

# Spectrum Epistemology: The BonJour – Goldman Debate

by

Andrew Wade Anthony Morgan

A thesis  
presented to the University of Waterloo  
in fulfillment of the  
thesis requirement for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
in  
Philosophy

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2009

© Andrew Wade Anthony Morgan 2009

## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

## Abstract

Socrates teaches in the *Meno* that in order for a belief to be justified, an appropriate relation must ‘tie down’ the belief to its (apparent) truth. Alvin Goldman’s position of externalism holds that for a belief to be justified, an appropriately reliable process must have obtained. One need not be aware of this reliable process. Conversely, Laurence BonJour’s brand of internalism holds that this relation between a belief and its (apparent) truth is just what the cognizer needs to be aware of in order for that belief to be justified. This work examines their debate, with particular interest paid to BonJour’s case of Norman: a clairvoyant who forms a belief via this ability but has no evidence for or against the belief or his own clairvoyance. Using this case, I propose an ‘epistemological spectrum’ wherein the insight of externalism is appreciated – what Robert Brandom deems the Founding Insight of Reliabilism – that a reliably produced belief bears some epistemic legitimacy, while retaining the insight of internalism: that objective reliability cannot offset subjective irrationality. This is done by classifying cases wherein only the obtainment of a reliable process occurs as epistemically rational, though not justified. Ultimately I reconcile the virtues of both positions, and propose that Goldman’s brand of full blooded externalism was generated by following an intuitional illusion by way of affirming the consequent.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author acknowledges the efforts of his advisor Dr. Doreen Fraser, without whom this project would not have been possible. The support of the entire department of philosophy at the University of Waterloo is also thanked, particularly Dr. Dave DeVidi and Dr. Tim Kenyon. My office mates W. Jim Jordan and Jeremy Seitz are also owed thanks, as this project often commandeered the chalk board. Dr. Marcello Guarini of the University of Windsor is thanked for sparking my interest in this area. Finally, I am ever grateful for the tireless input and unending patience of Michelle Hebert.

## **Dedication**

Lovingly dedicated to

Lisa Morgan and Timat

*Forever Young*

## Table of Contents

Part I: Introducing the Players .....	1
1.1 The Background .....	1
1.2 The Foreground .....	6
Part II: The BonJour-Goldman Debate.....	8
2.1 Goldman’s Analysis of Being Justified.....	8
2.2 BonJour’s Objections .....	17
2.3 Goldman’s Second Effort .....	25
Part III: The Externalist Mirage .....	28
3.1 Generating Externalism.....	28
3.2 A Spectrum Epistemology.....	35
3.3 The Illusion.....	53
Part IV: Finale .....	58
4.1 Concluding Remarks .....	58
Bibliography .....	60

## **Part I: Introducing the Players**

### **1.1 The Background**

The notion of epistemic justification can be characterized as a problem of conflicting intuitions. Consider the term 'free'. In English, this denotes at least two ideas: The Libre notion of free, meaning free as in speech, and the Gratis notion of free, free as in beer. Surely there are more. The term 'knowledge', like the term 'free' is used to express a varied patchwork quilt of notions, and here we are not even concerned with knowledge by acquaintance or capacity knowledge<sup>1</sup>. While 'knowing Toronto', or 'knowing Beauty' – that is to say, to know some thing personally; or 'knowing how to grill steak', or 'knowing how to engineer the Avro Arrow' – that is to say, to know how to perform a task, are both valuable in their own right, I am not concerned with those types of knowledge. One may even have a sort of acquaintance knowledge with a proposition, without properly knowing the truth of that proposition in the sense that this project is concerned with. Moreover, acquaintance and capacity knowledge, as well as the following sort, can be interconnected in complex and interdependent ways. However, for this project I am concerned with propositional knowledge of the form  $s$  knows that  $p$ , where  $s$  designates a person (and usually means a human or kind of animal) and  $p$  designates a proposition. For present purposes I shall avoid taking a stand on what propositions are, and so will treat them as most philosophers have done: as language-neutral meanings of sentences, and basic truth-bearers. Talk of knowledge shall be largely restricted to priming purposes in this introductory chapter, as the heart of the issue at

---

<sup>1</sup> For a treatment of these types of knowledge, see chapter 2 of Modern Epistemology, Nicholas Fisher, Alec Everitt, New York, New York: McGraw-Hill. 1995. pp. 12-29

hand focuses primarily on the justificatory aspects of propositionally knowing. But justification, like knowledge, also contains problems of conflicting intuitions.

The aim of this thesis is to argue that the apparently irreconcilable views of Alvin Goldman's Externalist Reliabilism and Laurence Bonjour's Internalism both have insights that merit an attempt at amalgamation along what I will baptise an epistemological spectrum. Goldman argues that one need not be aware of justificatory reasons in order to be justified in a belief, as long as that belief was appropriately generated. Bonjour argues that one need be aware of the reasons that provide justification for a belief. By examining their debate, and the problem of Bonjour's example of the Norman case in particular, I shall show where Goldman's externalism fails as a theory of justification, but succeeds in capturing an epistemically valid status of rational though unjustified belief. It is Goldman's failure to provide a satisfactory account of the Norman case that lends credence to a Robert Brandom-esque requirement for the giving and taking of reasons, while still maintaining the insights of reliabilism. Further, by asserting epistemic statuses of varying strengths along the spectrum, different sets of further permitted beliefs and actions are generated on the initial belief's behalf. Thus it becomes clearer why some intuitions on thought experiments such as the Norman case are deemed unjustified but still permitted to act in certain rational ways while others are considered justified and permitted to limited actions, while still others are thought strongly justified. Finally, I suggest that Goldman commits an error in reasoning by way of affirming the consequent and invests too much into reliability as evidence for an epistemically right model of justification. Intuitions can be misled and are often misleading; in this case, both occur.

At the core of the issue is the time honoured question of what the appropriate relationship is between belief in a proposition and its truth. Consider the following passage from the Meno:

Socrates: It is because you have paid no attention to the statues of Daedalus, but perhaps there are none in Thessaly.

Meno: What do you have in mind when you say this?

S. That they too run away and escape if one does not tie them down but remain in place if tied down.

M. So what?

S. To acquire an untied work of Daedalus is not worth much, like acquiring a runaway slave, for it does not remain, but it is worth much if tied down, for his works are very beautiful. What am I thinking of when I say this? True opinions. For true opinions, as long as they remain, are a fine thing and all they do is good, but they are not willing to remain long, and they escape from a man's mind, so that they are not worth much until one ties them down by (giving) an account of the reason why. And that, Meno my friend, is recollection, as we previously agreed. After they are tied down, in the first

place they become knowledge, and then they remain in place. That is why knowledge is prized higher than correct opinion, and knowledge differs from correct opinion in being tied down.

(Meno, 97d – 98b)

Here we find two lessons from the Meno. Right opinions, or true beliefs, are ‘beautiful and fruitful’ but they are not the only requirements for knowledge. They must be ‘fastened by the tie of the cause’. When true beliefs are thus bound, Socrates explains, they have ‘the nature of knowledge; and, in the second place, they are abiding’. A relation is thus introduced that must hold, according to Socrates, for one to have knowledge (or justified belief). This appropriate relation is a certain tying down between the truth of the belief (or apparent truth of the belief in the case of justification) and the belief itself. Note also that moving from right opinion to knowledge is characterized as a building process, rather than entirely distinct cognitive activities. Now it may be understood that this appropriate relation, this ‘tying down’, is fastened within the cognizer. In his Philosophical Fragments, Søren Kierkegaard as Johannes Climacus suggests that Socrates’ concept of recollection, the process by which one fastens down true belief, “is interpreted as a kind of remembering; one who is ignorant needs only a reminder to help him come to himself in the consciousness of what he knows. Thus the Truth is not introduced from without, but was within him” (Johannes Climacus (pseudonym), 11). So, our lessons here are that there is a ‘tying down’ justificatory relation that holds between a belief’s truth and the belief itself. This is characterized as the Justified True Belief analysis of knowledge. Second, it appears that this relation occurs within the

individual herself, though this is just what the externalist shall argue against. Neither Goldman nor BonJour argue against the need for an appropriate relation, it is just the nature and of this relation that is intuitively vexing and primarily at stake.

## 1.2 The Foreground

While intuition pumps and thought experiments excite a lavish wealth of imagery, they often become conceptually untenable and difficult to clearly and rigidly ground. The debate gives the impression that for any framework, a counterexample, and for any intuition pump, a contrarian. The Bonjour-Goldman debate is mired in intuitively stalling problems. Though the internalist may argue that the externalist gives only necessary conditions for knowledge or justification, which amounts not to a species of knowing or being justified, but to a pillar towards constructing that end, and the externalist may argue that the internalist provides sufficient conditions for knowing, which only picks out a species of epistemic legitimacy and does not capture the breadth of the concept, little exploration in this direction of their views as either necessary or sufficient conditions has been done between Goldman and Bonjour. The positions are viewed as incompatible.

This thesis consists of four parts. The first is this introduction, a primer for the body of the project. The second is explication of the Bonjour-Goldman debate with emphasis on how the Norman case and responses to it were handled by each philosopher, with particular interest in the implications for internalism and externalism. The other, sometimes irksome thought experiments that are of interest are also considered. The third chapter comprises the bulk of my argument, wherein I appeal to notions introduced by Robert Brandom to argue that there is an epistemological spectrum that captures the insights of both externalism and internalism, without losing (and in fact gaining) various fine grained notions of knowledge, justification, and what I term heuristically fit belief. Heuristically fit beliefs are unjustified, itself permit further rational belief and action. I reconstruct how Goldman generates his

externalist picture, thereby exposing its flaws and retaining its insights. The thought experiments of chapter two are squarely resolved by my proposal and Norman is used as a thread throughout. Finally I suggest that Goldman's brand of externalism is motivated on formally fallacious grounds, wherein he affirms the consequent thereby leading to incorrect conclusions and damaging the epistemic refinements we wish to maintain. In chapter four I provide my concluding remarks.

