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THE KNOWER, INSIDE AND OUT

ABSTRACT. Adherents of the epistemological position called internalism typically believe that the view they oppose, called externalism, is such a new and radical departure from the established way of seeing knowledge that its implications are uninteresting. Perhaps it *is* relatively novel, but the approach to knowledge with the greatest antiquity is the one that equates it with *certainty*, and while this conception is amenable to the demands of the internalist, it is also a non-starter in the opinion of almost all contemporary epistemologists since obviously it directly implies that we know nothing about the world. Perhaps skepticism is correct, but there are conceptions of knowledge at least as plausible as the certainty equation that do not obviously land us there. It is its promise along these lines that makes the so-called 'traditional' conception of knowledge initially interesting. But contrary to popular belief, the traditional conception cannot be claimed by internalists if it is to have any chance at all in avoiding skepticism; to avoid skepticism, I shall argue, it has to have an externalist element.

Moreover, each of the departures from the traditional view that appears in the Gettier literature is externalist as well, or at least all of the ones of which I am aware. The only genuine forms of internalism are those held by philosophers who draw a fairly sharp line between knowledge and justified belief, ignore the former, then offer an internalist account of the latter. This approach is very common and very plausible. But it is not as useful as is often thought; in particular, I shall suggest, it must succumb to a form of skepticism.

1. THE PROJECT

The oldest and most venerable project to be pursued by epistemologists (perhaps even the most venerable project of *any* philosopher) was to decide whether they possessed knowledge of the world in the face of skeptical doubts such as the possible existence of Cartesian demons, and if it turned out to be possible, they wanted to explain what sort of knowledge is possible and *how* it is possible. Two things are requisite to an answer: a statement of the *conditions* under which knowledge would exist were those conditions met, and either a convincing argument that those conditions *are not* (or cannot be) met, or else a good argument that they *are* in fact met, skeptical doubts notwithstanding, either because skeptical possibilities are incoherent and hence not possibilities after all, or else because the knowledge conditions can be met in spite of the existence of skeptical possibilities.

Even today there are philosophers who argue that knowledge is impossible and others who argue that skeptical doubts are incoherent.¹ Among those *antiskeptics* who think skeptical scenarios are indeed coherent, there is great disagreement, not just in the antiskeptical arguments they endorse, but also, more fundamentally, over just what knowledge is. Still, none of these people construes it as the capacity to prove beyond any possible doubt what we believe to be true, for this equation of knowledge with certainty obviously plays immediately into the hand of the skeptic.

I suggest that most of the work being done by epistemologists in recent years is designed to contribute to a plausible version of anti-skepticism. The idea is to find a viable account of knowledge that is less demanding than the equation of knowledge with certainty, so that the possibility of knowledge can be defended in the face of skeptical worries. I want to offer an examination of the options of hopeful antiskeptics. My sketch will eventually lead to a consideration of the relative merits of the internalist and externalist approaches to knowledge.

2. THE 'TRADITIONALIST' APPROACH TO KNOWLEDGE

Antiskeptics might begin their search for a decent picture of knowledge by equating it with something Bertrand Russell would have called "probable opinion" but which today is called 'the traditional conception'.² As traditionalists, they could search for some notion of justification or warrant given which we are justified in believing most of the things which pre-theoretically we grant that status, then equate knowledge with justified true belief. Proponents of this approach would claim that the mere *possibility* that we are being deceived by demons, or by scientists who have put our brains into vats, is consistent with knowledge of the world, and explain this by pointing out that a justified belief can still be false, as it would be if certain skeptical possibilities did in fact hold. To justify a claim we need not be incapable of being wrong in what we claim, so even if we cannot rule out the possibility that we are deceived brains in vats we can still be justified in believing such things about the world as that our brains are in our skulls and that there is a table before us.

