealized reasoning process in which people engage in the Original Position, behind the Veil of Ignorance, that the *concept* and *property* of justice has the nature it has, and that particular acts are included in the extensional set of the concept of *justice*. So, in an important sense, constructivism grounds ethical facts in practical action.⁹

Unfortunately, we would be making a mistake were we to ground normativity in practical action in the way constructivism requires. The reason for this is, yet again, phenomenal. Recall that the normativity of internalistic justification is type-identical to the felt phenomenal

⁵ I should note here that for theories that ground the nature of normativity in practical action, it is not actual bodily movements that are important, but instead, *willing* to perform such action. So were we disembodied brains in vats, deceived into thinking we had bodies that we could move around in space, we could still perform all of the actions to institute normativity.

⁶ "Ethics" here should be read in the wide sense of Hegel as meaning something like "the domain of normative truths."

⁷ See Bagnoli (2001).

⁸ See Rawls (1999).

⁹ I have used Rawls rather than the obvious choice of Kant in this explication because I don't think a proper interpretation of Kant makes him out to be a constructivist, despite popular interpretation within the field of moral and political philosophy. Interestingly, very few philosophers interpret Kant as a constructivist regarding epistemologists or metaphysicians. What those who interpret him in this way have forgotten, I wager, is that Kant is a *transcendental idealist*. This discussion is too far afield of the current project, however, and so I will leave it aside.

force of the justificational phenomenology of states of givenness. That is, there is a *direct, unmediated* phenomenal connection between the subject and normativity. However, the best the constructivist picture can give us (and this is only if the constructivist accepts both the nonconceptual nature of internalistic justification and the interpretation of givenness in terms of phenomenal presences) is a direct, unmediated phenomenal connection between subject and facts about practical action. According to constructivism, practical action is the supervenience base for normativity, and is not *itself* normativity. It won't help to say that we can infer the presence of normativity from our direct, unmediated access to practical action. The problem with that proposal is that it introduces conceptual mediation into the justificational mix, so we lose both phenomenal presence and givenness, and we might even be off on a vicious regress of justifying instances of concept use. Thus, we lose the very thing that we needed in order to connect phenomenology and normativity—direct phenomenal access to felt normative force.

The problem here is not specifically with constructivism, but instead with any metaethical theory that would claim that normativity or normative properties are in a phenomenal, metaphysical, or existential sense *external* to the subject such that when she is aware of normativity, what she is aware of is something *outside* of herself that must first be uptaken and made sense of before it can be acted upon. In this section, I lay out two conceptions of normativity, what I call *internal normativity* and *external normativity*. As a propaedeutic to the discussion I engage in in this section, I will first lay out a widely-accepted three-part metaethical distinction regarding the nature of normativity.¹⁰

Antirealists regarding normativity hold that there are no normative facts or no truthmakers for normative propositions. As such, normative propositions are either

¹⁰ See Robertson (2009) 12-14.

systematically false or truth-valueless, depending on additional semantic considerations. A simple way to put the antirealist position is that there is no such thing as normativity. Since moral justification is normative, no position that defends or explicates the existence of moral justification (such as this dissertation) can countenance antirealist views.

Realists regarding normativity hold that there are normative facts or that there are truthmakers for normative propositions and further that these facts or truthmakers exist because of or in necessary relation to the existence of specific normative or at least normatively related properties or objects in the world. Thus, there is an ontological robustness to the realist view such that the existence of a normative fact or truthmaker entails the existence of some object or property in the world. Naturalist realists hold that this object or property is purely natural, in whatever sense they give to the term *natural*. Nonnaturalist realists hold that this object or property is *sui generis* in its normativity, neither conceptually nor ontologically reducible to or explainable in terms of some nonnormative object or property.

Irrealists regarding normativity hold that there are normative facts or that there are truthmakers for normative propositions but deny that these facts or truthmakers exist because of or in necessary relation to the existence of specific normative or at least normatively related properties or objects in the world. What it is that serves as the truthmaker for a normative proposition or determiner/supervenience base of the existence of a normative fact is generally taken to be a structural property of some object deemed morally relevant. For example, according to one interpretation of Kantian ethics, the Categorical Imperative requires for the existence of moral facts or of moral truthmakers only that subjects' reasons or practices of practical reasoning be structured in a certain way. Accordingly, irrealists claim the existence of normativity without the entailment of any further object or property.

Neither realist nor irrealists have to claim that the relevant normative properties, facts, or truthmakers are ontological components of or ontologically independent of the subject(s) on which those norms are binding. That is, the realism/irrealism divide is silent on the metaphysical location and mereological properties of the relevant normative properties, facts, or truthmakers.

Consider divine command theory ethics. Something about God's commands, actions, or divine character makes or constitutes morality. According to this ethics, what is moral or immoral, the standards for morality, the ground of morality, the essence of morality, is fundamentally and essentially *external*, phenomenally, metaphysically, or existentially, to the individual lives of the non-divine creatures bound by this ethics. Even if we consider a Christian conception of God where God is omnipresent and the Holy Spirit *lives within* each human person, since God is not identical to or a constitutive component of a human person (except for Jesus, but that's another matter entirely), the source or ground of morality is still *external* phenomenally, metaphysically, or existentially to individual human persons. Further, consider consequentialist ethics. According to consequentialism, some component of states of affairs is good or bad, and this goodness or badness, when combined with certain moral bridge principles (between goodness and rightness/betterness and badness and wrongness/worseness), which, presumably, are moral facts, make or constitute morality in a sense that is binding on us. According to consequentialism, what is moral or immoral, the standards for morality, the ground of morality, the essence of morality, is fundamentally and essentially *external*, phenomenally, metaphysically, or existentially from the individual lives of the creatures bound by this ethic. Divine command theory and consequentialism, then, are exemplars of what I will call *external normativity*:

The normative status of states of affairs, actions, and persons is essentially *dependent* on facts and factors *external* to phenomenal, metaphysical, and existential lives of

individuals. In particular, it is essentially *independent* of their free choices, and is essentially *dependent* on factors external to the subject and her capacity for free choice. In other words: Normativity is *there for the taking*.

This is the standard contemporary conception of normativity. Regardless of the correct contemporary theory of the relation between reasons and normativity, e.g., whether normativity is definable in terms of reasons or the other way around, whether the buck-passing account is plausible, etc., the standard conception is that while normative facts *involve* human persons in that they are *normatively binding on* persons, nevertheless normative facts are things that exist essentially independent of and whose characters are essentially independent of *particular* lives of individual free human persons.

The broad realism/irrealism debate that I laid out at the beginning of this section is orthogonal to the internal/external normativity distinction that I am here drawing. However, realist *naturalists* are paradigm proponents of external normativity. Purportedly, the natural facts are the way they are totally and entirely independent not only of the free actions of *particular* persons, but the free actions of *all* persons. This is external normativity.

We can now contrast this with a somewhat unfamiliar concept, internal normativity:

The normative status of states of affairs, actions, and persons is essentially *dependent* on facts and factors *internal* to phenomenal, metaphysical, or existential lives of individuals. In particular, it is essentially *dependent* on their free choices, and *not* on factors external to the subject and her capacity for free choice. In other words: Normativity is *here for the making*.

To borrow helpful terminology from Thomas R. Flynn,¹¹ according to the picture of internal normativity, there exist *normativity constituting conditions* that, when met, institute (via constituting—more on this momentarily) normativity that binds the person meeting those conditions. To say these are normativity *constituting* conditions means that there is something

¹¹ Flynn (2006)

essential about the conditions that is transferred over into the essence of the thereby instituted normativity. Consider: Free performance of action X in way Y is a normativity constituting condition. The consequently instituted normativity will have features of X and Y as essential features.

According to external normativity, normative facts are essentially objective, third-personal. While all of our cognition is ours, and hence, is essentially first-personal, if we can cognitively access external normativity, then what we access, first-personally, is something that is essentially third-personal. Think of a table, with its objective, third-personal properties of mass and shape. When we first-personally cognize the table, what we are aware of is some object that is essentially third-personal, available for all to cognize—so goes the standard story about the metaphysical status of tables. Another way to put this is that when we are correctly intentionally directed at the table, we are so directed at something phenomenally, metaphysically, or existentially outside of any person. And yet another way to put this is that the correctness criteria for our cognition are objective.

According to internal normativity, normative facts are essentially subjective, first-personal. Perform some action right now and see how it feels. The phenomenology of the action combined with the action itself have an essentially subjective, first-personal aspect to them. When we are correctly intentionally aimed at a subjective fact, we are intentionally directed at something inside of ourselves. Another way to put this is that the correctness criteria for our cognition are subjective, internal to our first-personal lives phenomenally, metaphysically, or existentially. Internal normativity is idealistic, although not necessarily solipsistic.

So far I've been laying out a distinction between what I call internal normativity and external normativity. How is this distinction relevant to the current project? To quote a famous passage from Kant on methodology, only slightly altered:

Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about the *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of [normativity] by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us.¹²

What I am here calling *internal normativity* relies for its (normative) structure on the (active) structure of our cognitions and our cognitive apparatus. By sharp contrast, the Standard Picture is essentially a picture of *external normativity*. Not only is internalistic justification merely instrumentally epistemically valuable in terms of the ultimate epistemic good of truth, says the Standard Picture, the normativity that thereby binds us when we are justified is dependent on a source phenomenally, metaphysically, and existentially external to us. It was precisely this externality that caused a problem in Chapter 6. In order to attempt to block the Swamping Problem, we attempted to focus our theoretical attention on the *subjective* side of justification. However, when we did this, it became unclear how it was ever possible to act appropriately in accordance with this justification. By focusing on the subjective side of justification, justification became divorced from the one thing we were seeking: its normativity. We have tried epistemically to get at the normative force of epistemic justification when that force is construed along the lines of external normativity. Correspondingly, here is a “Copernican-revolutionary” philosophical hypothesis: What would happen if we construed that normative force along the lines of internal normativity?