## **Part II: The BonJour-Goldman Debate**

### **2.1 Goldman's Analysis of Being Justified**

The reasons for interest in a theory of justification are both theoretical and practical. Considering the former, among the pressing intrinsic academic pursuit having to do with whether or not a subject's beliefs are justified, we may be interested in whether or not justified belief is even possible. Aside from such sceptical considerations, interest in a fruitful theory of justification may arise from a desire to make proper ascriptions of unjustified or justified belief, and moreover may be used in the broader project of developing a rich theory of knowledge. Alternately, practical interests in a theory of justification arise particularly gracefully when considering Alvin Goldman's brand.

In his 1985 work Epistemology and Cognition, Alvin Goldman proposes a *reliabilist* theory of justification. Broadly construed, a reliabilist theory of justification will enable that "beliefs [alone] can, at least in some cases, amount to genuine knowledge [or justification]" (Brandom 97). This amounting to genuine knowledge or justification can occur when the "justification condition [of the justified true belief model] is not met (in the sense that the candidate knower is unable to produce suitable justifications), provided the beliefs resulted from the exercise of capacities that are *reliable* producers of true beliefs in the circumstances in which they were in fact exercised" (Brandom 97). Here Robert Brandom provides what he calls the 'Founding Insight' of reliablism *vis-à-vis* that *providing reasons* for a belief's truth is not the only avenue by which to show that if a belief is true, it is not just true by chance. Thus a belief can be justified if it was produced by a reliable process, independent of the subject's awareness of such a reliable process or ability to articulate its reliability. In

addition, the belief need not be true to be justified. Here, however, the practical benefit of reliablism is realised: if *I* know that the subject's belief in a certain proposition is justified, then I have reason for believing in the truth of that proposition. Thus we are practically interested in the degree of justifiedness of a proposition a subject holds, for if it is not justified we have little evidence one way or the other that indicates if the proposition is true. However, if the belief *is* justified (and we are aware of this status) we have some specific evidence for the truth of the proposition. As Goldman notes, "this point meshes with a reliabilist theory of justifiedness. It makes sense to regard someone's justified belief in *p* as evidence for the *truth* of *p* if justified belief is belief formed by a reliable process" (Goldman E & C 58). Otherwise, in cases where a belief is (apparently or actually) justified by means of an unreliable process that happened to obtain (and the subject is appropriately privy to this obtainment), or Gettier<sup>2</sup> style scenarios whereby the truth of the proposition is not what provides the justification for its belief, an observer does not have the same degree of evidence for believing the truth of the subject's justified belief. For even though the proposition is true in these cases, that the subject is justified in believing the proposition does not suggest or guarantee its truth.

The particular sort of reliablism that Goldman adheres to in Epistemology and Cognition occurs within a 'Rule Framework'. Since the language of justification deals with notions of epistemic 'rights' and 'entitlements', Goldman wishes to couch his position within

---

<sup>2</sup> See Edmund Gettier's Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? in Human Knowledge, (Eds.) Paul K. Moser and Arnold Vander. Nat, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. pp. 306-307. Famously, Gettier challenges the sufficiency of the justified true belief analysis of knowledge. Here, we might say that a believed proposition only 'happens' to be true. Knowing that a subject's belief that *p* is justified does little to provide evidence for the truth or falsity of the proposition because the subject is justified *despite* the truth of the proposition.

a language of permissibility and prohibition, “which readily invite a rule formulation” (Goldman E & C 59). Moreover, a rule framework approach allows for formulation of a comprehensive classification of justificational theories as well as greater rigor when evaluating their respective merits. Though our concern shall be with the deeper, specialized levels of the framework, some discussion of his general framing is in order.

Most generally, suggests Goldman, the first principle of a rule framework for justification can be characterized as:

(P3) S’s believing p at t is justified if and only if:

- (a) S’s believing p at t is permitted by a right system of J-Rules, and
- (b) This permission is not undermined by S’s cognitive state at t.

(Goldman E & C 63)

Goldman expects this principle to be widely accepted, if not entirely uncontroversial. It is meant to “express a semantic truth about the language of justified belief” (Goldman E & C 59), though one should not be misled by the language of ‘rightness’. At this level of analysis, talk of rules is meant to be purely formal and neutral, without a regulative ‘guide to action’ dimensional quality. Importantly, “it is not meant to identify any particular factual standards for justified belief” (Goldman E & C 59) but rather inform and specify what shall constitute a full theory of justifiedness that will contain such standards.

A crucial feature of Goldman’s (P3) is that it takes the analysandum as ‘being justified’ rather than ‘being justified in believing that one is justified’. Consider a rejected rule framework offered by Goldman:

(P2) S's believing that p at time t is justified if and only if:

(a) S's believing p at t is permitted by some right J-Rule system R, and

(b) R permits S to believe at t that the (or a) right J-Rule system permits his believing p at t.

(Goldman E & C 61)

Though a much stronger principle than (P3), Goldman is unwilling to cut from his epistemic fabric the intuitional cases that (P2) would disqualify. Children, 'philosophically unsophisticated cognizers', indeed most people, argues Goldman, "do not even have the concept of J-Rules, so they do not have beliefs, and presumably cannot be permitted to have beliefs, about whether their beliefs conform to right J-Rules" (Goldman E & C 62). Indeed, it is against Goldman's intuitions to consider that philosophers, or the intellectually reflective, are the *only* candidates for justified believing. It is just Goldman's point that "a person need not even understand the rules, and if he does, he need not be able to apply them in the process of belief formation" (Goldman E & C 59). Ordinary perceptual beliefs are exemplary of those that Goldman wishes to justify without higher-order over-intellectualization. Even at this level of inquiry, abstracted still from the criteria for a *right* justificatory rule system and, finally, what those particular justificatory rules are, Goldman's project is a squarely *externalist* one. S need not be permitted to believe at t that the right J-Rule system R *permits his or her believing p* in order to be justified in belief that p. The subject need not even understand the rules, let alone form permitted beliefs about them or be capable of their articulation.

Returning to (P3), let us determine what work this principle is doing. Clause (b) is meant to cleanly handle a special collection of intuitionistically problematic beliefs. If the subject's belief in *p* is permitted by a right system of J-Rules but the subject believes that it is not permitted or the subject is permitted by right J-Rules to have a belief in the denial of this permission, then the subject ought to not be justified in his or her belief. Goldman contends that "S's belief, or justification for believing, that the belief in *p* is not permitted *undermines* its permittedness" (Goldman E & C 62). Though a belief may be permitted by clause (a), undermined beliefs ought to be partitioned off and deemed unjustified. Clause (b) thus prevents undermined beliefs from counting as justified. This shall prove important during our comparison between Goldman and BonJour.

Having formulated a general principle by which to guide the remainder of his project, Goldman now stands in need of a rightness criterion for his justificatory rules. Principle (P3) in itself does not indicate particular standards for justification. Moreover, it does not indicate what system(s) of J-Rules is or are correct. Thus Goldman attempts to define a criterion for right J-Rules. A criterion of rightness is meant to "specify factual, substantive conditions for rightness of J-Rules. These cannot be conditions that themselves invoke, or rely upon, epistemic notions" (Goldman E & C 63). The desire to use only nonepistemic language is well guided, for the definition of a criterion of *rightness* ought to contain largely descriptive notions if it is to carry content and be non-vacuous. Additionally, Goldman also does not wish to formulate a 'test' to verify whether particular J-Rule systems satisfy. This criterion is only meant to give a "general set of conditions that are necessary and sufficient for a system of J-Rules to be right" (Goldman E & C 64). The criterion can be correct even if the

ascertainment of the actual J-Rule systems is not feasible or easy. Goldman is presently only interested in what *makes* a system of J-Rules correct rather than how to *tell* it is correct. Determining the former will provide the satisfaction conditions for a criterion of correct J-Rules, while the latter would provide a method for testing particular J-Rule systems of their rightness. Analogously, determining “what makes something a valid law, and what the procedures are for recognizing or verifying that something is a valid law” (Goldman E & C 65) are distinct operations. We do not yet wish to survey for which J-Rule systems are correct J-Rule systems in this second sense. We are interested in what makes a J-Rule system correct.

It is with this criterion that Goldman’s reliablism is articulated. Importantly and somewhat surprisingly, given his already established externalist commitments, Goldman remains neutral with regard to developing a foundationalist or coherentist project. I say surprising because both externalism and reliablism coalesce with a foundationalist epistemic picture, apparently offering solutions to some of the immediate problems of foundationalism. The regress problem shall be considered below. However, remaining neutral on the subject allows Goldman to consider a multiplicity of potential criteria without pre-imposed restrictions.

Two species of J-Rules criteria are considered. Both take as their principal tenet an emphasis on a type of truth ratio. For J-Rule rightness is not simply a function of the total number of obtained truths. Should one believe every proposition one can think of and its negation, a high total number of truths might be attained. Clearly though, a J-Rule system that permitted such a process (namely, only maximization of the quantity of truths) would not

also, necessarily, confer justification. For example, the aforementioned ‘process’ of belief in all thinkable propositions (including their negations) does yield some high number of truths. This is not the sort of reliability Goldman means to capture. This is merely reliability in the sense that truths are, as a matter of fact, produced – regardless of the number of falsities. Identified here is an ambiguity in the notion of reliability and a settlement on the matter. The apprentice may reliably strike the sword 500 times a day, but swing 1000 misguided blows. The master blacksmith may reliably only strike the sword 100 times a day, but never miss his mark. Both reliably produce some high number of successful strikes each day, but it is the latter whose *ratio* is notable, and ‘master blacksmith’ conferring. Similarly, justification conferring reliable processes must be sensitive to the number of falsities they yield in relation to the number of truths. Thus both species of J-Rule criteria are sensitive to the ratio of truths produced.