The abandonment of the equation of knowledge with certainty might strike some as cheating, as begging the question against the skeptic,

or as simply reacting to the skeptic's discovery that knowledge-cum-certainty about the world is impossible by substituting a different conception of knowledge (such as justified true belief) for the skeptic's and then announcing that knowledge is indeed possible. But this charge would not be convincing to very many philosophers nowadays. I think the main reason is that there has never been a point in time when the conditions under which knowledge exists were clear enough that any departures from the true conception could be spotted; hence there has always been room to abandon any conception that is so strong as to endorse skepticism. Nonetheless, everyone, including the skeptic, has to analyze knowledge before deciding whether or not it is threatened by skeptical possibilities. And all we have to go on in providing this account is the fact that we would (at least until confused by skeptical worries) all claim to know various things when we take ourselves to be in various circumstances and not when we take ourselves to be in others. Hence we must assume that we *would* know things under those conditions and be ignorant under the others, then work out an analysis of knowledge. This procedure does not preclude the possibility that the skeptic is correct, for once we have arrived at an analysis of knowledge that captures our clear intuitions it may turn out that knowledge conditions are seldom or never actually met. But the project does entail that knowledge is *possible*, in the sense that there are at least *hypothetical* situations in which people know to be true things they think they do.

Eventually, of course, the traditionalist has to face up to the question of whether or not we are justified in believing that we are not in the various situations discussed by skeptics. Perhaps I *can* be justified in believing that a table is before me without having evidence that conclusively rules out the possibility that I am actually a brain in a vat on a tableless planet, but traditionalists must deal with the strong case for the claim that the justificational status of denials of skeptical possibilities affects the justificational status of commonsensical assertions such as ones about tables. That is, they must deal with an apparently decent argument to the effect that being justified in believing the things we ordinarily claim as justified is incompatible with not being justified in denying that skeptical scenarios hold, so either our commonsense claims are justified or the claim that we are in no skeptical scenario is unjustified, but not both. Here is the argument: consider any of the situations skeptics use to call our beliefs into

doubt. One such skeptical scenario is my being a brain in a vat on a tableless planet where scientists are deceiving me by giving my brain misleading input. And let *antiskeptical scenario corresponding to a given skeptical scenario* refer to any situation that is logically incompatible with the obtaining of that skeptical scenario. (Example: there being a table before me is an antiskeptical scenario corresponding to the above brain in a vat situation.) Relative to each commonsensical, seemingly justified assertion we make about the world there is some incompatible skeptical scenario or another, and each purportedly justified claim about the world is an antiskeptical scenario corresponding to a skeptical scenario. I am justified in believing that I am in Hometown, USA, for example, and being here is incompatible with being a brain in a vat on a distant planet. So the former is an antiskeptical scenario corresponding to the latter. But when two views are incompatible, we are (at least in a position to be) justified in believing that the one is false if we are justified in believing that the other is true. If I am justified in believing that I am in Hometown then I am (in a position to be) justified in believing that I am not a brain in a vat on a distant planet; if I am justified in believing that a table is before me, I am justified in believing that I am not a brain in a vat on a tableless planet. So it is impossible to be justified in thinking that an antiskeptical scenario holds if we are not justified in believing that a corresponding skeptical scenario fails to hold. The justificational status of the one depends on that of the other. Call this the *Dependence Thesis*.

Essentially traditionalists could go two ways, on either of which knowledge (as justified true belief) of commonsensical claims is compatible with skeptical possibilities. First, they could agree with the above Dependence Thesis and continue to say that we are justified in believing the things we commonsensically think we do. For they could combine the Dependence Thesis with the commonsense thesis by insisting that we *are* justified in thinking that skeptical scenarios do not hold. The toughest part of this approach would be giving an account of justification and an argument that makes it plausible. Second, they could retain the commonsense thesis yet *deny* that we are justified in thinking that skeptical scenarios do not hold. Doing so would commit them to denying the Dependence Thesis. They could maintain that being justified in believing something need not put us into a position to justifiably believe whatever follows logically from it.

I justifiably believe I am in Hometown, the traditionalist might say, but I cannot justifiably believe that I am not a brain in a vat on a distant planet.³

So the traditionalist project of analyzing knowledge as justified true belief shows great promise, offering, as it does, more than one reply to the skeptic because it offers more than one strategy for establishing that knowledge is compatible with skeptical possibilities. However, Gettier's attack on the justified true belief account proved that it must fail, so that the traditionalist approach to skepticism, whatever its merits, cannot succeed. The upshot was that no matter how well justified we find ourselves vis-à-vis a belief about the world, it could happen that we are correct about it only accidentally – if correct at all – and hence ignorant that it is true. It seems perfectly reasonable to suppose that I know that someone in my office owns a Ford, given that I have justified my belief and it is true. But there are exceptions. Imagine that I have extremely good evidence that Nogot, who is in my office, owns a Ford, and on that basis I infer the truth of my belief that someone in my office owns a Ford. In fact (unknown to me) Nogot has only pretended to own a Ford, or has just sold it, yet Havit, who is also in my office, does own a Ford. So I possess a justified true belief that someone in my office owns a Ford, yet clearly I do not know that my belief is true.⁴