¹² Kant (1999) Bxvi

To be sure, this would alter how we think about justification and about normativity more generally. The traditional thought is that there are objective norms or rules or prescriptions and that it is our job to interpret them correctly and then do what they tell us to do. If we don't, then we're acting irrationally or immorally, if we do, then we're acting rationally or morally. The Standard Picture adheres to this traditional thought, that the epistemic normativity relevant to internalistic justification must be external normativity—that to act in a justified fashion, we must somehow receive the epistemic normativity of truth via justificational states. However, as we know, the Standard Picture is false, and it is false precisely because it locates the source of the normativity of internalistic justification phenomenally, metaphysically, and existentially *outside* of the subject, in an inaccessible realm.

9.3. The Existential Dimension of Normativity

The obvious worry for a picture of internal normativity is that it threatens to make any arbitrary state justificatory. If there is no place for a subject to touch ground, outside of herself, then justification is, to borrow a Wittgensteinian metaphor, a gear that turns while nothing else turns with it. The very point of Chapters 7 and 8 was to show the possibility of a mind-world connection that would be robust enough to block this sort of solipsistic arbitrariness. While I admit that this is a real worry, I think it is one with a relatively easy response. This response can be found in the history of philosophy, in the writings of the existentialists and the phenomenologists. In this section, I will lay out the existentialist response to this worry in terms of the central existentialist concept of *authenticity*. In the next section, I will supplement the authenticity picture with Husserl's picture of *intentional possibilities*. It is my claim here that authenticity and intentional possibilities, even though they are not tethered to a subject-independent world, can nonetheless obviate the worry of normative arbitrariness.

The existentialist picture begins in the free actions of rational human animals or human persons. The thought is that when a subject freely acts such that she becomes aware of the felt normative force of an epistemically justificational state, a subject is neither acting arbitrarily nor is she acting in a way that is bound by external normativity. Instead, when a subject freely acts becoming aware of felt normative force, she is acting in such a way that her action itself both justifies her awareness of felt normative force and further normatively binds her to that very justificational state of awareness. No further justificational state of awareness is necessary, because her state of awareness of felt normative force contains normativity-constituting conditions such that it is both a justified state of awareness and a state that can play a further justificatory role. We can put things schematically like this:

A subject, S, of a state of direct awareness, X, becomes aware of the felt normative force of a phenomenally present given, G, via a nonconceptual and transparent state of awareness, A. A is at once a creation or constitution of the normative essence of G, which essence is both contingently, but not arbitrarily, connected,¹³ via A, with X, as well as a justification for both the connecting of G with X as well as for the being in A to begin with.

Awareness, as an act or state of *being aware*, is a species of justification, but one with an interesting feature: that of copresent constitution. The thought of free action that also normatively binds the actor at first seems somewhat strange, but I want to insist that we are intimately familiar with this type of normatively binding action. Consider a free action in which you commit to the belief that the furry thing in front of you is Pepper the cat. Via this free act, you thereby normatively bind yourself to the further belief that the furry thing in front of you is a mammal and the even further belief that it is not a giraffe. You might not be initially aware of these normative commitments, but you can become aware of them, precisely because it is you who have bound yourself. Not only are you apt for censure if you subsequently declare your

¹³ Arbitrariness is reasonlessness, regardless of modal status (contingency, necessity). Contingency is non-necessity, regardless of rational/reasonable status.

belief that the furry thing in front of you is also a giraffe (unless, of course, you abandon the belief that the furry thing in front of you is Pepper the cat), but you would have done something positively wrong if you subsequently believed that the furry thing in front of you is also a giraffe. *You* are the one who has done the binding via your act of commitment to the belief that the furry thing in front of you is Pepper the cat. Accordingly, what binds you is, in part, internal normativity. To put this in terms of helpful terminology introduced by Flynn (2006), as I noted in section 9.2, free acts that normatively bind the subject possess *normativity-constituting conditions*. It is in virtue of the possession of these conditions that these acts can normatively bind. Awareness is one of these sorts of acts—acts of interpretation or acts that express interpretations are such that they bind the subject to the contents of the awareness.

It is important to address a question lurking in the background. If all justificatory states of awareness are both self-justifying and normatively contentful such that they epistemically normatively bind the possessor of those states, then are all acts of awareness epistemically equal? Another way of asking this question is: Are states of awareness *infallible*? This question, while initially plausible, rests on a misunderstanding both of the rejection of the Standard Picture and of internal normativity. *Infallibility* is a concept that deals with *veridicality*. Something is infallible insofar as it can't be wrong *in terms of the truth*. But justification's normativity has nothing at all to do with the truth. This is what Chapters 5 and 6 showed us—this is a consequence of the falsity of the Standard Picture. Further, in terms of internal normativity, the question of the infallibility of justificational states is nonsensical. Internal normativity can only be adequate to itself and its object, and not to some further external thing. To ask about its infallibility is to ask about its adequacy to something to which it cannot possibly be adequate because that is not the sort of relation it can possibly stand in. To ask questions about the

infallibility of states of awareness, then, in terms of justification, is to commit a category mistake.

This question can be modified, however, so that it makes sense. Is it the case that all apparently justificatory states of awareness are *actually* justificatory? That is, when the subject is apparently aware of or believes that she possesses internalistic justification,¹⁴ is she always correct? The answer here is *no*—subjects *can* be mistaken about their possession of internalistic justification. However, this mistake is not due to *phenomenal* problems, as it would be in the case of a subject being mistaken about her possession of externalistic justification. Subjects are always in a *phenomenal* position to be aware of their possession of justification via a phenomenally present state of givenness. However, there are occasional *existential* and *epistemic* problems (whose detection is possible in every case via the phenomenal perspective, i.e., the existence of these problems is always phenomenally accessible to the subject) that could lead a subject to think that she is justified when she is actually not. These problems involve the radical misuse of a subject's self-consciously accessible epistemic abilities. I call these problems *existential* as well because they involve acting in a way such that a subject treats her epistemological and phenomenal self very badly.

When a person is aware of a set of epistemological, phenomenal, and normative facts about herself and yet, she self-consciously turns away from those facts and acts as if they weren't facts at all, she is not respecting herself. Consider a person who has had a mystical experience and who, after considering whether it is best interpretable in religious or non-religious terms and recognizing that there is no good reason or no justification to interpret in one way rather than

¹⁴ Note that this would be a second-order awareness, i.e., an awareness of an awareness, or a belief about an awareness. This chapter is not primarily about our second-order awareness, nor is it about our beliefs about awareness. Neither of these things is necessary for justification, according to the picture I'm outlining here. I spend time talking about this only to respond to what I think is an important, although ultimately misguided, objection.

another, decides on an interpretation in religious terms. Further, this decision is made *not* because of any justification or reason, but because of phenomenally accessible emotional causes. Even further, suppose that this person recognizes that she is acting in response to emotional causes, and nonetheless represents herself as having decided based on evidence or justification. Certainly, this person might be shirking her epistemic or even moral duties. But even deeper than that, she is sinning against the very thing she is essentially—a reasons-responsive, justification-sensitive rational human person. Existentialist philosophers called this sort of action *inauthenticity*: Acting in such a way that you use your self-consciously accessible rational faculties in order to act as though you are not aware of your possession of those faculties, or as though you are not aware of the deliverances of those faculties. Inauthenticity is the opposite of authenticity, which we can define as follows:

A wholehearted attempt to commit to one's actions and decisions by taking responsibility for those actions and decisions. This requires not acting in bad faith by attempting to misrepresent to oneself one's fundamental properties and abilities.¹⁵

According to the existentialist philosophers, since we have, ultimately, nothing to guide us when acting other than according to our own standards, then what we must do is commit to the standards we set for ourselves. In this way, while *we* are ultimately in charge of our actions in response to justificational states and the consequences of those actions, we also hold ourselves responsible for being in charge of the normative contents of our justificational states themselves. There is then a sort of bottom-up normative responsibility that is instituted by us and that therefore binds us.

Another way to put this authenticity-driven thought is this: We get ourselves into different positions in the world and sometimes those positions allow for the uptake of states of

¹⁵ See Heidegger (2008) and Sartre (2000).

givenness whose phenomenal presence includes the felt phenomenal force of normativity. It is up to us, at that point, to be honest with ourselves about what we've done. *We* have gotten ourselves into a position in which *we* have uptaken things that strike *us* with the phenomenal force of normativity. To be in such a self-instituted position and yet to turn away from it, to act as though we are not in that position, is not just to lie to ourselves about ourselves, it's to ensnare ourselves in a phenomenal tangle. So while it is *possible* to act against our justification, to do so involves a sort of phenomenal contradiction in which we feel the presence of justification, and yet we attempt to pretend that we don't. We can avoid such a phenomenal contradiction by remaining open and sensitive to phenomenally present normativity and acting properly in response to its presence. So while we can go justificationaly astray by acting as if we were attempting to destroy our own phenomenal abilities from the inside, since such inauthenticity is phenomenally accessible to us (in fact, it's painful), we can know when we've got justification and when we don't, infallibly. And this infallibility shouldn't bother us at all. In fact, it's exactly what was promised to us by internalistic justification to begin with—the ability to tell when and how we are justified when and only when we are.

9.4. Normativity as Transcendental

In the previous section, I spoke often of our *uptaking* or *recognizing* the presence of the normativity of justification. At first glance, this sounds like a picture of external normativity—something outside of us impinges upon us and makes it evident that we ought to respond to it. However, as we've already seen, pictures of external normativity don't seem to be able to make sense of the *sui generis* and intrinsic nature of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification. In this section, I will lay out a picture of the *phenomenal source* of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification in which the *phenomenal source* and the *phenomenal*

force of that normativity are identical with one another. The picture relies on Husserlian phenomenology and its historical antecedents in Kant. The thought is that the possibility of the experience of normativity is embedded in phenomenology as a *mode of accessing* the intentional targets of states of internalistic justification. As such, when we become justified, the felt normative force of that justification doesn't come from the intentional objects themselves, but instead, from our way of accessing those objects, from the states of internalistic justification themselves. Thus, normativity is still internal, still *sui generis*, still intrinsic to states of internalistic justification.