First, J-Rules criteria of rightness may be sensitive to the capabilities of the sort of cognizer to which they are applicable. Of course, in our case humans are typically considered<sup>3</sup>. These sorts of J-Rules criteria are referred to as *resource-relative*. Herein an acceptable truth-ratio is determined – at least in part – “as a function of the target cognitive system’s resources” (Goldman E & C 104). A resource-relative criterion can be of two types. It may maximize the truth-ratio of beliefs, relative to the capabilities of the ‘resources’, or it may permit processes whose truth-ratio is commonly attained, given the capabilities of the resources. Note that J-Rules criteria that are resource relative guarantee that there will be

---

<sup>3</sup> Though often externalist intuitions wish to give some animals at least some degree of justified belief, if only those that are sufficiently physiologically complex.

some processes which are permitted *just because* they are defined in terms of the abilities of the subject. Wanting to take the challenge of scepticism seriously, wherein there may not be the possibility of justified belief, Goldman opts for a *resource-independent* conception of a right J-Rules criterion. Here a certain fixed truth-ratio must be met in order for a rule system to qualify as justificatory, regardless of the capabilities of the subject. Goldman formulates his absolute, resource-independent criterion of rightness thus:

(ARI) A J-rule system R is right if and only if

R permits certain (basic) psychological processes, and the instantiation of these processes would result in a truth ratio of beliefs that meets some specified high threshold (greater than .50).

(Goldman E & C 106)

Goldman provides this as a schema, rather than the actual criterion, as no high threshold has yet been selected. For our purposes, establishing Goldman's position as far as this level of analysis (namely, not choosing a threshold) is all that is required. It should be noted however, that one would not be able to determine whether a particular J-Rule system is right, given its truth-ratio, without first establishing the qualifying threshold. Particular J-Rules are not of consequence to the project at hand, though the criterion of their selection and the framework of the selector criterion are at issue.

Thus two compliant and related projects in externalism and reliablism are combined in Goldman's analysis of justification. His analysis is externalist insofar as the subject need not have any beliefs about the processes that produce his or her beliefs, what justificatory rules qualify those processes as justification granting, what makes justificatory rules correct,

and under what framework justification is analysed in order to qualify for having a justified belief. His project is reliabilist insofar as it is by some absolute high truth-ratio that the criterion of rightness for justificatory rules is determined. Let us now consider Laurence BonJour's scathing critique and Goldman's attempts at responding.

## 2.2 BonJour's Objections

In his 1985 work Structure of Empirical Knowledge, Laurence BonJour critiques externalist epistemologies generally, and argues strongly against Goldman's formulation in particular. The previously mentioned upshot of some brands of externalism is the apparent solution they offer the foundationalist for the problem of regress. Foundationalist views of epistemology hold that there are basic non-inferentially justified beliefs that act as inferential justifiers for other beliefs. However, a foundationalist must account for "(a) avoiding any requirement that the believer have further justified empirical beliefs to provide reasons for thinking that his allegedly basic empirical beliefs are true (which would destroy their status as basic), while still (b) maintaining in some way the essential connection between justification and truth" (BonJour SEK 34). Some externalist supporters consider their view a solver of this problem<sup>4</sup>. Their reply is that while "there must indeed exist a reason why a basic empirical belief is likely to be true (or...guaranteed to be true) the person for whom the belief is basic need not himself have any cognitive grasp at all of this reason" (BonJour SEK 34). A basic empirical belief is justified by the "obtaining of an appropriate relation" (BonJour SEK 34), connecting the subject's belief to the world. This relation connects the belief to truth in some way, either by likelihood or certainty. We have seen Goldman's reliabilist version of this relation. Thus, says BonJour, it provides "*for anyone who knew about it*, an undeniably excellent reason for accepting the belief" (BonJour SEK 34). But mind that the externalist's subject need not know about this 'excellent reason'. As it is claimed, a basic belief is thus (externally)

---

<sup>4</sup> See D.M. Armstrong's Belief, Truth, and Knowledge. Conceivably, an externalist position is consistent with rejecting traditional conceptions of justification or reasonableness and thus the regress problem does not arise. BonJour is concerned with formulations of externalism that claim to *solve* the problem, not reject it out of hand.

justified independently of any additional beliefs, and the regress problem of foundationalism solved. BonJour contends that externalist epistemology has no such justificatory power: it is not sufficient for justification.

Speaking historically, BonJour characterizes externalism as a radical departure from the epistemologies of the Western tradition. “Descartes...would surely have been quite unimpressed by the suggestion that his problematic beliefs about the external world were justified if only they were in fact reliably caused, whether or not he had any reason for thinking this to be so” (BonJour SEK 37). Externalist formulations of justification do not genuinely appreciate the problem of justified belief, but confuse what is wanted or radically redefine the endeavour’s concepts altogether.

As is similarly the case in the history of Gettier-style problems, BonJour’s method for discrediting externalist accounts of justification and fortifying an internalist view is by means of intuitional thought experiments. BonJour takes externalism to be insulated from a direct refutation, as such a technique would appeal to premises the externalist rejects. Furthermore, Goldman is piloting his project by means of capturing intuitions: wishful thinking and guesswork are not justification conferring, whereas perceptual processes, memory, and patterns of logic are intuitively justification conferring. The externalist enjoys these cases as exemplary of the position. By advancing as far as possible intuitionally, BonJour intends to “exhibit clearly the fundamental intuition concerning epistemic rationality that externalism violates” (BonJour SEK 37).

Let us call this fundamental intuition Bonjour's Insight:

(BI) According to the externalist view, a person may be highly irrational and irresponsible in accepting a belief, when judged in light of his own subjective conception of the situation, and may still turn out to be epistemically justified.

(Bonjour SEK 38)

(BI\*) External or objective reliability is not enough to offset subjective irrationality.

(Bonjour SEK 41)

The second iteration, (BI\*) captures the crux of the matter: that reliability alone *is not enough* to offset subjective irrationality. Though in the following chapter I shall propose that externalism violates an intuition of justification, it is not epistemic rationality, broadly construed, that externalism violates, sympathetic to Bonjour though I am. It is justification that is violated, as part of a spectrum of rational statuses.

To begin his intuitional skirmish, Bonjour considers what sorts of cases are needed. Importantly, they must *only* feature externalist methods of justification, in order to locate only their salient violations of justificatory intuitions. Hence cases of clairvoyant beliefs are proposed, as externalism ought to be generalizable to all forms of non-inferential justified belief, not just those that are realisable. Moreover, whether clairvoyance is possible or impossible is not at issue: the cases are analogous, given the other stated conditions of each case, to any belief forming process. Let us consider Bonjour's cases.

The initial round of cases shall be categorized together for two reasons: first, that they all share a common feature and second, that Goldman's externalist rule framework actually correctly accounts for their intuitional status as unjustified. Common to these cases is the notion that a subject's irrationality "consists in ignoring positive grounds in his possession for questioning either that specific belief [the belief produced by, as a matter of fact, reliable processes] or beliefs arrived at in that general way [the reliable processes themselves]" (BonJour SEK 41). The 'grounds in his possession' are serious reasons why either the clairvoyant belief itself or the process of clairvoyance is unreliable. The subject need not even believe the grounds in his or her possession. Let us call cases of this kind instances where the subject 'knows better than that'. Of course, 'knows' is not meant in any technical sense here outside of that the subject is *aware* of reasons which discredit his or her belief or process of belief acquisition, whether or not they actually believe them – let alone know them. The phrase 'knows better than that' is meant colloquially: in these cases the subject 'knows better than' to maintain belief in p.

At first blush it may seem as though Goldman's account is incorrectly (deemed as such on intuitive grounds) satisfied and permits these cases as justified beliefs, but this is not the case. Goldman does not attempt to offset these cases of subjective irrationality by appeal to objective reliable processes. Instead, recall the undermining condition of his (P3) rule framework:

(P3) S's believing p at t is justified if and only if:

(a) S's believing p at t is permitted by a right system of J-Rules, and

(b) This permission is not undermined by S's cognitive state at t.

(Goldman E & C 63)

Clause (b) is not satisfied by all 'knows better than that' cases. It is "sufficient for undermining that a cognizer believes that certain conditions obtain which, if they did obtain, would entail that the target beliefs are not permitted by a right rule system. The cognizer need not actually have any beliefs about rule systems, rightness, or criteria of rightness" (Goldman E & C 111). It is also sufficient for undermining the target belief if the subject is *justified* in believing that the target belief is unreliably caused, even if the subject does not actually believe that the target belief is unreliably caused. So, those subjects who 'know better than that' may either believe or be justified in believing that certain conditions obtain, namely some reason why clairvoyance is unreliable or the beliefs they have gained from its use are false. If these conditions did obtain, then a right rule system would not permit the target belief justified status because it is undermined. What keeps this an externalist project is Goldman's insistence here that the cognizer is not guided to reason in any particular way and he or she need not have any beliefs about the epistemic machinery itself. Thus these cases are correctly handled by Goldman's formulation as instances of unjustified belief.

BonJour considers an externalist project that features an undermining clause a much stronger and objection resistant position. But BonJour's Norman case proves too powerful an objection, even for these views:

(N) Norman, under certain conditions which usually obtain, is a completely reliable clairvoyant with respect to certain kinds of subject matter. He possesses no evidence or reasons of any kind for or against the general possibility of such a cognitive power or for or against the thesis that he possesses it. One day Norman comes to believe that the President is in New York City, though he has no evidence either for or against this belief. In fact the belief is true and results from his clairvoyant power under circumstances in which it is completely reliable.