At a minimum, Gettier showed that the traditional project is going to have to be supplemented; along with the truth and justification conditions there must be one ensuring that we are not correct about our beliefs by accident if we are to know that they are true.⁵ It would be a serious mistake, however, to see Gettier as initiating a project that is disconnected from venerable epistemological concerns. Lately there has been a tendency to do so; Mark Kaplan and John Pollock are among the epistemologists who view Gettier's concerns as side-issues, as distractions tempting philosophers away from getting on with the main concern of epistemology, which, they announce, is justification as opposed to knowledge.⁶ This is an error for two reasons. First, both knowledge and justification are obviously relevant to the ancient project of replying to the skeptic, for skeptics have argued both that we are justified in believing, and also that we know, nothing about the world. Second, and most important, it is best to think of Gettier as providing a new sort of skeptical scenario, one that cannot as easily be dismissed as the old Cartesian ones, so that the

so-called Gettier problem is no more a side issue than is skepticism.

Compare the old with the new type of skeptical scenario. The old skeptical scenarios are *far-fetched* in the sense that they are situations we believe never actually obtain. They are *globally misleading* in that in them most of what we believe is false, and *globally undermining* in that in them we are ignorant of the truth of most of what we believe about the world. Yet they are *doxastically and perceptually similar* to the actual world in that in them we have *all* of the sensory evidence and beliefs which we have in the actual world. Nobody thinks anyone has ever been in the evil demon scenario, but *if* we were, then virtually all of our beliefs about the world would be false despite our evidence to the contrary. Unlike the demon situation, the new scenarios are not far-fetched; in one of Gettier's original examples, nothing more extraordinary happens than that a Ford gets sold (or lied about) and a Ford owner walks into an office. Nor are the new ones globally misleading or undermining; at worse they are locally misleading in that in them only a few of our beliefs are false, though there are Gettier situations in which none of our beliefs is falsified. And they are only locally undermining in that in them we are ignorant of the truth of only a small swatch of our actual beliefs. Yet like the old situations they are perceptually and doxastically similar to the actual world.

In terms of the distinctions just introduced, let me characterize the traditionalist approach and then the implications of Gettier's contribution, beginning with the former. We said that the traditionalist can maintain that we can know our beliefs about the world are true even if we cannot demonstrate conclusively that skeptical scenarios do not hold, for people who possess justified true beliefs may be unable to demonstrate the falsity of every claim that is inconsistent with those beliefs. Among the ones they can ignore are claims about skeptical scenarios. Skeptical scenarios are considered relevant to knowledge only in the same way that any situation in which a belief is false *must* be relevant to our ability to know its truth: if the situation *actually* holds then we are ignorant of the truth of that belief. If a skeptical scenario actually holds – if, for example, I actually am a brain in a vat – then I know little if anything about the world, not because my beliefs are not justified, not because the justification condition is not met, but because they are false, because the *truth condition* is not met. But so long as these scenarios do not in fact hold in the actual world, then they do not interfere with the truth condition; hence knowledge is

possible. Roughly stated, we know that most of our beliefs about the world are true so long as skeptical scenarios do not in fact hold, but we do not if they do.

Thus according to the traditionalist who is committed to antiskepticism, the fact that no skeptical possibilities actually hold is a necessary condition for knowledge. But it is hidden under, or made redundant by, the truth condition. And however plausible this position may seem, Gettier showed that it must fail. In effect, Gettier showed that the truth condition is not so powerful a tool against the skeptic as the traditionalist position just sketched makes it out to be. For Gettier cases are ones in which both the justification *and truth* conditions are met yet we remain ignorant. So even if skeptical situations are not actual, at least some of them – Gettier-style ones – are relevant in that *as possibilities* they show that the justified true belief account is not strong enough. The traditionalist cannot show that skeptical possibilities do not undermine knowledge after all.