One of Nietzsche's principal criticisms of the Christian religion is that it requires humans (i) to believe something false about themselves, i.e., that they can *completely give themselves over* to an ultimate decision-maker who can do the hard work of choosing for them and (ii) to actually *completely give themselves over* to this ultimate decision-maker. According to Christine Korsgaard:

So action is necessary. What kind of necessity is this? Philosophers like to distinguish between *logical* and *causal* necessity. But the necessity of action isn't either of those. There's no logical contradiction in the idea of a person not acting, at least on any particular occasion. You could not fail to act, in all the ways I've just described, if there were. And although particular actions, or anyway particular movements, may have causes, the general necessity of action is not an event that is caused. I'm not talking about something that works *on* you, whether you know it or not, like a cause: I am talking about a necessity you are *faced* with.

Now sometimes we also talk about *rational* necessity, the necessity of following the principles of reason. If you believe the premises, then you *must* draw the conclusion. If you will the end, then you *must* will the means. That's rational necessity, and it's a necessity you are faced with, so that comes closer. But the necessity of action isn't quite like that either, for in those cases we have an if-clause, and the necessity of action is, by contrast, as Kant would say, unconditional. The necessity of choosing and acting is not causal, logical, or rational necessity. It is our *plight*: the simple inexorable fact of the human condition.¹⁶

¹⁶ Korsgaard (2011) 1-2

To drive this point home, the conservative position advocated by Edmund Burke is analogous to the Christian position rebuffed by Nietzsche. According to Burke, tradition is necessary for the structuring and progress of society, not merely in practical terms, but in existential terms. According to Burke, we need to begin from within *specific* traditional frameworks if we are to see one another as subjects of dignity. These are “the decent drapery of life...furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked and shivering nature, and...raise it to a dignity in our own estimation.”¹⁷ We can contrast this with Gadamer and Kuhn, who, for example, argue that we can’t even begin to reason except from within an established normative-conceptual framework. This is a purely practical concern, while Burke’s is an existential concern.

According to Husserl in his *Paris Lectures* (which were eventually expanded into his *Cartesian Meditations*):

Every intentional analysis reaches beyond the immediately and actually given events of the immanent sphere, and in such a way that the analysis discloses potentialities—which are not given actually and whose horizons have been sketched—and brings out manifold aspects of new experiences in which are made manifest what earlier was meant only implicitly and in this way was already present intentionally. When I see a hexahedron I say, in reality and in truth I see it only from one side. It is nonetheless evident that what I now experience is in reality more. The perception includes a nonsensory belief through which the visible side can be understood to be a mere side in the first place.¹⁸

Let us consider the following. As you are reading these words, you’re surely either reading them on a screen of some sort or on a printed page. Examine your phenomenology, your immediate experience, closely. While the immediate object that you experience is only *one side* of a screen or page, you can justifiably form the belief that you are looking at *one side* of an object with

¹⁷ Burke (2009), quoted in Fleischacker (2013) 47-8

¹⁸ Husserl (2001), 55

more than just that one side. That is, you can justifiably think that what you see is part of something else, something else that has sides that you *can't* see, but that you *could* see were you to reposition yourself with respect to the object in front of you. There is some synthetic cognitive process you engage in, then, where you move from the contents of your perception to a justified belief about how these contents fit into a three-dimensional world whose features don't immediately appear to you in the manifold of perception, i.e., in the collection of sensory stuff immediately apprehended by you.

The key point here is not just *that* you do this incredible thing, but that you are *justified* in doing this incredible thing. Pre-reflectively, you move from sense perception to belief, justifiably, and the content of your belief contains notions of possibility and subjunctive conditionality—what you *could* do and what *would* be the case *were* you to do that. Where does this justification come from? Let's assume some process of induction whereby what you're doing when you're justifiably moving from sense-contents to beliefs about possible sense-contents is that you're inferring from past experience and concluding that since past experience contained specific possibilities, this experience does or must as well. But notice that, even assuming this strong principle of induction, something is left out. How is it that you're justified in believing that this case is relevantly like those past cases, so much so that *this particular* inductive generalization (which is justification-preserving, etc.) rather than *that particular* inductive generalization (which may or may not be justification-preserving, etc.) or *no particular* inductive generalization applies in *this particular* case? That is, how do you know your way around, justifiably, from sense-contents to beliefs about possibilities regarding those sense-contents? Nelson Goodman's classical "New Riddle of Induction,"¹⁹ whereby conscious

¹⁹ Goodman (1955)

inductive evidence systemically underdetermines inductive inferential projections, nicely illustrates one facet of this question. If at this point, it seems as though we should just throw up our hands and exclaim “I just see it!, I just see that this case is like the others and I therefore just know, based on my phenomenology, that I am looking at an object that has a back side to it!” then this is exactly Husserl’s point.²⁰

There is a feature of perception, experienced, but non-sensory, of which we are aware such that we can use this feature to infer justifiably from actual experience to possible experience. Husserl’s discussion here is essentially Kantian, and mirrors Kant’s conclusions in the Transcendental Aesthetic.

[The representations of t]ime and space are accordingly two sources of cognition, from which different synthetic cognitions can be drawn *a priori*, of which especially pure mathematics in regard to the cognitions of space and its relations provides a splendid example. Both taken together are, namely, the pure forms of all sensible intuition, and thereby make possible synthetic *a priori* propositions. But these *a priori* sources of cognition determine their own boundaries by that very fact (that they are merely conditions of sensibility), namely that they apply to objects only so far as they are considered as appearances...²¹

The structures of the formal representations of space and time, available to us *a priori* in a way that can serve the requisite justificatory role of anticipating possible perception, are the conditions for the possibility of sensible experience at all, and these formal-representational structures are strictly determined by our innately specified cognitive capacities. All experience, then, according to both Husserl and Kant, comes pre-packaged with a set of possibilities that we can also become aware of. I become aware of these possibilities *through* experience, but since

²⁰ Compare this with Siegel (2006) in which Siegel claims that there are nonsensory properties that we are nonetheless aware of via perception, such as natural kind properties. While I ultimately disagree with Siegel’s conclusions (since I think that some of the properties she identifies would have the wrong modal status if they were truly perceptual *contents* rather than structures of perception—this is a Husserlian/Kantian point), I think that she is absolutely right that there is more to perception than meets the eye.

²¹ Kant (1999), A38-9/B56

they are necessary features of *all* experience, they can serve the relevant justificatory role of telling us how things will be in future experience.

Husserl continues:

But how does this belief, that there is more, disclose itself? How does it become obvious that I mean more? It occurs through the transition to a synthetic sequence of possible perceptions, perceptions I would have—as indeed I can—were I to walk around the object. Phenomenology always explains meanings, that is, intentionality, by producing these sense-fulfilling syntheses.²²

While it might be the case that I originally learned about the back of the paper, or the back of the computer screen, via an individual, contingent, a posteriori act of sensory awareness—i.e., I looked one time—, my looking that one time would not be enough to justify my beliefs, now, before I've looked *this* time, that there is a back of the paper or back of the screen. Further, it wouldn't justify my conceptualization of what's in front of me, and my further belief that what's in front of me is a *mere component* of a larger whole, and not, as Husserl says, a *sense atom*.

Here is Kant making essentially the same point, but embedded in a much larger and more complex system:

Now the unity of the manifold in a subject is synthetic; pure apperception therefore yields a principle of the synthetic unity of the manifold in all possible intuition.

This synthetic unity, however, presupposes a synthesis, or includes it, and if the former is to be necessary *a priori* then the latter must also be a synthesis *a priori*. Thus the transcendental unity of apperception is related to the pure synthesis of the imagination, as an *a priori* condition of the possibility of all composition of the manifold in a cognition. But only the **productive synthesis of the imagination** can take place *a priori*; for the **reproductive** synthesis rests on conditions of experience. The principle of the necessary unity of the pure (productive) synthesis of the imagination prior to apperception is thus the ground of the possibility of all cognition, especially that of experience.

Now we call the synthesis of the manifold in imagination transcendental if, without distinction of the intuitions, it concerns nothing but the connection of the manifold *a priori*, and the unity of this synthesis is called transcendental if it is represented as necessary *a priori* in relation to the original unity of apperception.²³

²² Husserl (2001), 55

²³ Kant (1999) A118

What does all of this mean? First, some terminology that I will significantly simplify without leaving out essential elements. The “manifold” is simply our phenomenal field of awareness. “Apperception” is self-awareness. “Imagination” is just what it means in popular locution—the mental faculty or capacity responsible for production and reproduction of phenomenology that didn’t (at that time, although it may have come at an earlier time) come to us through the senses. For Kant, memory is also part of imagination (as reproductive imagination). “Synthetic unity” is an apparent or phenomenal togetherness or oneness that is not due merely to concepts or conceptual connections.

Thus, Kant is saying this: Our field of phenomenal awareness is unified both spatially and temporally under self-awareness—this phenomenal awareness is *one* awareness of objects and events as they are stretched across space and time, and it is one awareness (rather than many, disjointed awarenesses) precisely because it is *my* awareness, the awareness of a self-conscious subject. But I myself appear nowhere in the awareness (i.e., the *self* is not an empirical phenomenal object, and Kant fully buys Hume’s arguments for this thesis), so the unifying process and the unified quality of awareness must be instituted or generated by some mental faculty or process. Hence the productive part of my phenomenal apparatus must always be at work whenever I am phenomenally aware, in order that all of my awarenesses are united under a single self-awareness, that is, united *as mine*. A necessary phenomenal component of this productive part of my phenomenal apparatus is its infusing my field of awareness with a direct cognitive access to the possibilities of further experience. If I decide to imagine how things could be different from how they are, I rely on the structure of my field of experience in order to perform that imaginative act. But, again, all of this awareness of possibilities for further experience is always at the same time *my* awareness of the possibilities for *my* further

experience, synthetically united under self-awareness. Self-conscious experience always brings along with it, then, a self-conscious awareness of the possibilities for further experience. The awareness of these possibilities is already always there *in* any experience.