(BonJour SEK 41)

In (N), though the intuitive charge of subjective irrationality preventing Norman from being justified persists, Goldman's undermining condition does not properly classify this case as unjustified. Why does the undermining condition fail here? Well, Goldman claims that his position does handle this case correctly, but consider the epistemic moves he wishes to make. His former technique of appealing to the *mere presence* of a reliable and available alternative process does not work here: there are – as a matter of fact – no alternative processes. Of (N), Goldman states that “it is hard to envisage this description holding”<sup>5</sup> (Goldman E & C 112), and determines that “Norman *ought* to reason along” (Goldman E & C 112, note that these italics are Goldman's own!) certain lines. If Norman has clairvoyant power, surely he would find some evidence for it. He would form beliefs inexplicably, and when checked, would

---

<sup>5</sup> Seemingly despite that an upshot of externalism is justified beliefs for some animals, young children, and cases such as blindsight. In all of these cases a belief is held *seemingly ex nihilo* and without accompanying beliefs, one way or another, about the reliable process or the target beliefs – perfectly analogous to Norman.

typically check out positively. “Since I [Norman] lack any such signs, I [Norman] apparently do[es] not possess reliable clairvoyant processes. This undermines his belief” (Goldman E & C 112). What is Goldman actually doing here? Clearly this is a departure of some kind from how ‘knows better than that’ cases were handled. There is an appeal to Norman’s subjective rationality: that he *ought* to reason along certain lines. What if this was the first belief his perfectly reliable clairvoyance engendered? Ought Norman to reason along those lines still? More than this, explicit propositions *ought* to be believed by Norman, e.g. that he lacks signs of reliable clairvoyant processes and thus does not possess reliable clairvoyant processes. These are beliefs about the reliable processes themselves, that Goldman is requiring Norman to hold, in order for his supposedly *externalist* position to correctly disqualify Norman’s justification.

BonJour argues that Goldman is violating his own externalistic tenets and I agree. When Goldman states “the justificational status of a belief is not only a function of the cognitive processes *actually* employed in producing it; it is also a function of processes that could *and should* be employed” the difficulty lies in how to understand that an alternative cognitive process should have been used. “On the surface this seems to be an appeal to the idea of subjective rationality...[and] I have been unable to arrive at any alternative construal of the passage” (BonJour SEK 48). Without appeal to the subjective rationality of the subject, and thereby departing from an externalist program, Goldman is unable to properly deem Norman unjustified.

Should we find this surprising though? Reliable processes appear to be insufficient for justification. “Why should the mere fact that such an external relation obtains mean that

Norman's belief is epistemically justified when the relation in question is entirely outside his ken?" (BonJour SEK 42). If one is to appeal to Norman's subjective rationality, internalist accounts of justification partition off this case much cleaner (insofar as the founding tenets of the position are not violated) than a now dubious externalist account that prescribes how Norman ought to have reasoned. Simply, Norman is not in possession of reasons that justify his clairvoyant belief, and is thus unjustified.

### 2.3 Goldman's Second Effort

Consider Goldman's 1992 work Liaisons: Philosophy Meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences wherein Goldman's initial handling of Norman is recanted and a redesigned approach taken. It is admitted, in the third footnote of chapter nine, that while clause (b) of (P3), the non-undermining provision, aptly handles Bonjour's cases wherein the subject has contrary evidence that he or she ignores, "It is not entirely clear, however, how well these qualifications succeeded with the Norman case" (Goldman L 175). Though Norman possesses no reasons for or against believing that he has a reliable clairvoyant power, nor any other relevant evidence to support the belief formed by his reliable clairvoyance, Goldman's "own assessment is less clear in this than the other [type]...I am tempted to say that Norman's belief is *non*justified, not that it is thoroughly *un*justified, merely nonjustified" (Goldman L 159, Goldman's italics). Continuing, Goldman accounts for those evaluators who would deem Norman *un*justified as relating clairvoyance to a group of scientifically disreputable phenomena, and is hence concluding it is an epistemic vice. This goes so far that now, in footnote four of chapter nine, Goldman discusses Tom Senor's presentation of Norman to his classes for evaluation. Save when Senor describes Norman, clairvoyance is explicitly given the status of vision – the same vividness, visceral impact, meaning and so on, and thus roughly half the class assess Norman as justified in his belief. This is not how the Norman example functions. Norman, as a matter of fact, has *no* reasons for or against the presence of a clairvoyant power among his perceptual abilities, let alone for its reliability. Thus it is disanalogous to vision. Though by unjustified Goldman means "having negative justificatory status" and by nonjustified Goldman means "lacking positive justificatory

status” (Goldman L 159), it seems to remain that Norman ought to have negative justificatory status as well as nonjustification. Describing the Norman case as on par with visual perception is an unfair treatment, unless handled carefully. One cannot assume about the Norman case that he has ever had a clairvoyantly caused belief in his past, let alone opportunity to actually confirm or refute the truth of this belief. Senor does not make this same distinction when describing how Norman’s clairvoyance is related to vision. Ordinary understanding of vision includes a continual engendering of beliefs in the subject as well as confirmation or refutation of their truth (by way of other senses or conversation with other observers), indicating its (normally) high reliability. Should I have *no* reason for or against a belief that I possess sonar and have never had a belief engendered due to sonar before, but in fact I do possess reliable sonar and come to form a vivid, visceral, stimulating true belief that there is a bat behind me in the office, am I justified in this belief? Though I might have an approximation of what it is like to be a bat, I would not be justified in believing there is a bat behind me (nonjustified – lacking positive justificatory status) *and* would have negative justificatory status (unjustified) *just because* of a lack of corroborating or refuting evidence. Should I be considered nonjustified but not unjustified, I would not be epistemically responsible – a very aim of the epistemic project. If Norman had *never* opened his eyes, or – by some miracle – been unable to confirm or refute the testimony of his eyes, then – upon their use – forming beliefs on their behalf would be comparable to his clairvoyance. No useful distinction is gained from the nonjustified / unjustified refinement, as usually one gains a negative justificatory status just because of a lack of a positive justificatory status.

Before we digress further, let us now formally move into the critical and constructive chapter. I take it that Goldman's motivation for externalism is generated via an intuitional illusion and redundant problem solving: the cases the externalism holds as central are not problematic instances of epistemic justification in need of a reliabilist account. Usually, they are not instances of justification at all. Goldman's inability to handle the Norman case plays a crucial role in developing my criticism of his reliabilism. I shall argue that an intuitional illusion has misled Goldman's account of externalism, particularly within the context of his debate with BonJour. Additionally, I shall argue against the sufficiency of externalism to confer justified beliefs and in favour of an epistemology that situates knowledge, justified belief, and what I shall term correct heuristically fit belief all under the umbrella of informing rational belief and action.

## **Part III: The Externalist Mirage**

### **3.1 Generating Externalism**

With some qualifications, I am decidedly in favour of a position with an internalist bent. My thesis is thus: The reasons for endorsing externalism are well intentioned but ultimately fail. Externalism arises from too broadly construing our notion of justification, thus damaging the refinement of the epistemic spectrum. Cases that appear intuitively justified, as the externalist would call them, are not: the subjects in question are just entitled to act and form further beliefs with some degree of epistemic correctness that is not irrational. This does not mean the subjects are *justified* in their beliefs, and that externalism rightly attributes this ‘justification’. A well crafted normative pillar of what is meant by ‘justified’ is lost by the externalist notion of its attribution. Though – as noted at the start of 2.1 – Goldman brand externalism does gracefully provide some practically pleasing results<sup>6</sup>, it does not outperform the internalist position. Moreover, the theoretical motivation for the externalist position is questionable, lacking the teeth required for soundly shoring up its *raison d'être*. An externalist position seemingly correctly captures certain cases as justified while partitioning off certain cases as unjustified, apparently providing some grounding for the position. However, it is these very cases that I charge with being categorized imprecisely, doing violence to a well refined notion of epistemic statuses. Ultimately, this is due to Goldman’s externalist position being open to the charge of affirming the consequent.

---

<sup>6</sup> Such as when an observer is aware that *s* is justified in her belief that *p*, this provides some evidence for the truth of *p*, as it was produced by a reliable process sensitive to some high truth ratio. Recall that “it makes sense to regard someone’s justified belief in *p* as evidence for the *truth* of *p* if justified belief is belief formed by a reliable process” (Goldman E & C 58).

Let us put Goldman's externalist position through its philosophical paces. We shall consider for what reasons it arises, if it suitably satisfies those reasons, and at what cost these benefits come. So why does externalism arise in the first place? Recall Bonjour's remarks that externalism marks a radical departure from much of the Western epistemological tradition and that the prominent figures of the tradition would be unsatisfied with such an account. However, recall what Robert Brandom calls the 'Founding Insight' of reliabilism, baptised here as (FI).

(FI) What I call the 'Founding Insight' of reliabilist epistemologies is the claim that true beliefs can, at least in some cases, amount to genuine knowledge [or justification] even where the justification condition is not met (in the sense that the candidate knower is unable to produce suitable justifications), provided the beliefs resulted from the exercise of capacities that are *reliable* producers of true beliefs in the circumstances in which they were in fact exercised.

(Brandom 97)

Thus we do not see a *total* departure from the Western philosophical tradition. As noted of Plato in Part I, what separates knowledge or justified belief from mere right opinion is an appropriate relation holding between the belief and what makes it true or apparently true. The insight of externalist reliabilism is that this account need not be grasped by the subject. Though Descartes may not be impressed with Goldman's epistemology, Plato may well have been satisfied. An account of an appropriate relation between belief in *p* and the truth of *p* is given. Additionally, not all intuitive examples of externalism in action pertain to 'outlier'

cases, like those of young children and animals. In fact, Goldman argues some of the most central and intuitively obvious cases of knowledge and justified belief are *only* correctly handed by externalism. Because externalism is the only epistemic avenue by which a correct result is rendered, this is taken to show that internalism is unnecessary for justified belief and, since the cases are so intimately tied to our core intuitional beliefs about justification and/or knowledge, that externalism is necessary and sufficient.

Consider the case of stored or dispositional beliefs. Goldman suggests that “at any given time, the vast majority of one’s beliefs are stored in memory rather than occurrent or active” (Goldman IE 278). This includes a whole array of beliefs, including the present year, one’s name, where one’s house is, the nutritional requirements of humans, and so on. “For almost any of these beliefs, one’s conscious state at the time includes nothing that justifies it. No perceptual experience, no conscious memory even, and no premises consciously entertained at the selected moment will be justificationaly sufficient for such a belief” (Goldman IE 278). The charge is that internalism renders these beliefs unjustified, and such a rendering is counterintuitive. Surely belief in one’s own name is justified, without coincidentally occurrent beliefs about what appears on one’s birth certificate, and the reliability of such a document or what one’s parents report to be one’s name, and the reliability of their testimony. Of course one need not actively, consciously possess these beliefs in order to be justified, according to Goldman. Accordingly, the externalist position apparently correctly handles stored beliefs as justified, insofar as they were produced at some point or another via an appropriate reliable process.