Actually, it should not have taken Gettier to show us that the traditionalist approach to antiskepticism must fail. Tools have always been available for showing this, for the truth condition is actually consistent with the obtaining of *old-style* skeptical scenarios. Suppose that because I seem to see one before me I conclude that a table is nearby. The truth of this belief is consistent with the actuality of the usual brain in a vat possibility supposing that the vat is sitting on a table. Obviously I cannot be said to know that my belief is true in this case, yet it is equally clear that my belief is justified and true. Clear, also, is the fact that this scenario is far-fetched, globally misleading and globally undermining in the traditional manner. So the project of analyzing knowledge as justified true belief has been doomed all along; traditional skeptical scenarios have always sufficed to show that. It is likely that epistemologists have been kept ignorant of this fact only because they assumed that the truth condition was inconsistent with the obtaining of skeptical scenarios.

There is, incidentally, still further reason to align Gettier cases with the more ancient skeptical possibilities, so that neither can be dismissed as red herrings unless the others can: there are skeptical scenarios that are impossible to classify as either the old or new sort in the sense that they seem to have attributes of both and lack attributes of both. Consider the possibility that a Cartesian demon is monitoring your beliefs and would have deceived you had you believed anything

other than what you in fact believed. In this situation most (probably all) of your beliefs are true, but its obtaining is inconsistent with your knowing the truth of the things you believe. It, too, is a counterexample to the justified true belief account, but it is difficult to classify. Like the old sort, it is far-fetched and globally undermining, but like the new it is at worst only locally misleading.

Of course, we might have been tempted to dig in our heels and say that Gettier possibilities do not threaten knowledge, whether they are actual or not, simply because knowledge is justified true belief (by God). So knowing that my belief is true does not entail that I am not accidentally correct about it. But now that it is evident that even traditional skeptical scenarios can be used in the place of Gettier cases, this strategy is of no interest whatever. Besides, if intuitions are even to be a guide, then this strategy will not do. It is too clear that Gettier cases do not count as knowledge.

It would be better to extend the strategy of the traditionalist. Again, traditionalists used their account of knowledge in an argument designed to show that whereas knowledge does not exist when we are actually being deceived by demons or the like, it *can* exist when such possibilities do not hold. The traditionalist case for this was that justified true belief can exist where and only where such possibilities do not exist, and while this case is flawed, there can be others. Why not accept the implications of Gettier (and traditional skeptical) cases that knowledge exists only when our beliefs are not accidentally correct, construct a new analysis that preserves this implication, and then argue that since our beliefs are accidentally correct when we are in the situations described by Gettier and other skeptics, and not when we are in ordinary circumstances, then knowledge is possible when we are not in the skeptic's situations but impossible when we are?

In fact, this seems to have been the strategy behind all of the post-Gettier analyses of knowledge which which I am acquainted. For example, defeasibility accounts of when it is that a person *S* knows that a given claim *p* is true supplement the justification and truth conditions with some version of the condition that the evidence on which *S* bases the belief that *p* not be defeated, i.e., that there be no true proposition that, were it combined with *S*'s evidence for *p*, would result in the situation that *S*'s belief is no longer justified. Ordinarily, good justifications will be undefeated and hence knowledge will exist.

But in the skeptic's situations, our justifications are defeated, so that knowledge will not exist. Reliabilist accounts often abandon the justification condition altogether, maintaining instead that we know that a given belief is true if it is true and we have a reliable means of sustaining or arriving at it. In the skeptic's situations we will have no such means. So whether we go with a defeasibility account or a reliabilist account we once again reach the result that the situations described by skeptics (including Gettier) undermine knowledge only when actual.⁷

However, there has been a backlash against post-Gettier analyses. Philosophers such as Lawrence Bonjour have classified analyses into internalist and externalist ones and maintain that the externalist sort, so common in the post-Gettier literature, will not do. Externalists depart too radically from the traditional way of approaching knowledge for their views to be of interest; they are as odd as the death-of-God theologians who were perverse enough to want to continue in their role as clergymen. At the most general level internalism is the position that certain sorts of epistemically relevant items must be within us in some sense, while externalism is the view that these items need meet no such restriction. Epistemologists who think that epistemically relevant items must be inner fall into two camps depending on the items they have in mind. On the one hand we could say that the *things that justify* our views, or the things that render them known, must be inside us; on the other, that the *conditions under which* our views are justified or known must be inner. A justifier is one thing, while the conditions under which it justifies are something else; one kind of internalist (*justifier* internalists⁸) would say that justifiers must be inner items, while another would adopt the stronger view that everything must be inner that is involved in the state of affairs of a belief's being known (knowledge condition internalism) with the exception of the truth condition.