Here is another way to put this: Experience necessarily brings along with it the awareness of the self *not* as a phenomenal object but as a set of possibilities for further experience. So already infused into any sensible act is the self as a uniting force and set of further possibilities. To see whether Kant or Husserl is right, all we have to do is check our phenomenologies. I admit that I have exactly the phenomenology described by both Husserl and Kant, infused with intentional possibilities. Accordingly, and most relevantly for the project at hand, there are nonempirical but nonetheless phenomenal components of awareness that are not components of the specific worldly intentional objects, but instead, are components of the mode of access to those objects. This mode of access, operative in all phenomenally present states of givenness, while phenomenally transparent in that it doesn't have phenomenal properties itself, *brings along with it* phenomenal properties that become present to us along with the intentional objects of states of internalistic justification.

This picture can make sense of the source and nature of states that are both normative and phenomenal and whose specific phenomenal and normative content is modally and constitutively bound up with one another in such a way that the felt phenomenal/normative force does not come from or derive from the objects of the states themselves. It is the *structural nature* of internalistic justificational states that they provide, along with the objects of those states, an awareness of the normativity of the full justificational content of those states. Not only is this view *theoretically* powerful, in that it can make sense of everything we've asked of it, but it is also *phenomenally* powerful in that it can capture the phenomenology of justificational states.

Consider your state of visual awareness of the cat on the mat. None of the objects of the state are normative such that they have a felt phenomenal force or assertiveness attached to them. It is not as though *cat* or *mat* is normatively or phenomenally relevant or forceful in some specific way. In fact, according to the *assertiveness* metaphor, things like *cat* and *mat*, captured by subsentential items—words—are not the sorts of things that could be assertive in this way. Further, while you see *proper constituents* of the fact of the cat being on the mat, you don't actually *see* the fact itself, so there's no plausibility in saying that it is the *fact* that is forceful. What is it, then, that's forceful? It is the state of visual awareness itself. And this is exactly what the present account is saying. States are nonempirically phenomenally and normatively forceful in such a way that the justification they provide is *evident* to the possessor of those states. Thus, in Kant's terminology, the phenomenology of normative force is transcendental—it is a necessary a priori structural precondition of the experience of the objects of states of internalistic justification.

9.5. Conclusion

This chapter is the first of two that presents and argues for the plausibility and power of a positive view of internalistic justification in which the normativity of justification is phenomenally present in the state itself, and yet, is also not dependent on some object outside of the state or some consequence of the state for its normative force. I presented two conceptions of normativity, what I called *internal* and *external normativity*, and argued that only internal normativity can provide us with the phenomenal and normative features necessary to make sense of internalistic justificatory states as intrinsically valuable. I then showed that the internal nature of epistemic normativity did not entail an anything-goes picture of epistemic normativity in which there are no standards at all on which states are justificatory and which are not. The

standards are *internal* to the phenomenal lives of rational human animals or human persons such that only when subjects are acting self-reflectively honestly about their phenomenal and epistemological situations are they able to become internalistically justified. I showed that this sort of honesty is essentially the existentialist notion of *authenticity*. Finally, I showed that the phenomenal normativity present in states of internalistic justification is *transcendental* in the Kantian sense in that it is a necessary a priori structural precondition of the experience of the objects of states of internalistic justification. What all this means is that internalistic justificatory states bring along with them the phenomenal normativity that, while nonempirical and experienced as not part of the objects of the justificatory state, is still phenomenally available to the subject. In the next chapter, I will tie in the concept of phenomenal intentionality by showing that justificatory states themselves are bound up with intentional action in such a way that it is via acts of intentional commitment that justificational states come about. Further, the normativity of intentional states *just is* the normativity of justificatory states.

Chapter 10. Justifying Oneself to Oneself for Oneself

In Chapter 9, I laid out a picture of the relation between the phenomenology and normativity of internalistic justification that can support the claim that the normativity of justification is phenomenally present to subjects in any justificational state. In this, the final chapter of this dissertation, I add the final theoretical component to the picture: intentionality. The goal of this chapter is to show how spontaneous intentional acts can at once *call forth* the normativity of internalistic justificational states, while also themselves being *grounded in* the normatively robust situatedness of the subject in the world. This chapter thus continues and extends the anti-Cartesian phenomenal and existential picture of the normativity of internalistic justification begun in the previous chapter.

This chapter proceeds as follows: In Section 10.1, I show that the proper bearers of internalistic justification are *epistemic subjects themselves* and not the beliefs or actions that are the intentional targets of those subjects. I further show that while the justification of subjects is a necessarily *active* process, it is not active in the way traditionally conceived, by the subject's *providing reasons* for her beliefs and actions. The work of this section is especially important for the rest of the chapter, because, in the remainder of the chapter, I deploy a picture of the subject's phenomenal situatedness in the world as the source of her access to the subject-specific normativity of internalistic justification. In Section 10.2, I lay out and explicate the conception of the essentially active component of internalistic justification as the *normatively contentful intentional acts* of subjects. The central claim of this section is that by becoming intentionally directed at the intentional and phenomenal objects that serve as the contents of states of internalistic justification, subjects institute the normatively robust connections between justificational states and their contents. In Section 10.3, I continue my explication of the

specifically phenomenal/existential conception of the normative situatedness of the subject in the phenomenal world. My reason for continuing this explication is to explain how it is possible for subjects' spontaneous acts of intentional directedness not to be normatively arbitrary in any way that would threaten the possibility of justification. On the contrary, their spontaneous intentional acts just *are* the justification.

10.1. The Personal and Active Nature of Justification

So far in this dissertation, I have talked generally of *beliefs* as the primary bearers of justification and of *being justified* as the way justification and beliefs are related. I have talked this way because these are the standard locutions in the literature. However, if I am being precise, I think that neither way of talking is strictly correct. Instead, I think that it is *subjects themselves* who are the primary bearers of justification for *acts* of either a doxastic (believing, coming to believe, etc.) or non-doxastic (jumping, eating, driving, etc.) nature. Further, I think that subjects don't merely *become justified*, but, instead, *justify themselves* or *engage in acts of self-justification*—justification is an act that subjects engage in rather than a passive event or process that happens to subjects. My reasons for holding this picture of justification are many and varied, and result from specifically epistemological, phenomenal, ethical, and aesthetic considerations. In this section, I discuss the properly epistemological considerations that I think should lead us to think of justification as an active self-reflexive process that applies primarily to subjects.

In his “Personal and Doxastic Justification in Epistemology” (1992), Mylan Engel notes that the following two expressions of the necessity of justification for knowledge are generally used interchangeably in the literature:

JR1. S knows that p *only if* S is epistemically justified in believing that p.

JR2. S knows that p *only if* S's belief that p is epistemically justified.¹

The fact that (JR1) and (JR2) are used interchangeably is not taken to be an oversight on the part of epistemologists; the ability to use them interchangeably results from the assumption that (JR1) and (JR2) are synonymous, necessarily equivalent, or at least extensionally coincident. Accordingly, it seems as though what Engel calls the Equivalency Thesis (ET) is held by most epistemologists:

S is epistemically justified in believing that p *iff* S's belief that p is epistemically justified.²

Engel cites Alston (1985) in support of the widespread adherence to ET:

It applies to beliefs, or alternatively to a cognitive subject's having a belief. I shall speak indifferently of S's belief that p being justified and of S's being justified in believing that p.³

However, Engel also notes that even though epistemologists seem to accept ET uncritically, internalists regarding justification nonetheless tend to talk in terms of *subjects* being justified (JR1) while externalists regarding justification nonetheless tend to talk in terms of *beliefs* being justified (JR2). What this shows, concludes Engel, is that (JR1) expresses a driving motivation behind internalism while (JR2) expresses a driving motivation behind externalism.

It is worth noting, at the outset, that (JR1) and (JR2) are *semantically* very different from one another. The object of epistemic justification varies between (JR1) and (JR2)—in the former, it is the subject herself while in the latter, it is the subject's belief itself. Unless it were a commonplace in epistemology to talk of properties of subjects transferring over or *ipso facto* being properties of beliefs and vice versa, we would need to argue for the connection between properties of subjects and properties of beliefs that is expressed in ET. However, there are all

¹ Engel (1992) 133. While the topic of this dissertation is not knowledge, but, instead, justification, it does no harm to look at conceptions of justification as they are related to knowledge. Nothing significant will turn on this.

² *ibid.*

³ Alston (1985) 58

sorts of properties had by beliefs—their contents, their truth-value, their embedded propositional attitudes—that are not thereby had by subjects, and similarly, there are all sorts of (doxastically relevant) properties had by subjects—their circumstance of belief-acquisition, their credence, their justificational context—that are not thereby had by beliefs. *A fortiori*, even if ET is true, it is certainly not self-evidently true, and hence, it requires an argument in its favor.

It is also worth noting, at the outset, that ET makes things somewhat complicated when it comes to our conception of justification. If ET is true, one of the following three options is also true:

1. One or the other of (JR1) and (JR2) is merely elliptical for what is expressed by the other of the pair.
2. There is one sort of justification that takes a pair of things, a subject and a belief of that subject, as its objects.
3. There are two sorts of justification, justification that attaches to subjects and justification that attaches to beliefs, and the presence of one entails the presence of the other.

The least complicated of the three options is (1), but even the truth of (1) would raise some serious and interesting metaphysical and semantic questions. It's important to note that claiming (i) that one or the other of (JR1) and (JR2) is true and also (ii) that the other of the pair is a technically incorrect way of expressing that truth, is *not* a version of (1). (1) is an interpretation of ET, and the truth of ET relies on the truth of both (JR1) and (JR2). If one or the other of (JR1) and (JR2) is actually incorrect, then it is also false, and, hence, ET is false. If this is the case, then we ought to stop applying the confusing phrase 'merely elliptical for what is expressed by the other' to whichever of the pair is false.

In his evaluation of ET, Engel notes that not only can subjects be epistemically evaluated apart from their beliefs, but beliefs can also be evaluated apart from their subjects. This is not to

say that subjects holding no beliefs or beliefs held by no subject are possible—that is a different and unrelated question. What it is to say is that standard (and apparently acceptable and useful) epistemic practice sees subject and beliefs frequently evaluated on epistemic grounds independent of one another. Subjects can be epistemically praised for reasoning well independently of their beliefs needing to be called *well-reasoned beliefs*, unless we are simply forcing the argument for the truth of ET. Beliefs also can be epistemically praised as reasonable or rational even if we recognize that the process of acquisition of those beliefs is unreasonable or irrational—but we might be forced to stop talking in the latter way were ET true.