Now, consider Goldman's second externally paradigmatic case of justified belief that internalism apparently incorrectly deems unjustified. Here, the subject has formed a belief via a suitably reliable process, but has since forgotten the evidence on which the belief was formed.

"Many justified beliefs are ones for which an agent once had adequate evidence that she subsequently forgot. At the time of epistemic appraisal, she no longer possesses adequate evidence that is retrievable from memory. Last year, Sally read a story about the health benefits of broccoli in the "Science" section of the *New York Times*. She then justifiably formed a belief in broccoli's beneficial effects. She still retains this belief but no longer recalls her original evidential source (and has never encountered either corroborating or undermining sources). Nonetheless, her broccoli belief is still justified, and, if true, qualifies as a case of knowledge. Presumably, this is because her past acquisition of the belief was epistemically proper. But past acquisition is irrelevant by the lights of internalism...because only her current mental states are justifiers relevant to her current belief. All past events are 'external' and therefore irrelevant according to internalism.

(Goldman IE 280)

Here is yet another commonplace example that – on Goldman's view of the internalist position – it threatens to incorrectly classify. While the internalist apparently again has no occurrent beliefs from which to provide epistemic reasons for belief that p, the externalist

apparatus still functions, as forgotten events – in this case – were reliable producers of belief. More than these central cases of justified belief, the externalist may also claim that such a position correctly handles the rarely considered ‘outlier’ cases, where internalism apparently fails.

Consider the cases of animals and young children, chicken sexers, and blindsight. These cases may be construed as instances where the subject has a reliably produced belief but is apparently not in possession of a belief for or against this reliability. Crudely, these are analogous to the Norman case, save for that there our intuitions are that the process is not justification conferring. The first case is evident: while some animals and young children are intuitively permitted to have justification with regard to certain beliefs, they are unaware of the reliable processes that produce such beliefs and unable to articulate them, and thus their beliefs are denied the status of justified according to the internalist. This is the counterintuitive result, cries the externalist, who judges these cases to be justified (apparently in line with our intuitions) insofar as a reliable process engendered the subject’s belief. Industrial chicken sexers can “reliably sort hatchlings into males and females by inspecting them, without having the least idea how they do it...it has been established that although these experts uniformly believe that they make the discriminations visually, research has shown that the cues their discriminations actually depend on are olfactory” (Brandom 103). Now this case is not entirely congruent to that of Norman. Should an industrial chicken sexer believe that visual cues are the process by which they make reliable sexing discriminations, the internalist may classify this case as justified, if so desired. Consider the internalist view that:

Perceptual knowledge, according to any JTB account with any initial plausibility at all, depends on the capacity of the perceiver to offer justifying evidence from which the belief *could* have been inferred, even though in fact that is not how it came about. And the idea of reliability of a belief-forming process is exactly what is required to produce a recipe for such ex post facto justifications of non-inferentially acquired beliefs. In the standard case, we would expect that a reliable chicken-sexer would come to believe that he is reliable. And that belief, together with his inclination to classify a particular chick as male, provides an appropriate inferential *justification* for the corresponding noninferentially acquired belief.

(Brandom 104)

Thus to strain the internalist position into ‘misclassifying’ this case as unjustified and out of line with our intuitions, the chicken sexer must *not* believe that she can reliably discriminate. Though many chicken sexers *do believe* they can reliably discriminate because of visual cues, this not actually being the reliable process at work does not disqualify their belief *that* they are reliable discriminators. Continuing, those with blindsight are blind in the colloquial sense. However, due to a particular occurrence of blindness, they are able to report with greater than random statistical significance the colouring of a square which is held up before them, even though they consciously visually perceive nothing. Usually, one with blindsight does not hold that she is a reliable producer. Expectedly, this is another case wherein the externalist provides the epistemic mechanism of having justified belief (supposedly in line

with intuition, should we consider the blindseer to even have a belief at all<sup>7</sup>) and the internalist must deem these cases unjustified, despite the reliable production of true reports, and possibly beliefs. Here, then, externalism appears to tidily handle our intuitions, while internalism apparently fails.

Thus there are at least two motivating reasons for an externalist theory of justification. Externalism claims to satisfy our intuitions on some high number of justification conferring and justification withholding scenarios by detailing conditions that are necessary and sufficient. Furthermore, the claim holds that many of these cases are mishandled by internalist conceptions of justification. These cases appeal to both the core of epistemic cognition, such as perceptual experience, stored beliefs, and forgotten justifiers as well as infrequently occurring scenarios. Secondly, externalism retains – in some broad sense – a colouring from the Western tradition, insofar as it holds that there is a relation of some kind between the truth of a proposition and the subject's belief, even if this relation is outside of the subject's grasp. Thus we are to understand of externalism that it intuitively rightly handles a certain high ratio (higher than internalist accounts) of justification permitting and justification denying scenarios, while maintaining an appropriately situated historical-philosophical context from which it functions.

---

<sup>7</sup> It is more accurate to say that the blindsighted have some of the functional capacities associated with beliefs. One should consider this example only insofar as ascription of belief possession allows.

### 3.2 A Spectrum Epistemology

I argue that externalism – upon reflection – does not correctly handle the aforementioned cases. Our *prima facie* intuitive responses to these cases may hold that the subjects in question are justified, and that the most complete way of capturing all the desired cases while rejecting those we wish to call unjustified is founded externally. I argue that justification, apparent though it does seem, is not the epistemic status of the subjects in question. Consider what Brandom names the ‘Conceptual Blindspot’ of reliablism:

(CB) It is simply a mistake to think that the notion of being reliable could take over the explanatory role played by the notion of having reasons. For what distinguishes propositionally contentful and therefore conceptually articulated *beliefs*, including those that qualify as knowledge, from the merely reliable responses or representations of noncognitive creatures – those that have know-*how* but are not in the knowing-*that* line of work – is (at least) that they can both serve as and stand in need of *reasons*.

(Brandom 109)

So the conceptual blindspot of externalist reliablism is essentially an overestimation of its founding insight. The “examples of knowledge [or, justified belief] based on reliability without the possibility of offering reason, which motivate the founding insight, are *essentially* fringe phenomena. Their intelligibility is parasitic on that of the reason-giving practices that underwrite ordinary ascriptions of knowledge” (Brandom 110). Consider the case of Norman. What sort of epistemic ‘line of work’ does his belief that the president is in New York City specify? Norman cannot give reasons as to how his belief was reliably

produced, for this information is outside his ken. He cannot give reasons why he is justified in some other way, for – intuitively – he is *not* justified. He is in no position to confirm or disconfirm queries from others as to whether or not the president is in New York City. Why he has had this thought at all, he cannot provide a reason for. What Norman does stand to do is search out confirming or disconfirming reasons as to whether he should continue to believe the president is in New York City, and reasons as to how he formed this viscerally impactful conviction-strength belief in the first place. He may ask for these reasons of others who may know or of the features of the world that may be informative. So, in Brandom’s language in (CB), I hold that Norman may rightly stand in need of reasons but cannot serve as an epistemic reason for other’s pertinent questions about the location of the president or even his own. He is *permitted* to seek out confirming or disconfirming evidence about the location of the president or his own clairvoyance, but is not permitted to figure in an any more complex justificatory epistemic picture regarding the location of the president. Thus he is not justified, and the case for internalism grows, as here Norman’s being justified appears to also mean being able to give reasons. This is something he is quite literally unable to do, for he has no reasons at all, not even false ones. However, he is not totally outside the game of epistemic rationality as he is permitted to stand in need of epistemic reasons for his belief.

The (CB) thesis may be defended thus: if we say Norman is justified in his belief that the president is in New York City, then we also mean that he is in the ‘knowing-that’ rather than ‘knowing-how’ line of work. If this is the case, then “we ought to respect the distinction between genuine perceptual *beliefs* – which require the application of *concepts* – and the reliable responses of minerals, mines, and matador fodder. I claim that an essential element

of that distinction is the potential role as both premise and conclusion in reasoning...that beliefs play” (Brandom 109). So if Norman is justified in a belief, then he must be able to stand in need of and give reasons concerning his belief and the potential role his belief can play as a premise and conclusion. Now, (FI) – the founding insight of reliabilism – maintains that the reliable production of beliefs confers some important epistemic status on them. This is the best way<sup>8</sup>, if we are to take (FI) seriously, of partitioning off those reliable processes of nature which are *merely* reliable from those which are cognitive and conceptually contentful<sup>9</sup>. As Norman *cannot* give reasons in any capacity regarding his belief (for he has none) we cannot call his belief justified. However, again taking (FI) seriously, a reliable process *did* produce his belief, and thus he *is* permitted to stand in need of reasons. Note that permission to seek confirming or disconfirming evidence does not occur for all beliefs – we take the obtaining of a suitable reliable process as sufficient for this permission. Consider an unreliably produced belief that the Sasquatch lives with the Loch Ness monster in Hudson Bay. Certainly the scientific and inquisitive spirit should not be squelched: many more beliefs than those which are reliably produced permit further investigation. However, many do not grant such a permission, such as the belief above: one produced unreliably by throwing mental darts at a board of fictional concepts. I am not permitted to seek confirming or disconfirming evidence on behalf of this belief alone. On Brandom’s view, “besides serving as a kind of reason, reliability can take a subordinate place alongside reasons in

---

<sup>8</sup> Note the claim that “One might choose to draw this line differently, though I am not aware of a plausible competitor” (Brandom 109)

<sup>9</sup> For a full treatment of Brandom on the epistemological practices of socially giving and taking reasons, see Making It Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment. Harvard University Press (Cambridge) 1994.

certifying beliefs as knowledge [or, justified]. But it cannot displace giving and asking for reasons from its central place in the understanding of cognitive practice” (Brandom 110). It is from this tension between the (FI) and (CB) that I wish to propose a fine grained notion of epistemic status. Before we reconsider our cases, recall what Goldman wants a theory of justification to accomplish.