The complaint against knowledge externalism boils down to this. Suppose that some of the justifiers or other things involved in the state of affairs of a belief's being known are not inner items. Then whether or not I know something to be true depends on factors outside of my inner perspective; I might know something to be true in one of the situations in which it *is* true but not in another, even though from the inside the two situations appear the same. How can this be? How can

we say that I know something in one of the situations in which it is true if the only differences between it and others in which I am ignorant are differences I cannot detect? Thus the complaint amounts to the fact that externalist theories lead to violations of the following principle (the Principle of Interknowledge):

If in one world $W1$ S knows that p is true by arriving at the belief that p through process P , then in any world $W2$ in which S arrives at the belief that p through P S knows that p is true, so long as $W2$ is perceptually and doxastically similar to $W1$ for S and so long as p is true in $W2$.

Stated in this way, it is easy to see that the complaint is misguided. The point is that everyone must acknowledge that our knowing about the world depends on our not being in one of the situations described by skeptics, even though whether or not these possibilities obtain is ultimately undetectable from the inside (in the sense that whether or not skeptical possibilities hold need not affect the way things seem to us, i.e., those possibilities need not affect our beliefs or perceptual states). Epistemologists have gotten very sophisticated in the ways they *state* the requirement that skeptical possibilities not hold, but they have always done so. The internalist can and must do so like everyone else. However, the only successful internalist version of this restriction is some formulation of the following:

the truth of the belief at hand is *entailed* by the fact that our beliefs and percepts have the intrinsic features they have conjoined with the fact that these beliefs and percepts are related strictly to each other in the ways they are related.

And to adopt this condition is to adopt the knowledge-as-certainty approach. The only other approach that might have seemed capable of remaining internalist yet also ensuring that we do not know while in skeptical situations is the justified true belief account. For as we saw earlier it is tempting to think that we can hide the restriction against skeptical situations under the truth condition (which is an externalist element even internalists countenance). Now that we see that the truth condition is not so versatile, we have no choice but to state some other restriction against those troublesome situations, and the only candidate that allows us to avoid knowledge-as-certainty is an externalist condition. Therefore, no one who hopes to give antiskepticism a run for its money can fail to be an externalist.

3. JUSTIFICATION INTERNALISM

Even if knowledge has an externalist element, it does not follow that justification does. It is therefore unsurprising to find that internalists may retreat to a far less ambitious claim: epistemic *justification* must be given an internalist analysis. Most internalists have done so. Of course, there immediately arises the question, 'Given that we must give an externalist analysis of knowledge, why insist on giving an internalist analysis of justification?' Why not simply say that the sort of justification required for us to achieve knowledge is simply the sort of support that, against the background of our circumstances, enables us to avoid accidentally correct belief? On this approach an account of justification is thought to be entailed by our externalist account of knowledge (whatever the latter turns out to be).

Unfortunately, there is good reason to think that an account of justification cannot be derived from the requirements of nonaccidentally correct belief. Indeed, if what I have said elsewhere is correct, then the elements of justification are quite disconnected from the element of nonaccidentally correct belief.⁹ The two are quite distantly related components of knowledge. Let us use the term *metaphysical component* for the conditions under which we are nonaccidentally correct about our beliefs. By *doxastic component* let us mean the conditions under which our beliefs are justified. I maintain that these elements of knowledge are disconnected from each other in the sense that a belief may meet the one set of conditions but not the other and vice versa: a justified belief may be one I am accidentally correct about, and a belief I am *nonaccidentally* correct about may be irrational or unjustified. And if the two components of knowledge are disconnected in this way, then clearly we will not be able to derive an account of justification by working out the requirements on justification imposed by those on nonaccidentally correct belief. For in no straightforward sense does any such imposition occur.

There is not enough space to give a complete argument, but let me motivate my claim that the two elements of knowledge are disconnected. Gettier has already shown that a justified belief may be one about which I am accidentally correct, so obviously beliefs may satisfy the doxastic without satisfying the metaphysical requirements. It is much harder to demonstrate that satisfying the latter does not ensure satisfying the former. I would need a complete analysis of nonaccidentally correct belief to do so.¹⁰ The essential point, however, is

this. I take it that one way to arrive at an irrational, unjustified view is to rely upon the application of a bogus inference rule or inference process. But even if I arrive at an opinion through extraordinarily absurd reasoning, *my circumstances could conspire to render me nonaccidentally correct about it*. For example, worlds are possible in which *benevolent* Cartesian demons always intervene to ensure that highly irrational reasoning produces correct views. It is even possible to describe absurd reasoning that in the *actual* world would lead me to think things about which I would not be accidentally correct. Just suppose that while in my office under ordinary circumstances I employ the following inane inference rule:

R: If: you seem to see a table before you or else you seem to
 see two unicorns before you,
 Infer: a table is before you.