Even further, and beyond the scope of Engel's evaluation, ET leaves no room for a gap between justification-possession and belief-possession, either in the case of deliberation that will result in belief or in the case of agnosticism. Consider your standard belief-forming process. You possess, come across, or go out looking for justification, consider the justification, compare it to other justification and beliefs you hold, and then form a belief. But in the period between justification-acquisition and belief-formation, it seems as though you possessed justification (i.e., you were justified), but you as yet possessed no justified belief. If ET were true, then we couldn't make sense of your justification status at any time before you had formed a belief in response to the possession of justification. Agnosticism is a phenomenon we've encountered a number of times in this dissertation. The possession of justification without a resultant belief is not only possible, but (apparently) epistemically valuable. In fact, we praise people in certain circumstances who possess justification and use that justification to decide *not* to believe one way or another regarding some issue. It would be forcing things (although not *impossible*) to claim that the person formed a meta-belief with the content "I ought not form an object-level

belief on this issue.” But if a person can possess justification without thereby possessing a justified belief, then ET is false.

These final two considerations, however, both based on the possibility of the possession of justification without concurrent or resultant belief, do more than merely strike against ET. If justification-possession without concurrent or resultant belief is possible—and an argumentative prevailing theme of this dissertation has been that it is—then not only is ET false, but also any attempt to reduce the justification of *subjects* to the justification of *beliefs* is bound to fail. What this means is that an interpretation of (1) above according to which talk about the justification of subjects is merely elliptical for talk about the justification of beliefs is false. What this also means is that (2) above is false—it cannot be the case that there is one sort of justification that attaches to a pair of items: beliefs and subjects. The reason for this is that if a subject can possess justification without a concurrent or resultant belief, then the necessary relata of the justification relation would not all be in place. Note, however, that this does not yet mean that (3) above is false, and that there are not *two* sorts of justification, one that attaches to subjects and one that attaches to beliefs.⁴

In his “On Justifying and Being Justified” (2003), Adam Leite lays out and articulates the conceptual distinction between a subject’s *being justified* and *justifying*. The former is an epistemic *property* subjects can possess when they have engaged with their justificational states in epistemically proper sorts of ways, while the latter is an epistemic *activity* subjects can engage in by supplying their justification to themselves and others. Leite’s thesis is that *being justified* is

⁴ The purely logical component of (1), (2), and (3) considered as possible interpretations of ET is expressible in the following way: $ET \rightarrow ((1) \vee (2) \vee (3))$. Consequently, the falsity of ET does not entail the falsity of any of (1), (2), or (3). As such, if any of (1), (2), or (3) is false, that will need to be demonstrated separately from the demonstration of the falsity of ET.

only possible if one is able to participate in the process of *justifying* oneself or one's beliefs. I'll call this thesis of Leite's *Justificational Activity First* or JAF:

A subject is justified or justified with respect to some belief or action only if she is able to participate in the activity of justifying herself or her belief or action.

JAF, notes, Leite, is unorthodox. Philosophers such as Alston and Audi have both explicitly rejected it. This is what Alston says:

We must clear out of the way a confusion between one's *being* justified in believing that *p*, and one's *justifying* one's belief that *p*, where the latter involves one's *doing* something to show that *p*, or to show that one's belief was justified, or to exhibit one's justification. The first side of this distinction is a state or condition one is in, not anything one does or any upshot thereof.⁵

And this is what Audi says:

It would seem that just as a little child can be of good character even if unable to defend its character against attack, one can have a justified belief even if, in response to someone who doubts this, one could not show that one does.⁶

Thus, JAF is initially problematic precisely because it requires of (intuitively) justified subjects that they be able to perform actions that they are (similarly intuitively) unable to perform. JAF therefore seems to restrict the domain of the properly epistemic to purely self-consciously rational linguistic creatures while excluding what I'll call Babes and Brutes (Bs&Bs), subjects that possess conceptual abilities but are non-linguistic, that lack conceptual abilities, or even subjects that possess both conceptual and linguistic abilities but that are socially atypical such that they can't or won't engage in practices of justifying themselves. Paradigms of the Bs&Bs category are young human children, cognitively atypical human adults (e.g., those on the autism spectrum), the cognitively enfeebled (e.g., those with Alzheimer's or dementia), conceptual and linguistic non-human animals such as the higher apes, conceptual but non-linguistic non-human

⁵ Alston (1985) 82

⁶ Audi (1993a) 145

animals such as dolphins, and (perhaps) nonconceptual and non-linguistic but nonetheless clearly *intelligent* non-human animals such as pigs and elephants. It seems as though members of the Bs&Bs category have a reasonable claim to be considered as members of the *epistemic* domain. But if JAF is true, they are all excluded, since they can't participate in practices of self-justification.

Leite's argument proceeds in three steps. He first rejects a set of epistemological views regarding the relationship between reasons and justification (which views, I should note, I also reject, although for different reasons than Leite's). He then explicates his own view, JAF, and shows how it does not possess the problems possessed by the epistemological views he rejects. He finally defends his view against a number of potential criticisms. This is standard philosophical methodology. However, Leite's entire argument relies on two assumptions:

1. *Justification* is necessarily based in *reasons*.
2. An *epistemic subject* is necessarily an *active* thing.

While (2) is true (and I'll have much more to say about (2) in a moment), (1) is false, unsupported, and relies on a fundamental confusion about and overreliance on what epistemologists have call the *basing relation*.

Basing is the epistemological relation that combines one-way modal dependence of property instantiation with one-way (although in the other direction) (at least partial) constitution. So if X is based on Y, where X and Y are both properties, then changes in X require changes in Y (a sort of weak supervenience) and X's nature is (at least in part) determined by Y's nature. Epistemologists have sometimes expressed the conditions on knowledge in terms of the basing relation, and have also sometimes expressed the conditions on justificational status in terms of the basing relation. However, while there is nothing essential to the basing relation that

requires that it take two non-identical objects as its relata, there is no good methodological reason to employ the relation unless those relata are non-identical. As we've seen in this dissertation, however, a proper picture of internalistic justification has no need for the basing relation, since justificational states are states of immediate phenomenal presence for their possessors, and they put their possessors in nonconceptual, unmediated normative contact with the intentional and phenomenal objects that constitute the justificational content of those states. Were it the case that there were something justificationally or normatively relevant to a state of justification that was not immediately present to the subject in this way, that justificational state could not play the phenomenal role required of internalistic justification. This is not, of course, to say that justificational states don't stand in other relations to non-justificational objects and facts, e.g., causal relations to the non-epistemic world. What it is to say is that there is nothing *epistemically relevant* to justificational states that could possibly stand in a *basing relation* to justificational states.

Leite's paper is characteristic of much of contemporary theorizing about epistemology in that it refuses to stop the explanatory regress when that regress reaches its terminus. Insofar as we are concerned with the *specifically epistemological* components of internalistic justification, once we bottom out in transparently phenomenal normative justificatory states whose contents are the intentional justificatory objects of those states, what more could we possibly be looking for? To go further, as I've noted, is either to change the epistemological subject to something like externalistic justification, or to change the metaphysical subject to something like neural states. This methodological problem, however, is not due to sloppiness or an oversight on the part of Leite or others. It is again a product of an uncritical adherence to the overarching Cartesian picture of the relation between mind and world, and between subject and object, which I laid out

in Chapter 9, Section 9.1. The Cartesian picture manifests itself here as follows: Since there is a fundamental unbridgeable conceptual and metaphysical gap between the objects of awareness and the subject who is aware, the only way to secure proper contact between phenomenal states of the subject and the objects of those states is *merely modal* and *non-epistemic*. This modal relation is the essential component of the basing relation. Thus, to claim that one is in a justificatory state whose contents are A, B, and C is really an imprecise way of claiming that one is in a phenomenal state whose contents are merely mental and that via a non-epistemic modal relation between the mental state and A, B, and C, some sort of weak intentional relation can hold between subject and objects such that the subject can believe true things about A, B, and C.

As we saw in Chapter 9, however, not only is this Cartesian picture of the relation between mind and world *historically-dialectically* problematic, it is also *epistemologically* problematic in that it merely assumes an epistemological, phenomenal, metaphysical, and existential picture that *necessarily blocks the possibility* of internalistic justification. If subjects cannot be aware, i.e., cannot have phenomenal access to, all of the proper justificational components of their justificational state, then at least some relevant justificational fact or item will be essentially externalistic. In my attempt to provide a clear, consistent, and persuasive picture of the possibility of internalistic justification, then, I have rejected Cartesianism as a possible framework within which to understand internalistic justification. The alternate picture that I began to explicate in Chapter 9, and that I will continue to explicate in this chapter, derives from Kant, Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty. This picture says not only that subjects and objects are *of the same type*, but also that subjects are *embedded in the world* such that our interaction with the world, and with the objects in the world, is direct, unmediated, normatively structured, and necessarily phenomenal. On such a picture, there is no room for a basing relation

that entails the contradictory claim that epistemically relevant objects and relations are phenomenally inaccessible to us.

Even apart from the specifically Cartesian problems inherited by a standard contemporary picture of justification, there is a problem for Leite and similar philosophers who think that justification is expressible in terms of reasons. There is a difference *in kind* between justifiers, i.e., justificational states, and the things we provide to others in order to justify ourselves, our beliefs, and our actions to them, i.e., reasons. This is evident given that justifiers possess two properties that reasons lack: Justifiers are *necessarily nonconceptual*, whereas reasons are *conceptual*, and justifiers are *necessarily phenomenal*, while reasons are *non-phenomenal*. The relationship between justificational states and reasons is an interesting and complicated issue, and I won't fully investigate that issue here. However, I will simply briefly describe the picture of this relationship that is most clearly in line with the picture of justification explicated and argued for in this dissertation. Reasons can be (proper) components of *contents* of justificational states, i.e., of justifiers. This would threaten neither the nonconceptual nature nor the phenomenal nature of justifiers while also allowing reasons to play some part in justification. However, *reasons themselves* are not normative, and hence, are not justificational. It is only by being taken up by a subject *as a reason* and being included in a justificational state that reasons can have anything to do with justification at all. So the practice of giving and asking for reasons is not properly a justificational process at all, but is, instead, proto-justificational. Further, it should be noted that the contents of reasons and the contents of justificational states are nonidentical, so when a person provides a reason for her belief or action, she is not, in any appropriate sense of the term, *providing her justification*. Reasons can play a *partial justificational role*, but are not themselves *justifiers*.