The very language of Goldman’s epistemology is that of permissibility and prohibition, so that it may reflect a notion of ‘rights’ or ‘entitlements’. Thus Goldman wishes for his epistemology to *permit* justification of a belief. Moreover, and in a very familiar way, a justified belief *itself permits* further rational beliefs and actions. For example, a subject’s justified belief that the building she is presently in is aflame (alongside other desires and beliefs, such as wanting to not perish and a belief that fire is the sort of thing that can cause dying) *permits* a rational action: her evacuation. Interestingly, *rational actions and beliefs need not be justified*. A justified belief is just one kind of, broadly put, rational belief. I wish to propose the following ‘Spectral Epistemology’, wherein there are refined gradients of the status of beliefs, each of differing rational quality and permitting power. I argue for the following epistemic spectrum on the grounds that the insights of both (FI) and (CB) provide reason to consider epistemic statuses as stratified. On one hand, *that* a reliable process obtains *appears* to often confer the status of justification. I argue that this is a façade, and that *while the conferred status is under the cloth of rational belief* it is not cut of the justified sort. Beliefs of this status permit the subject to stand in need of reasons. Norman is an example where Goldman’s account confers justification, though intuitively Norman is not justified and, more concretely, is unable to observe fully (CB). Though he is unjustified,

Norman stands in need of confirming or disconfirming reasons, and his reliably produced belief, if we are to take (FI) seriously, ought to alone have permissive power to rationally allow such actions. Thus an epistemic hierarchy is needed. Conversely, the giving and taking of reasons for a belief and the role it plays appears to be the business of knowledge and justified belief. I shall refine justified belief into two senses. Note that I shall largely retain the language of reliable processes, but this is now just one of many available reasons which can serve to permit a respective epistemic status.

(KB):           Known Belief: S's Strong Justified belief that p is true.

(SJ):           Strong Justified Belief: S is aware of (able to articulate/occurrently present) the reliable process that produced the belief that p. S is *acquainted* with the reliable process that produced the belief and not just *that* the process was reliable. S is occurrently aware of the content, so to speak, of the reliable process. Moreover, this belief is not undermined.

(WJ):           Weak Justified Belief: S is aware *that* (able to articulate/occurrently present) a reliable process produced the belief that p. S is not *acquainted* with the reliable process that produced the belief and is only aware *that* the process was reliable, and this belief is not undermined.

(HF): Heuristically Fit Belief: S is unaware of (unable to articulate/not occurrently present) the reliable process that produced the belief that p. It need only be the case *that* a reliable process of some high truth ratio produced the belief that p and this belief is not undermined.

(IR): Irrational Belief: S believes that p and no reliable process or other rational epistemic conferring reasons produced the belief that p.

I take it that the range of epistemic statuses can be refined further. Surely, the status of irrational belief alone lends itself to further refinement into several levels of varying irrationality. However, this level of resolution shall do for our present purposes. Further, I take this spectrum to be indicative of the rational permissiveness of each sort of belief. A (HF) belief does not permit the same range and sort of beliefs (and actions, presumably) of a (WJ) belief. Norman, for example, has a heuristically fit belief regarding the location of the president. This permits him a certain range of rational actions including, perhaps, performing actions that are designed to either confirm or disconfirm his belief about the president's whereabouts. He would not be permitted to, say, confirm or disconfirm *other's queries to him* about the location of the president, even though he holds a rational belief that contains this content. Confirming other's queries may be an action that would be permitted if Norman were (WJ) in his belief about the location of the president. The content specified by (WJ), (SJ), or (K) is just the content that is salient when an interlocutor is attempting to confirm or disconfirm p based on Norman's testimony. How these epistemic statuses specify further

permitted beliefs and actions – while itself an interesting project – is not the focus of this work. All that needs to be granted is *that* they specify further permitted beliefs, and that these sets of specified beliefs vary between statuses. Each stronger status has associated with it increasingly permitting further beliefs and actions. Identifying the actual further beliefs and actions is also unnecessary for present purposes. These are largely dependent on the particular content of each belief. However, it is important to note certain permitted further actions and beliefs. For example, heuristically fit beliefs will permit the subject to stand in need of reasons, thus allowing her to endeavour to confirm or disconfirm her belief. Weakly justified beliefs entitle the subject to respond to simple queries, such as whether or not the president is in New York City. Strongly justified beliefs entitle responses to more detailed questions, such as how or why the president is in New York City, and known beliefs will permit the subject to both stand in need of reasons and give increasingly complex reasons concerning her belief. Of course, many further beliefs and actions are permitted in each status, some dependent on the particular content of the p, others dependent on other beliefs and their epistemic status, and so on.

Now, the question arises as to what licenses entitlements for heuristically fit beliefs, since it cannot be justification. The beliefs of this status are unjustified, but still rational. What grants them license to further permit other beliefs and actions is just that they were reliably produced by some appropriate process. This is a result of considering (FI) as restricted by (CB). Though reliably produced beliefs are of an epistemically legitimate status, this status is not justification or knowledge. This status at least permits the heuristic endeavouring towards the confirmation or disconfirmation of the belief in question because

the reliability of the process that produced the belief so licenses. A subject can distinguish heuristically fit beliefs from irrational beliefs insofar as the subject is aware of why some irrational beliefs are irrational. Beliefs whose irrationality is unknown to the subject are indistinguishable from heuristically fit beliefs (prior to pursuing their confirmation or disconfirmation) as what makes (HF) beliefs rational – their reliability – is entirely outside the subject’s ken.

Ironically, Goldman hints at developing this sort of epistemological refinement. He does this in two ways, though I shall only endorse one. The suggestion that the Norman case ought to be handled by differentiating between unjustified and nonjustified is just the sort of refinement that I reject. Though by unjustified Goldman means “having negative justificatory status” and by nonjustified Goldman means “lacking positive justificatory status” (Goldman L 159), it seems to remain that Norman ought to lack positive and have negative justificatory status. Justificatory stratification of Goldman’s type does not properly figure. Cases where only externalistic machinery is operating often do not suggest justification, and often suggest cognitive irresponsibility, as Norman illustrates. When Norman holds his clairvoyantly attained belief about the location of the president, merely stating that he lacks positive justificatory status does little to capture the unique details of his situation. A completely irrationally formed belief may also be described in this way, but Norman’s belief does permit some limited range of rational beliefs and actions and is so different from just lacking positive justificatory status. Stating that Norman *only* lacks positive justificatory status and does not have negative justificatory status is little help: there is no conceptual space here. When one lacks positive justificatory status, the further beliefs and actions permitted are not

of the (WJ), (SJ), or (K) class and the further beliefs and actions permitted may be of the (HF) class. When one has negative justificatory status, again the further beliefs and actions permitted are not of the (WJ), (SJ), or (K) class and the further beliefs and actions permitted may be of the (HF) class. Thus, as far as normative epistemic ascriptions and rational further belief and action permissions, lacking positive justificatory status *is the same as* having negative justificatory status. This distinction does not differentiate between cases where a belief may be further belief and action permitting and cases where a belief is not further belief and action permitting. Or, put concretely, using Goldman's distinction we cannot tell how it is that Norman is permitted in some further actions, whether or not he only lacks justificatory status or both lacks justificatory status and has negative justificatory status. The conditions of (HF), among the others, determine these distinctions.

Epistemic operations irrespective of the subject not only lack justification conferment, but generate a negative stigma. Being justified is a *doing* of some sort and being unjustified is just this lack. 'Not being justified' is not describable in the two ways at issue. Or rather, it is, but they capture precisely the same targets and no substantial epistemic<sup>10</sup> differences. Anytime a subject is not justified, they are not only a 'non-participant', but a *counter*. According to my spectral epistemology I can explain the different status of say, Norman's belief and a totally irrational belief as one of degree; Goldman's nonjustified–unjustified distinction is a difference of kind: what is meant by the analysandum has

---

<sup>10</sup> Of course the distinction between lacking positive justificatory status and having negative justificatory status may designate different sets in other fields, or even other branches of epistemology. Within the debate of Goldman and Bonjour, this distinction does little to help reconcile their positions or even advance the dialogue. Namely, one cannot determine *how it is that* Norman's belief about the president, while not justified as they both agree, is not totally epistemically irrational and thus permitting of certain actions and beliefs.

changed. One does not lack positive justificatory status while, at the same time, not have negative justificatory status. Both nonjustified and unjustified specify beliefs of the same status class. I take this to be what is special about normative epistemology. Lacking positive justification for a belief that *p* *just means that* one has negative justificatory status. The converse is also true. If nonjustified were an epistemic status with clout, that is, it specified some beliefs that were not unjustified but only nonjustified, consider the beliefs one could hold. I would only 'lack positive justificatory status' for some beliefs that I did not have reason not to believe. Goldman does not indicate what it is about these beliefs that *make* them only nonjustified, other than that they cause problems for externalism. This is epistemically irresponsible, not on the subject's part, but for our theoretical development: the set of beliefs which can be counted as nonjustified and not unjustified is an empty set, lest we radically change what we mean by justification. I wish to give gradient refinement to epistemic statuses, whereas a notion of nonjustified is not analysing the notion into its parts but changing its meaning. Even if there is an instance of a belief that is nonjustified but not also unjustified, this is not the kind of distinction that explains Norman type beliefs as contrasted against purely irrational beliefs. Below, Norman will be handled without appeal to this distinction of kind.

The second hinting at epistemological refinement that Goldman offers is much more appealing to my spectral epistemology, though it arises in talk supportive of reliabilism. Consider the following passage:

Support for reliabilism is bolstered by reflecting on *degrees* of justifiedness.