It would be no accident that I am correct in thinking that a table is before me if I arrive at that belief through an application of this rule, for I am not subject to unicorn appearances while sitting in my office. But it is clear that my belief would be irrational. Very roughly, I am nonaccidentally correct about my belief that *p* just in case I have arrived at it through a causal chain consisting of facts which each meet the following condition:

if that fact held, *p* would be true,

which means that *p* holds in all of the worlds close to the actual world in which the fact holds.¹¹ Whether this condition is met depends on my circumstances since they determine which worlds are close to the actual world. Consider one of the facts in any of the causal chains leading to my belief that a table is before me in the above example: the fact that I have reached *R*'s recommendation. Given that I am in my office under ordinary circumstances, the close worlds in which this fact holds are also ones in which a table is before me. Similar considerations apply to the other components in a causal chain present in the example.

It is possible to meet the requirements of the doxastic component of knowledge without meeting the metaphysical requirements and vice versa. Consequently, it would not be surprising to find deep asymmetries between knowledge and justification. For example, while the discussion in the first part of this essay shows that the metaphysical component of knowledge obviously must be given an externalist

treatment, it is entirely possible that the doxastic component is amenable to the internalist approach, so that vis-à-vis knowledge we must be externalist but vis-à-vis justification we can be internalist.

And of course justification internalism comes in various forms. Distinctions among justification internalists can be drawn that parallel those among knowledge internalists. Alongside justifier internalists are justification condition internalists. The thought that underlies justification internalism, moreover, is analogous to that underlying knowledge internalism: If I am justified in believing something in some situation, but not in another, then I had better be able to detect some difference between the two situations. Otherwise I would be unable to tell whether or not I am justified in a belief, which would be absurd. Whatever our analysis of justification, the following Principle (of Interrationality) had better turn out true:

If in one world $W1$ S 's belief that p is justified, then it is justified for S in any world $W2$ that is perceptually and doxastically similar to $W1$ for S .

According to this principle, the rationality of belief (unlike the reliability of its sources) is invariant across perceptually and doxastically similar worlds, a proposition that entails both justifier and justification condition internalism.

The internalist position is dedicated to making this principle come out true, a fact that is handy if we are to get clear about internalism. The central internalist tenet, that justification is an 'internal' matter, is vague, but one that we now know how to cash in. What it means is that anything that affects the justificational status of our beliefs needs to affect our perceptual or doxastic situation so that the Interrationality Principle will be true. For 'inner', read 'our perceptual or doxastic situation'.

I think that this is a satisfactory account of internalism regardless of our stance toward recent accounts of belief according to which the *contents* of beliefs depend on our circumstances. Some internalists (especially radical ones) will insist that *what* we believe, the contents of belief, is determined by properties intrinsic to brain states (plus the strict relations of these to the propositions that are the objects of belief). For them, the Interrationality Principle will be equivalent to the following revision in terms of mind/brain states:

If in one world $W1$ S 's belief that p is justified, then it is justified for S in any world $W2$ in which S has the same mind/brain states as in $W1$.

(I use the term mind/brain to allow for the rare dualist who thinks that the thinker is some sort of entity other than a brain.) But suppose we take our cue from recent work done by Putnam and Burge¹² and say that what the term 'water' in the sentence 'Water is before me' refers to depends on certain sorts of causal relations holding between me and my environment (regardless of whether or not I am aware that they hold). In various skeptical scenarios these relations will not hold between me and real water. One is a situation in which the world is as we believe it to be now except that rather than real water the planet has always contained a water look-alike, feel-alike and taste-alike called XYZ whose microcomposition differs from that of water. Instead, the relations on which the referent of 'water' depends will hold between me and XYZ. So if I were in this hypothetical situation, what I would believe when I assent to 'Water is before me' would be that XYZ is before me. Yet from the inside I cannot tell which of the two situations I am in; I cannot tell, that is, in the sense that perceptually speaking the two situations are similar. And the above revision of the Principle of Interrationality in terms of brain states would be false. Nonetheless, it is quite plausible to say (as does the original Principle of Interrationality) that in any two situations in which I *do* have the same beliefs and percepts, I am justified in believing something in the one only if I am justified in believing it in the other. Internalists wedded to the causal theory of reference could therefore still delineate their view as I have done above.