To be clear, I have discussed Leite's view here not merely in order to dismiss a set of claims and philosophical presuppositions that are false, but because Leite is an exceptionally clear exponent of a view that has been detrimental, because of its unexamined assumptions, to proper epistemological theorizing about the nature and content of justificational states. Alston is correct (although he doesn't supply an explanation of his statement) when he claims that "[m]ost human subjects are quite incapable of carrying out a justification of any perceptual introspective beliefs."⁷ Justification is something possessed by subjects insofar as they are in justificational states. These states are nonconceptual, and hence, cannot be expressed in terms of reasons, which are necessarily conceptual. In fact, then, the case is more extreme than Alston's quotation makes it seem. It is never the case that any justified subject is capable of justifying herself by providing, via reasons, her justification. Justification is just not the sort of thing that can be *provided*.

In sum, in this section, I've shown that the primary bearers of internalistic justification are *subjects* and not *beliefs* or *actions*. I've further shown that *possession* of justification does not rely on an *ability to provide* that justification in terms of the articulation of reasons. This does not mean, however, that Leite's second theoretical assumption, that epistemic subjects are essentially active things, is false. In fact, I think that the personal nature of internalistic justification, i.e., the fact that the primary bearers of internalistic justification are subjects, combined with the necessary inarticulability of that justification in terms of reasons, is best explained in terms of intentional *actions* on the part of epistemic subjects. My reason for thinking this is that we have yet to settle the issue of the precise conditions on the connection between the phenomenology, normativity, and intentionality of justificational states. I have argued that the normativity of justificational states is essentially phenomenal and that the phenomenology of justificational

⁷ Alston (1985) fn. 3

states is essentially normative (Chapters 7 and 9), and in those chapters, I also showed how this was possible. While I have further argued that the phenomenology and intentionality of justificational states is state- and content-token-identical, I have not shown how this is possible. I devote the remainder of this chapter to this task.

10.2. Intentional Directedness as Activity

Although the central argument of Leite's paper rests on a common mistake regarding the phenomenal properties of internalistic justification (i.e., it claims that some justificational relevant properties are phenomenally inaccessible and are epistemically relevant because of a basing relation that is itself phenomenally inaccessible), there is a kernel of truth that underlies his project. The main thrust of Leite's paper, it seems to me, is to find a way to articulate a conception of internalistic justification that does justice to a picture of the epistemic subject as an essentially active thing. Epistemology is an essentially *normative* enterprise, *normativity* expresses itself in actual or potential *actions*, actions are undertaken by *active subjects*. This means two things for the normativity of internalistic justification:

1. Possession of an internalistically justificatory state is necessarily normatively relevant to present or future belief or action. Further, the beliefs and actions to which the possession of an internalistically justificatory state are normatively relevant are constitutively related to the normative content of that justificatory state.
2. Possession of an internalistically justificatory state is necessarily brought about via normatively appropriate action. Further, the occasioning action relevant to the possession of an internalistically justificatory state is constitutively related to the normative content of that justificatory state.

(1) is perhaps not terribly surprising, since it almost directly follows from the definition of *epistemic normativity* that I've been employing throughout this dissertation. (2), however, I think initially will be somewhat surprising. In simpler language, what (2) is saying is that internalistic justificatory states do not *come over us*, but, instead, are *appropriately taken up by us* in such a

way that this act of uptake institutes the normative force that thereby binds us. This is an extension of what, in Chapter 9, I called *internal normativity*:

The normative status of states of affairs, actions, and persons is essentially *dependent* on facts and factors *internal* to phenomenal, metaphysical, or existential lives of individuals. In particular, it is essentially *dependent* on their free choices, and *not* on factors external to the subject and her capacity for free choice. In other words: Normativity is *here for the making*.

The reason to prefer a picture of the normativity of internalistic justification construed along the lines of internal normativity was because of what I called, in Chapter 6, the *necessity of normative interpretation*:

Mere possession of a normative item, such as a justifier, is not sufficient for a subject to come to a belief about how she ought properly to respond to that justifier. The reason for this is that all normativity must be interpreted so as to connect the content of the normative item with the apparently correct course of action in response to that normative item.

Thus, by conceiving of the normativity of internalistic justification along the lines of internal normativity, while we lose the Standard Picture of Epistemic Normativity, we thereby gain the ability to possess internalistic justification in a way that will allow for normatively appropriate belief and action.

The focus on *action* as both a necessary and constitutive component of justificatory states is a consequence of a set of views grouped together by contemporary philosophers under the banner of *the primacy of the practical*. This set of views holds that in some important way, theoretical cognition is dependent on practical activity. The first full expression of the primacy of the practical occurs in Kant's Critical philosophy. For example, in his theoretical philosophy, Kant claims that the *only* use of concepts is to judge by means of them,⁸ where judgment is an essentially *practical activity*. It's not just, for Kant, that concepts are useless without some

⁸ See Kant (1999) A68/B93.

practical activity containing them; the *concept* of the concept itself, for Kant, contains the notion of practicality. What this means is that the building blocks of theoretical cognitive activity cannot possibly be understood without also understanding their practical capabilities. Hegel takes the primacy of the practical one step further⁹ in insisting that concepts themselves both are the *result of* and are *constitutively determined* by the practical historical-dialectical framework in which they are embedded. What makes some concept the specific concept that it is, says Hegel, is, crudely, where it came from and where it's going. So, for Hegel, not only can the contents of concepts not be understood without understanding our practical capabilities (as in Kant), but also the contents of concepts are *dialectically structured complexes* that can only be understood dialectically. Wittgenstein, who focused on *tokened utterances* instead of *concepts*, claimed that there was nothing more to the meaning of an utterance than its practical discharge, its use. It was not even, for Wittgenstein, that meaning is *determined* by use; it was that meaning was nothing over and above use. In this sense, we might call Wittgenstein a *realist instrumentalist* about language: Language is a mere practical tool, but this does mean that meanings are unreal—meanings are identical to actual and possible uses. Brandom, to give one final example, backs off from the Wittgensteinian thesis somewhat in claiming that *inferential practices* determine *semantic content*. The latter *make explicit* what was merely *implicit* in the former. Still, the normative properties of language use are all present and fully formed in use, so, in an important way, *explicit language-use* is merely epiphenomenal.

We don't need to adopt any of these pictures fully in order to appreciate the motivation behind the position of the primacy of the practical. Here we can recall that the Kantian-Wittgensteinian regress of rules problem that I presented in Chapter 6 is a problem for any

⁹ Or, depending on the interpretation and the interpreter's assessment of Hegelian philosophy, in an entirely different direction from Kant.

instrumentalist conception of the epistemic value of internalistic justification. According to that problem, purely intellectualist or concept-bound or rule-governed epistemic practices necessarily face a vicious regress due to the fact that each practice required a further normative standard according to which *its* correctness can be judged. If X can't be performed properly without appeal to Y's performance and Y can't be performed properly without appeal to Z's performance... it seems as though we can never get going performing epistemic tasks. The form of this problem is relevantly similar to the problem presented by Lewis Carroll in "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles" (1995). The Tortoise demands that Achilles prove to him that the conclusion of a *modus ponens*-form argument follows from its two premises. In order to do this, Achilles introduces a third premise, a conditional that takes the conjunction of the argument's original two premises as its antecedent and the argument's conclusion as its consequent. But then, of course, the Tortoise demands that Achilles prove to him that the conclusion of this new argument follows from its three premises. So Achilles introduces a fourth premise...

In order to see the value of the primacy of the practical, consider the Carroll incarnation of this regress problem. Were you in Achilles's place and the Tortoise asked you how it was that you knew that *q* followed from *if p then q* and *p*, what could you possibly say? You might say that you understood *modus ponens*, but this would seem to be putting the cart before the horse. *q* follows from *if p then q* and *p* not because of the validity of *modus ponens*—*modus ponens* is a valid argument because *q* follows from *if p then q* and *p*. Further, a claim that you *know* that *q* follows from *if p then q* and *p* seems to be equivocating over the term *know*. Surely, you *do* know, in a propositional sense, that *modus ponens* is a valid argument form, etc. But you also *know* in a practical sense that when you're given *if p then q* and *p* that you *ought to* conclude *q*. This is an *ability* you have, to correctly conclude validly in the case of *modus ponens*. To claim

that you know how to do this because of your antecedent propositional knowledge seems again to be placing the cart before the horse; your propositional knowledge is an expression of your ability and not the other way around.

Even if the explanation in the previous paragraph is not intuitive to you, given what I've already said in Chapters 6, 8, and 9, it should be evident that justificational arbitrariness results from an attempt to ground epistemic normativity in a set of rules or normative propositions. What is needed, instead, is an account of action as related to justification-possession such that not only does the action itself institute normativity, but, further, the action is not itself normatively arbitrary. This latter condition is needed to accommodate the fact that even if actions could institute normativity, they could only do so if they themselves were normatively acceptable, otherwise our entire justificational structure would rest on a normatively arbitrary foundation.