Talk of justifiedness commonly distinguishes different grades of justifiedness:

‘fully’ justified, ‘somewhat’ justified, ‘slightly’ justified, and the like. These distinctions appear to be neatly correlated with degrees of reliability of belief-forming processes. Not all perceptual processes or memory processes, for example, confer equal grades of justification. A belief based on fleeting or careless perceptual exposure is generally less justified than a belief based on ample and attentive perceptual examination. A belief based on a hazy recollection is less justified than one involving a vivid memory. These intuitions of justificational strength are traceable to truth ratio. Perceptual processes featuring more extensive, leisurely observation tend to have higher truth ratios.

(Goldman E & C 104)

Despite surfacing in support of reliablism, it is clear that there is an intuition in favour of processes that grant justification in terms of degrees. Presumably, beliefs of varying justificational status themselves permit varying further beliefs and actions. The insight of my position is that there is an epistemically real status of rational belief *that is itself unjustified (and, nonjustified)*, yet may *permit* the subject to form certain equally as restricted rational limited beliefs and perform certain equally as restricted rational limited actions. This is what I have called (HF) or Heuristically Fit Belief. The appeal of this epistemic status shall become apparent below, but now consider my example of perceptual beliefs, as considered above by Goldman:

If one is in her or his study and hears a new and unique sound ring, they may form a belief that they heard a sound of a certain character and that somebody is at the door. Say this

sound is the subject's doorbell, and she has not yet heard the novel chime, having newly moved into the residence, but she is still able to identify that some kind of noise occurred whose character usually indicates the presence of a visitor at the door. The subject is only (HF) in her belief as to the character of the sound at this point because a reliable process produced the belief, but she is unaware that a reliable process, such as her auditory systems, obtained (which would be WJ) or the content of that reliable process, such as the details of her auditory system (which would be SJ). Perhaps our subject was wearing music playing headphones and is unsure whether or not they interfered with her hearing the character of the strange sound. They did not, though our subject even has reason to doubt her belief as to the character of the sound. Having a (HF) belief however, she is permitted certain actions. She may – also believing that it was the doorbell – go to the front door and repeatedly press the doorbell button. She does this, and confirms that the character of the sound is as she thought it was. Moreover, she owns a computer program that visually represents audio as waves, and she visually confirms the character of the sound. Further, the visitor who was at the door, informs her that the chime is 'Auld Lang Syne', and our subject is able to confirm the similarities in character between other renditions of the song and her doorbell chime. Thus, upon some perceptual input, she had a (HF) belief, which she was permitted to confirm or disconfirm by using information from the testimony of her hearing and other senses, and the testimony of others. Here the appeal of the heuristically fit status is apparent: it allows for ordinary investigation into the empirical world while being situated within a refined epistemic picture.

Of course, while strictly speaking our beliefs immediately derived from experience may count as (HF), various confirming or disconfirming perceptual inputs usually occur in concert. When I see a mug and I form beliefs about its character (shape, colour, temperature, etcetera) I can also usually feel the mug, confirming or disconfirming its shape and temperature, or ask another about their perception of its character. Upon several occurrences of her doorbell chiming when she is in different ‘auditory’ circumstances (with headphones on at volume  $n$ , without headphones on, in different locations in the house), and given her confirming or disconfirming permitted actions that follow, she may form a belief about her reliability as an ‘Auld Lang Syne’ door chime hearer in various contexts, and becomes aware *that* she is reliable in certain contexts. She may trust that she heard the doorbell in the study but believes that she is probably mistaken when she thinks she hears the chime while in the basement. If she investigates the nature of this reliability, she may form beliefs about her auditory system and how sounds travel in the materials of her house. So, a belief is not fixed into its epistemic caste full stop: a subject may increase or decrease her epistemic status level for any given  $p$ , should the conditions for a given epistemic status actually be satisfied. This is what occurs in many cases entertained by the externalist, and these cases are what are confused as instances of justification. When instances of (HF) beliefs are thought to be justified, we lose the refinements we wish to make to a notion of justification, since in these instances *any* appropriately produced belief that  $p$  is justified.

Recall that stored beliefs have no consciously occurrent internalist justifier. Contrary to our intuitions that they are justified, upon reflection I suggest that they are not justified in the strong sense. Moreover, unless what I term ‘belief flagging’ has occurred, these beliefs

may not be justified at all but only heuristically fit. Consider the case where a stored belief is ‘flagged’ with the notion that it was produced by a reliable process, but the details of this process are inaccessible. That one can express an awareness that a belief that *p* was produced by a reliable process is sufficient to qualify belief in *p* as justified in the weak sense. I take this belief flagging – wherein a belief that *p* is flagged with a marker *that* it was appropriately produced – to occur more often than we might think. In what sort of cases does this usually occur? Well, examining the range of stored beliefs produces many examples. As one stores a ‘stored belief’, the details of what strongly justified it are often omitted in favour of simply flagging the belief as appropriately produced. Importantly, one need not ever be strongly justified in a belief that *p* in order to flag that it was appropriately produced. One may form a belief that *p* and be aware that this belief was formed via an appropriate process while not being aware of the details of this process at all. What is required for a stored belief to qualify as weakly justified is that this belief be flagged as appropriately produced. Should *s* be pressed for the details of these appropriate processes and be unable to produce them, then we cannot grant strongly justified status. Importantly, if *s* has not flagged a stored belief as appropriately produced, then on what ground are we to say *s* is justified? I argue that while our initial intuitions may lead us to still grant some form of justified epistemic status, we now have reason to deny this. If *s* is unaware that an appropriate process produced the belief that *p* and *p* was in fact produced by an appropriate process, then this belief is only heuristically fit. In some limited way the belief that *p* *does permit* *s* to form further beliefs and perform certain actions despite this belief being unjustified. However, if *s* is unaware of whether or not an appropriate process produced the belief that *p* and *p* was *not* produced by an

appropriate process, then the belief that *p* is both unjustified and irrational – or at least falling below our heuristically fit epistemic status. I handle the case of forgotten evidence in much the same way. Should the belief be flagged as formed via an appropriate process, then one is weakly justified despite forgetting the details of this process. Where *s* has not flagged her belief but it was appropriately produced, then we confer heuristically fit epistemic status and the limited entitlements it carries – perhaps a permission to seek confirmation or disconfirmation of the belief, and certainly not permission to confirm or disconfirm the queries of others. Where the belief was not appropriately produced, not even (HF) is conferred.

Now consider the fringe cases that the externalist cites as improperly handled by the internalist position. The beliefs of animals and children should be considered heuristically fit at most, rather than justified. Though the epistemic status of (HF) beliefs is not part of our usual epistemic intuitional repertoire, there is an important class of beliefs that it does specify wherein those beliefs entitle *s* to form further beliefs and perform certain limited actions but those beliefs are not themselves justified or entirely irrational. Hence in the case of animals and children, most of their beliefs – namely the ones the externalist feels are intuitionally justified – are merely instances of heuristically fit belief.

Both the chicken sexer and blindseer are also gracefully handled by spectral epistemology. It is important to note that this position is not a radical departure from internalism. My epistemic spectralism retains a robust notion of internalism as what beliefs qualify for justified and known is still a function entirely internal to the subject. It merely refines the notion of justification to accommodate the conceptual blindspot of reliabilism

while introducing a new epistemic status that captures the reliabilist founding insight. Thus the chicken sexer is handled just as the aforementioned cases are processed. If the chicken sexer has, as a result of gathered information come to form a belief that she is a reliable discriminator but is unable to indicate the details of this reliability, then the beliefs in question are weakly justified. Alternately, should the chicken sexer be a reliable producer, but she holds no beliefs for or against this reliability (perhaps she is still new to the job and has not yet realized her ability has become reliable) then beliefs formed as a result of this process are heuristically fit. Indeed, the chicken sexer is entitled to place chicks she believes to be male in free ranges (ideally) or conveyors (realistically) labelled 'M'. In a way this practice just is seeking confirming or disconfirming evidence as to one's reliability as a chicken sexer: one continues to adjudicate and observes the results.

The case of blindsight is similarly handled. As those with blindsight are blind as it is usually understood save for their one special qualification, they are particularly good candidates for the scenario wherein the subject is not aware there is an appropriate process obtaining when there is, though they report the fruits of this process, or even when the subject believes that an appropriate process is not obtaining. In the first case, the blindseer's beliefs (if we so call them that) are only (HF), though they do entitle the subject to some further beliefs and actions, namely the reporting of the colours to the researchers. As the researchers confirm to the blindseer that their reports are reliable, one would expect the blindseer to then form a belief *that* an appropriate process is producing the beliefs and these beliefs would now qualify as weakly justified and enjoy the increased belief and action permitting power that accompanies this status, such as confirming or disconfirming the

queries of others who cannot see the objects in question as to their colour. Note that I am not prescribing that the blindseer must reason along these lines (perhaps she distrusts the researcher, or the testimony of the researcher is not as viscerally compelling as her subjective experience of lack of colour), given the confirming feedback from the researchers: it is merely an avenue that would possibly become available. In the second case the blindseer's belief is *undermined* in just the same way Goldman undermines reliably produced beliefs. Since the blindseer believes she does not possess an appropriate process that could produce the respective belief, a belief actually produced by this appropriate process is undermined as a candidate for (HF) and its entitlements. As researchers give confirming reports to the blindseer as to her reliability, she may become neutral with regard to the appropriate process (thus qualifying for (HF)) and perhaps, become aware that an appropriate process is producing, thus qualifying for (WJ).