While, throughout this dissertation, I have been talking about justificational *states*, once we recognize that there is a constitutive component of internalistic justification that is *active*, we might, instead, want to refer to internalistic justificational *actions*. Note what this does not mean: The fact that internalistic justificational states are essentially active does not mean that they are either identical to, reducible to, or supervenient on *acts of justifying*. This was precisely Leite's thesis that I rejected above. *Justifying*, qua *reason-giving process*, can only occur *after* justification is already present. There are no reasons to give when nothing is yet normative, i.e., there is nothing for reasons to capture (however incompletely) unless they have something antecedent and more fundamental to attempt to capture. What it means to claim that justificational states are essentially active, or that justification is essentially an action, comes in at the foundational normative, phenomenal, nonconceptual level. There is something we *do* when

we are correctly situated with respect to the contents of our justificational states in a way that properly allows for those states and their contents to play the role of epistemic justifiers.

The action that is required as a constitutive component of internalistic justificational states is an action of *intending*. *Correct situatedness* with respect to the contents of our justificational states is a sort of *directedness* on our part *via* our justificational states *toward* the intentional objects of those states. It is not a mere accident, then, that justificational intentional states are token-identical with justificational phenomenal states, or that the justificational relevant intentional objects of those justificational states are token-identical with the justificational relevant phenomenal objects of those justificational states. We are intentionally directed in a way that allows for a proper connection between our justificational states and their targets *precisely because* we direct ourselves in this way.

This is abstract and laden with terminology. Consider the cat on the mat again. There is a point when you are visually scanning, even if you are aware of some object in the distance, that it would not yet be correct to say that you are justified in believing that the cat is on the mat. You are not yet justified in believing this because you do not yet possess the relevant justificational state. And you do not yet possess the relevant justificational state because you haven't *intentionally directed yourself* at the cat as she sits there on the mat. To be intentionally directed in this way isn't the same as to *conceptualize* the cat *as a cat* and the mat *as a mat*, etc., although conceptualization also requires an intentional connection between subject and the relevant contents of her mental state. Intentional direction can be explained in terms of a phenomenal metaphor: To become intentionally directed in the right sort of way is to narrow one's perspective such that the cat and the mat come into phenomenal view. It is to make the cat and the mat relevant objects of thought by bringing them into your phenomenal horizon. It is to zero

or home in on the cat and the mat as phenomenal targets. It is to *attend to* the cat and the mat.

This *phenomenal* connection between subject and contents is the same as the connection of intentional directedness. One final metaphor: To become intentionally directed in the right sort of way is to grasp, intentionally and phenomenally, the objects toward which you are appropriately directed. You can experience this sort of intentional and phenomenal *grasping* by looking around the room right now and bringing your focus onto different objects while letting others fade out of focus. Of course, it is not possible to recognize an object as *out of focus*, since then it comes right back into focus. However, there is a distinct phenomenology to this intentional focusing. The point is this: By *intending*, you become *intentionally directed* and *attentive*.

It is important to note that the talk of scanning and focusing in the previous paragraph is not entirely analogous to talk of intending or becoming intentionally directed in the relevant way. The reason for this is that *focusing* captures many more phenomena than does merely *becoming intentionally directed*. While intentional directedness is a component of focusing, it is merely a *proper* component—thus, the two are neither identical nor strictly analogous. We can see this if we consider the fact that, to a large extent, although not entirely, what you focus on is up to you, while what you become intentionally directed toward is, to a large extent, not up to you. There is a sort of *spontaneity* present in intentional directness, becoming intentionally directed, that is much less prevalent in cases of conscious focus. For an example of this, consider the fact that you have been intentionally directed toward your feet while you've been reading this paragraph. You may not have been self-consciously attending to your feet, but you were *aware* of them in such a way that allowed not only for correct positioning of your body with respect to your feet and the floor (or wherever your feet currently are), but also for the awareness of yourself as an embodied creature. Your initial reaction to this claim might be incredulity. However, consider

what would have happened had your feet suddenly gone out of your phenomenal consciousness. It would have been as though your feet had suddenly phenomenally *disappeared*. Had this happened, you certainly would have been aware—in fact, it would have jolted you into self-conscious attention directed toward your feet. What this shows is that there has been a conscious, but not self-rationally reflective, component of your awareness of your feet. This consciousness, however, has included an intentional directedness toward your feet—again, not one that is self-consciously rationally reflective, but one that is consciously present nonetheless. Hence, *intending* in the relevant sense is much more narrow and much more *spontaneous* (I am specifically avoiding the term *automatic* for reasons that will momentarily become clear) than is the wider phenomenon of self-conscious reflective focus.

Intentional directedness in the way just described, is diachronically self-sustaining precisely because it is an action rather than a mere state that must be brought into existence by something outside of itself. Insofar as a subject is intentionally directed at some object, she is providing all that is needed to continue the intentional directedness. Think of what it is like for you to play an instrument or to read or ski or to turn a doorknob—something that requires skill, but that, once you have learned the skill, becomes, in an important way, *second nature*. When you begin the etude, start the sentence, initiate the turn, reach for the knob, there is a very important sense in which you were not *forced from the outside* to initiate this action. On the other hand, it feels very much like you've just sat down on a slide and pushed off with all of your might. However, on this conception of *might*, your might is existentially constitutive of you, and hence, from a phenomenal perspective on things, is effortlessly authentic, a pure-hearted, single-minded *being*. There is a phenomenal groove that you situate yourself in when you initiate any of these actions such that it *feels correct* to continue them. In a sense, it feels as though it would

take more effort to bring the action to a halt than it would to continue on. It's the same, phenomenally, with intentional directedness. There's a second-naturedness to it such that it takes effort to redirect oneself, to change the objects of intentional directedness.

It is at this point that the intentional, the phenomenal, and the normative should be coming together. Intentional states and their contents, in the realm of internalistic justification, are token-identical to phenomenal states and their contents in the realm of internalistic justification. The felt phenomenal force of internalistic justificatory states that we've already identified with the phenomenology of epistemic normativity is the same felt force that is present in acts of intentional directedness. Thus, this is the promised three-term modal-constitutive relation between intentionality, phenomenology, and normativity promised in earlier chapters. It is precisely this relation that both allows for and is identical with internalistic justificatory states. This picture fully embraces internal normativity—it is the states themselves that are normative in a way that is both directly relevant to the intentional objects of those states and phenomenally accessible by the subjects of those states.

Further, the relation between intentional directedness and normativity has a robust phenomenal foundation. There are relations of phenomenal inclusion and preclusion that are instituted by acts of intentional directedness. On a conceptual level, it would be simple enough to make sense of this inclusion/preclusion purely at the semantic level: If concept X is applied in a particular act of intentional directedness, then any concepts entailed by or at least consistent with X are possibly included while any concepts inconsistent with X are precluded. Thus, my awareness of a cat *as a cat* precludes my awareness of a cat *as a dog*, since no object to which the concept CAT properly applies can also properly have the concept DOG applied to it. However, at the nonconceptual level, the level of the phenomenal presence of states of

internalistic justification, there are no semantic contents of the sort to preclude or include other semantic contents. Thus, we can rely on *phenomenal* relations of inclusion and preclusion. Following Kant, these relations are all grounded in direct awareness of the spatiotemporal position of the intentional/phenomenal contents of internalistic justificatory states. For example, no two objects can occupy the same spatiotemporal region simultaneously. These relations of inclusion/preclusion institute norms of acts of intentional directedness such that any such act that could possibly bring about a violation of such a norm is phenomenally forbidden.

The story of intentional/phenomenal normativity is much more complicated than this, and I will not elaborate on it further here. If helpful, the story can be supplemented with Husserl's account of intentional possibilities and Kant's account of the transcendental nature of normativity as those accounts were presented in Chapter 9. What is important to recognize at this point is that acts of intentional directedness on the part of the subject can be normatively contentful in a way that is directly relevant to the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification. One thing that I should note before I continue is that this is not merely a constructivist account of normativity in which intentional acts *generate* or *create* normative facts. In the same way that the objects of the world are *ready for intentional and phenomenal uptake*, i.e., objects are epistemically and metaphysically *poised* to be the contents of intentional and phenomenal states, the normativity of intentional acts is *grasped* or *taken up* rather than *created*. I will talk more about this grasping in the next section in terms of the existential phenomenologists. What is important to recognize at this point is that rejecting the Standard Picture and the conception of external normativity gives us the theoretical tools to confront the manifest world on its own terms: as something that is *prepared for interaction with us*.

10.3. Spontaneity, Taking Up, and Existential Normativity

In the previous section, I laid out an account of the epistemic normativity possessed by internalistic justificational states as identical to the phenomenal/intentional normativity of those states themselves. Recall, however, that there are two normative connections required for internalistic justification to function properly: that between state and subject possessing the state (that is what was provided in the previous section) *and* that between the state and the propriety of tokening that state. Without this second sort of normativity, as I've noted, the internalistic justification would be an unjustified justifier, a thing that can provide justification but which has no normative right to be doing so since its tokening was, itself, unjustified. To put this another way: Given everything I've said so far in this dissertation, it seems as though I've destroyed the possibility of objective normativity for internalistic justification as traditionally conceived and that I've then just claimed that normativity flows forth from spontaneous acts on the part of the subject. But this sounds like magic! If acts can imbue their contents with normativity, then where did this normativity come from? That is, even if these specific sorts of acts can do what I'm claiming they can do, there needs to be a normative check on the performance of these acts. Otherwise, anything and everything is internalistically justified—surely a *reductio* of my thesis.

The theoretical background and epistemic foundation for the normative check on the performance of normatively relevant acts of intentional directedness has already been laid out in Chapters 7 and 9, as well as above in the current chapter, but it bears repeating here before the specific account is explained. This account relies on the notions of the normativity of givenness and the normative embeddedness of our phenomenal situatedness with respect to the world. Let us recall that the phenomenal presence of states of givenness is not itself a phenomenal object, but is, instead, a mode of presentation of the phenomenal/intentional contents of internalistic

justificational states. The normativity that is phenomenally present in such states, while phenomenally *relevant* in that it is also *present* to us in such states, is not itself a separate object or content of these states, but is, in Kantian terminology, *transcendental* in that it is a necessary a priori structural precondition on the possibility of such justificational experience itself.