The once difficult to adjudicate Norman case is also handled well under epistemic spectralism. Norman is heuristically fit, just as the dog or inexperienced reliable chicken sexer. He is not *justified* (strongly or weakly) regarding his belief that the president is in New York City. However, he *is* entitled to certain further beliefs and actions on this heuristically fit belief's basis. For example, Norman may rationally act towards investigating whether or not the president actually is in New York City *based on* his seemingly ex nihilo belief that such is the location of the president. As a matter of fact, it is not ex nihilo for it was formed due to an appropriate process. This is what any traditional perceptual sense, on its own, entitles us to do: confirm or refute the seemingly ex nihilo formed beliefs via the other senses or confirmation or refutation from others. In the case of clairvoyance it is just that

confirmation or refutation via other senses is not immediately available. Norman has a strong belief – a conviction, even – that the president is in New York City. This belief was formed via a reliable process that Norman does not believe is or is not reliable, or even that he possesses it. Surely he is entitled to some kind of rational further belief formation and action, and surely he is not justified. More than this, he is unjustified, and if we care to remark, nonjustified.

### 3.3 The Illusion

Thus is the insight of epistemic spectralism: knowledge and justification are not the only epistemic statuses that confer entitlement for further rational belief and action. As a result, there are certain *unjustified* statuses that do have entitlement power: here we have gestured towards characterizing one such status as (HF). We began this chapter with a series of questions that we are now in a position to better answer. Goldman maintains that externalism arises because it satisfies cases, core and outlier, where internalism does not. Moreover it has the practical upshot that knowing that a belief was produced via a reliable process suggests that belief's truth. We have shown that externalism does not, upon reflection, suitably satisfy the cases it claims, and that should we employ it we would lose refined senses of justification as *any* belief that p that was produced via a reliable process would be justified, such as Norman's presidential belief.

Given this failure of externalism, it might be said that there is a more basic and, ultimately, problematic reason from which it arises. While sometimes the chicken sexer is entitled to act *as though* he or she is justified, it is just justification that he or she is lacking. Indeed, the entitled beliefs and actions of a (K) p entirely include those of a (SJ) p, in addition to having many more. Similarly, the entitled beliefs and actions of a (SJ) p entirely include those of a (WJ) p in addition to having many more. The (WJ) p entitlements entirely include (HF) entitlements, again, while having many more. From here there is an 'intuitive illusion' by which the externalist becomes a victim. The chicken sexer is only acting and believing within the scope of (HF) further entitlements, but because these entitlements are entirely included within justified statuses (meaning, all of (HF) further permitted beliefs and

actions are contained within (WJ), (SJ), and (K)), the externalist claims that the intuition is that the chicken sexer is justified. It is thought that since the chicken sexer may act and form beliefs *seemingly as though* he or she is justified, then *intuitively they are* justified and an account of justification must be created that obtains in this and related cases. The baby may act as though he or she is justified, and so too the subject with unflagged stored beliefs, but because justified statuses exhaust this set of entitlements *does not mean it is justification that is permitting* these entitlements. The illusion of externalism is created by an affirmation of the consequent:

If one is justified in p, then one may believe p and believe and act in a certain way.

One may believe p and act or believe in a certain way

Therefore one is justified.

This is clearly mistaken reasoning. Analogously, running on a treadmill causes the runner to sweat whereas running on a sidewalk causes the runner to both sweat and be propelled forward. Our metaphorical externalist here asks if the subject is running on a sidewalk then he is sweating, sees that the runner is sweating, and concludes that the runner is on the sidewalk. However, the runner is on a treadmill. It is being propelled forward (in our limited example) that is constitutive of running on the sidewalk. To see this in Goldman, recall his (ARI), the absolute resource-independent criterion for justifiedness:

(ARI) A J-rule system R is right if and only if

R permits certain (basic) psychological processes, and the instantiation of these processes would result in a truth ratio of beliefs that meets some specified high threshold (greater than .50).

(Goldman E & C 106)

So, biconditionally rephrased, if the permissive justificatory rule system R is right (justifying), then a psychological process results in a truth ratio of beliefs that meets some specified high threshold. On Goldman's view a psychological process does result in a truth ratio of beliefs that meets some specified high threshold in both paradigmatic and outlier cases considered (for example, Norman). Therefore these examples are instances of justification, as the J-rule system is deemed right. This is affirming the consequent. Moreover, consider Goldman's initial response to Norman. Here, if Norman is justified in believing that he does not possess reliable clairvoyant powers, then Norman may believe p (that he does not possess reliable clairvoyant powers) and ought to further believe and act in a certain way (namely, reason that he does not have clairvoyant powers), Norman may believe p and ought to further believe and act, therefore Norman is justified in believing that he does not possess reliable clairvoyant powers.

Consider also Goldman's practical considerations for externalism, wherein knowing that s's belief that p was reliably formed is evidence for p being true. But how can we tell if one's belief is justified or unjustified, particularly when the subject cannot articulate the reasons (reliable processes) for their justification? Well, they are observed. Their testimony and actions are judged in light of the p at issue and how appropriately, if their belief in p

were epistemically sound, their testimony and actions follow. Goldman might cite the case of the chicken sexer here. Take the proposition ‘chick  $x$  is a male’, as spoken by our subject. One evidence gathering way to discover whether or not this proposition is likely true is to observe the behaviour of the chicken sexer. If he is justified in  $p$ , then he will be able to reliably sort chicks, when we do observe her reliably sorting chicks, we say that she is justified and that this justification provides reason to believe the truth of the proposition. But note that this is an affirmation of the consequent, and that it need not be justification that the reliably successful sorting behaviour is indicating.

The motivating reasons for externalism and its insights do not rightly apply to what we wish to call epistemic justification, but rather another epistemic status that falls under the broad range of rational beliefs. This is what we call heuristically fit beliefs. This affirmation of the consequent and resultant intuitional illusion has misled Goldman’s account of externalism, particularly within the context of his debate with BonJour. Additionally, externalist reasons to grant justified beliefs of any kind are insufficient full stop. However, externalism does inform my position. (HF) beliefs are just those that are unjustified but still provide some entitlement: namely, the exclusive epistemic machinery here is externalist. This inspires a gradient continuum of epistemic rationality, wherein knowledge has the most entitlement power but maintains the strictest conditions. Strongly justified belief sees a reduction in entitlement power but a loosening of conditions. This trend continues through weakly justified beliefs and heuristically fit beliefs, with the latter losing its status as justified and gaining status as unjustified. Otherwise, externalism does violence to the fine distinctions we wish to make within the umbrella of epistemic rationality. By opening the floodgates,

justified status is granted to cases where there is only limited entitlement and all cases of justification have essentially the same satisfaction conditions. Though Goldman speaks of having ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ senses of justification, these are only sensitive to the truth ratio of a reliable process, and not formal conditions strictly defining increasingly strict (and thus more powerful) senses of justification.

Thus my position amounts to two related though distinct contributions to the literature. The first is that there is rational epistemological space for a belief status that is itself unjustified but does provide limited rational belief and action entitlements. The second is that this status creates the illusion that purely externalist epistemological schemes provide robust theories of justification and knowledge. They do not. Our intuitions may suggest that an externalist theory of justification is needed in order to satisfy, but upon reflection it becomes apparent that the insights and blindspots of externalism ought to be massaged into but a part of a complete spectrum of epistemology.

## **Part IV: Finale**

### **4.1 Concluding Remarks**

Thus my hierarchical spectral epistemology blends the insights of internalism and externalism. I argue for this spectrum on the grounds that all cases (including Norman, core and outlier) are properly handled, that Goldman's nonjustified versus unjustified distinction is not the sort of distinction that properly handles Norman, and that both the founding insight and conceptual blindspot of reliabilism are taken into account. From the founding insight of reliabilism I take the notion that a reliably produced belief alone *does* have a legitimate rational epistemic status, but I dismiss that it is justification. I do this on the grounds that reliabilism also contains a conceptual blindspot, wherein we must maintain that 'knowing that' is distinguished from 'knowing how' by (at least) standing in need of and being able to give reasons. This distinction is of particular importance to reliabilist projects (or projects such as mine that want to take into account the founding insight of reliabilism) as it helps to partition off non-cognitive *merely* reliable natural processes from conceptually contentful reliable processes. When *only* a reliably produced belief is under consideration, the subject only stands in need of reasons and cannot give reasons. Justification is in the business of permitting the giving of and standing in need of reasons, whereas heuristic fitness is only in the business of permitting standing in need of reasons. Thus, while knowledge, both sorts of justification, and heuristic fitness are all rationally epistemic permission granting statuses, heuristic fitness does not gain this license via justification, as it is squarely unjustified. Rather, it is only the reliability of the process that produced the belief that provides the license to stand in need of reasons.

The refinements I make to epistemic statuses themselves stand in need of further analysis. The notion of 'irrational' beliefs alone no doubt contains several categories of varying irrationality. Moreover, interesting research projects are generated that inquire as to how a particular epistemic status specifies its set of entitlements, and what a more complete offering of those entitlements looks like. Here I have offered two in that (HF) beliefs permit one to stand in need of reasons and stronger epistemic statuses than (HF) permit one to serve in offering of reasons. This is the work for another day.

## **Bibliography**

“External Versions of Foundationalism”

Laurence Bonjour in Structure of Empirical Knowledge, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985.

“Toward a Defence of Empirical Foundationalism”

Laurence Bonjour in Resurrecting Old-Fashioned Foundationalism, (Ed.) Michael R. Depaul, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc, 2001.

“Actions, Norms, and Practical Reasoning” and “Insights and Blindspots of Reliabilism”

Robert B. Brandom in Articulating Reasons: An Introduction to Inferentialism, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003.

“Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?”

Edmund Gettier in Human Knowledge, (Eds.) Paul K. Moser and Arnold Vander Nat, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

“Chapter 9: Epistemic Folkways and Scientific Epistemology”

Alvin Goldman in Liaisons: Philosophy meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992.

“Internalism Exposed”

Alvin Goldman in The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 96, No. 6 (Jun., 1999), pp. 271-293 Published by: Journal of Philosophy, Inc.

“Justification: A Rule Framework” and “Justification and Reliability”

Alvin Goldman in Epistemology and Cognition, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985.

“A Project of Thought”

S. Kierkegaard, translated by David F. Swenson, translation revised by Howard V. Hong in Philosophical Fragments, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1936.

“Meno”

Plato, translated by G.M.A. Grube in Plato Complete Works, (Eds.) John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company Inc. 1997.