Further, and this highlights the particularly Husserlian/Heideggerian conceptual of the phenomenology of normativity that I'm working with here, the specific felt phenomenal force of internalistic justification that is identical with normative force is not *unidirectional* in that it either phenomenally *issues forth* from the contents of the states or from the subject herself. There is a sort of nonconceptual intentional-phenomenal interaction with the contents of internalistic justificational states such that that interaction was *called forth* from the subject by the objects and such that the subject's interaction *feels* correct or is *phenomenally appropriate*. This language is clearly partially metaphorical. I will rely on the ability of the reader to perform a phenomenal investigation to identify the relevant phenomena in her own mental life. By way of gesturing at these phenomena, however, here are Hubert Dreyfus and Sean Dorrance Kelly in their recent popular book that partially addresses the topic:

[It] is nearly mystical to apprehend. It is characterized by [a] kind of sustained responsiveness to the demands of the situation...It is unflinching, unhesitating, and unwavering, and it has these certain qualities precisely because the activity flows not *from* the subject but *through* him. As a spectator of [such] activity one has the sense of watching something nearly inevitable, as though it is ordained by some force beyond the mere whim of human self-assertion.¹⁰

This sort of worldly situated activity, while *intentional*, and hence, *unforced*, is not the response to an act of self-conscious rational *deliberation*. That is, there are at least two modes of our conscious and intentional action in the world: one that is the result of deliberation and choice and one that is spontaneous (but not automatic), a response to being called forth by the world. In the

¹⁰ Dreyfus & Kelly (2011) 11

former mode, there is a sense of intense uncertainty—I highlighted this uncertainty and dubbed it *existential* in Chapter 6. In the latter mode, however, there is a sense of intense certainty—this certainty is not the certainty of one’s acting arbitrarily (what sort of *certainty* could accompany arbitrary action, anyhow?), but is, instead, the certainty of needing no deliberation in order to know how to act. Say Dreyfus and Kelly:

This sense of certainty is rare in the contemporary world. Indeed, modern life can seem to be defined by the opposite. An unrelenting flow of choices confronts us at nearly every moment of our lives, and most of us could admit to finding ourselves at least occasionally wavering. Far from being certain and unhesitating, our lives can at the extreme seem shot through with hesitation and indecision, culminating in choices finally made on the basis of nothing at all.¹¹

My point in introducing these quotations from Dreyfus and Kelly is not to *argue for* the existence of these phenomena, but, instead, to draw our attention to them. Phenomenology, as a fundamentally *descriptive* enterprise, can accomplish its *theoretical* tasks only if it can gain assent regarding the correctness of its descriptions. While there are intense disagreements within the field of phenomenology concerning many issues, the sort of embeddedness in the world identified by Husserl and fully formulated by Heidegger has been something that has enjoyed almost universal assent. The previous quotation from Dreyfus and Kelly is reminiscent of a quotation from Derrida from Chapter 6. This quotation should resonate with us even more at this point in the discussion:

It is from the moment one surrenders to the necessity of divisibility and the undecidable that the question of decision can be posed: and the question of knowing what deciding, affirming — which is to say, also deciding — mean. A decision that would be taken otherwise than on the border of this undecidable would not be a decision. Thus the gravest decision — the Wager, the Sacrifice of Isaac — the great decisions that must be taken and must be affirmed are taken and affirmed in this relation to the undecidable itself; at the very moment at which they are no longer possible, they become possible. These are the only decisions possible — impossible ones. Think here of Kierkegaard: the only decision possible is the impossible decision. It is when it is not possible to know

¹¹ *ibid.* 3

what must be done, when knowledge is not and cannot be determining that a decision is possible as such. Otherwise the decision is an application, one knows what has to be done, it's clear, there is no more decision possible; what one has here is an effect, an application, a programming.¹²

What these phenomenal philosophers are drawing our attention to here is twofold: First, embedded action in the world, while it might *seem* arbitrary, is anything but. There is a normativity that, in Dreyfus's and Kelly's terminology, *flows through* the subject. Second, even at the level of self-conscious action that is the result of a choice that is the end-result of a process of conscious deliberation, there is something of a worldly embedded character about our actions. Even after we have made a self-consciously rational choice to act a certain way, at the moment of choice, and further, at the moment of action, reasons and self-conscious deliberation disappear. At root, then, we are embedded in the world all the way down to our normative/phenomenal/intentional roots.

This image of our normative/phenomenal/intentional rootedness in the world is precisely what Hanna (forthcoming: 2015) calls *The Grip of the Given*. And what Dreyfus and Kelly call the activity's *flowing through* the subject Hanna calls the *minded body's own reasons*.¹³ Says Hanna:

[A]utonomous essentially non-conceptual content is presupposed by all rational conceptual/propositional content whatsoever, and thus it is inherently proto-rational. And in rational human minded animals or real human persons of the specifically higher-level or Kantian kind, it is also self-reflectively constrained by categorically normative moral principles. It therefore can and does sometimes sufficiently justify perceptual beliefs and basic intentional actions, and thereby provide reasons for them, even without standing in inferential relations to them. Otherwise put, over and above inferential reasons, there is at least one other kind of normative, good-reason-producing, justifying relation to beliefs, choices, and actions; and autonomous essentially non-conceptual content can stand in that

¹² Derrida (1995) 147-8

¹³ I have used the term *reason* in this dissertation in accordance with what I think is its more traditional and widespread definition: a conceptually articulated propositional item that can be provided via individual linguistic tokenings. For this reason, my usage and Hanna's diverge here. However, Hanna is *not* claiming that the sorts of reasons at the necessarily nonconceptual level, the *minded body's own reasons*, are reasons in this traditional sense. For Hanna, the term is expanded to include what I have been calling *nonconceptual normativity*.

kind of relation to them. Hence autonomous essentially non-conceptual content is genuine, normatively-loaded representational content, although obviously of a categorically or essentially different kind from conceptual content.¹⁴

The application of these phenomenal investigations to our current investigation should be obvious: It is via the sort of worldly embedded non-deliberative actions identified by Dreyfus and Kelly that we intentionally direct ourselves in such a way that we express and participate in what Hanna calls the minded body's own reasons. That is, we recognize the normative phenomenology of our intentional states in such a way that we are able to respond appropriately without running inferential processes of rationally self-conscious reasoning. We *just act*, and via this action, we normatively appropriately *commit* ourselves in a way that institutes a normatively robust intentional connection between ourselves and the subjects of our intentional states.

Committing oneself isn't latching on to normativity or creating normativity, but acting within a normative space such that awareness of the action is awareness of normativity. This normative space is both constituted by and constitutive of the normative bindingness of our actions. Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty famously provide examples of apparent nonconceptual awarenesses that are nonetheless justificatory.

For the player in action the soccer field is not an "object." It is pervaded by lines of force...and is articulated into sectors (for example, the "openings" between the adversaries, which call for a certain mode of action. The field itself is not given;...the player becomes one with it...At this moment consciousness is nothing but the dialectic of milieu of action. Each maneuver undertaken by the player modifies the character of the field and establishes new lines of force in which the action in turn unfolds and is accomplished, again altering the phenomenal field.¹⁵

According to Heidegger, it is not merely that we sometimes encounter these justificatory nonconceptual phenomenal states, but also that these states are temporally, justificatorily, and

¹⁴ Hanna (forthcoming: 2015) 174-5

¹⁵ Merleau-Ponty,(1983) 168-9, quoted in Dreyfus (2013) 17

metaphysically prior to our judgmental (i.e., conceptual) awareness of things. Speaking of a blackboard that is badly positioned for the lecturer such that moving to and from the blackboard is awkward for the lecturer, Heidegger says:

It is out of the manifestness of the lecture room that we experience the bad position of the board in the first place. Precisely this manifestness of the lecture room within which the board is badly positioned is what does not explicitly appear at all in the assertion. We do not first attain the manifestness of the lecture room via the assertion “The board is badly positioned,” rather this manifestness is the condition of the possibility of the board in general being something we can make judgments about.¹⁶

Thus, we now have a picture of the relation between the normativity, phenomenology, and intentionality of internalistic justification that appeals not to a problematic *external normativity* picture, but that is also not normatively arbitrary. While it is important for me to admit that that this new picture is substantially different from the Cartesian picture adopted by almost all contemporary epistemologists working on the problem of the nature of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification, that difference is theoretically necessary in order to save the genuine normativity and the phenomenal accessibility of internalistic justificatory states.

10.4. Conclusion

In this final chapter of the dissertation, I have continued the positive project initiated in Chapter 9 of tying together the phenomenology, normativity, and intentionality of internalistic justification. This project, as I have noted, is decidedly phenomenal in that all the necessary components of internalistic justification and the connections between those components are phenomenally present to the subject. The reason for the phenomenal inflection of this picture is that the concept of internalistic justification demands it. To build essentially veritic or merely instrumentally normative components into a conception of internalistic justification would be to

¹⁶ Heidegger (1995) 345, quoted in Dreyfus (2013) 20

abandon the *internalistic* component of such justification. Further, as I have noted, this project is decidedly existential in that the epistemic normativity possessed by internalistic justificatory states is internal to the states themselves, is phenomenally accessible to the subject possessing those states, and relies not on facts or properties external to the subject and her phenomenally accessible epistemic life, but instead flows from the subject's epistemic life and free epistemic choices as she exists phenomenally situated in the world.

In providing this admittedly unorthodox picture of the epistemic normativity of internalistic justification, it is my hope that I have both avoided all of the problems created by the Cartesian picture of the relation between mind and world as well as done justice to the phenomenal promissory notes any proper theory of internalistic justification has to make good on. While I have noted that the positive program initiated in the final two chapters of this dissertation is a sketch and not a fully worked-out theory, I think that it presents the outlines of a theory that has the best chance of retaining the epistemic importance and theoretical function of internalistic justification. In sum, then, I think that given the devastating problems I have raised for traditional accounts of internalistic justification, the necessary conditions on any theory of internalistic justification, and the positive sketch that I have provided, I have indicated a productive way forward in epistemological theorizing. This way forward begins with the acceptance of the necessarily phenomenal and existential components of epistemic normativity. Thus, it is only through an appreciation of *ourselves* as *at bottom* phenomenal and existential subjects that we can understand the issue that lies at the center of our epistemic lives: how justification works.

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