My account of internalism, incidentally, does not imply that internalists do not want to get to the truth. They certainly do, but this potentially externalist aim is only their *goal* in seeking justification, not a condition on justification – an important distinction since one may be justified even if one fails to achieve the goal of justification, but not if one fails to satisfy a condition for justification.

So construed, justification internalism is an enormously plausible view. It is important to see that it unites philosophers on both sides of a wide range of controversies. Thus the internalist is not committed to any particular metaphysical view: Cartesian dualists and materialists can be internalists, as can philosophers on both sides of the sense data theory. Foundationalists and coherentists will both be internalists as well. Even naturalistically inclined philosophers such as Quine can agree with their opponents on this matter, though not all do. Quine thinks that our beliefs form a relatively seamless network and cannot be justified individually, but that is certainly compatible with the

internalist position that one cannot go completely outside of that network and find anything that affects the justificational status of our views.

Let us examine some of the consequences of the Principle of Interrationality. One important consequence is that its pedigree in terms of the external causal processes through which it arose cannot determine whether a belief is justified. Goings-on outside of the veil of ideas, so to speak, cannot play any role in determining the rationality of our beliefs. Hence if the pedigree of a belief determines its rationality, it must be its pedigree in terms of some sort of 'inner' process. A good candidate for this is the practices or rules that govern how we move from beliefs and/or percepts to other beliefs. For brevity, I shall call this system of rules or practices the *logic* we follow in arriving at our convictions.

A logic will *endorse* for me exactly the same beliefs in all doxastically and perceptually similar worlds, so that if I consider rational or justified all assertions that are endorsed by the logic with which I work, then in all doxastically and perceptually similar worlds I will suppose that the same beliefs are rational. But this is not enough to satisfy the Interrationality Principle. Whether it is satisfied depends on the sort of restrictions I hold my logic to. If I hold it to *no* restrictions (or to the vacuous restriction that it be *mine*, the one I trust) it is satisfied. But if I say that my logic must satisfy externalist conditions in order for the convictions it endorses to be rational, then my account will be inconsistent with the Interrationality Principle. For whereas my logic will *endorse* the same beliefs in all similar worlds, and I will *consider* these beliefs rational, the logic will fail to meet the externalist restrictions in many of the similar worlds; hence the beliefs it endorses there will be irrational (though I will think otherwise).

It would be absurd to hold our logic to no restrictions whatever, but the only ones that are available as far as the internalist is concerned are internalist ones. So among the following decreasingly demanding conditions, the last two will not do since they are externalist:

- (1) In all worlds, our logic is a reliable source for the beliefs it endorses.
- (2) In our world, our logic is a reliable source for the beliefs it endorses.

- (3) In our local situation, our logic is a reliable source for the beliefs it endorses.

Still, the last two can be converted to internalist conditions by prefixing them with 'we think that' or 'we are justified in thinking that'. Unfortunately, the result of the latter would be a circular account, and the result of the former simply raises new issues focusing on the question, 'Why do we think the logic is reliable?'

Curiously, the first condition is satisfactory to the internalist. That Logic *L* meets (1) is a necessary truth if it is a truth at all. (1) demands that our logic be reliable in all worlds, including the worlds that are doxastically and perceptually similar to the one in which we have had recourse to it. So the Irrationality Principle is satisfied. Unfortunately, (1) is no way out for the internalist. No logic whose input is the fact that we have the percepts and beliefs that we do and whose output is beliefs about the world can meet (1). But consider a new condition:

- (4) Our logic is among those that are reliable across as wide a spectrum of possible worlds as can be.

Once again, that our logic *L* meets (4) is a necessary truth if a truth at all: if true, it is true in all possible worlds, including the ones that are doxastically and perceptually similar to the one in which we used *L*. So the Principle of Irrationality is satisfied, and the internalist happy, especially when we add that unlike (1), (4) can be met.

I suggest that some version of (4) is the internalist's best bet. Some version of the following account is therefore the best candidate for the internalist, and also highly plausible:

S's belief that *p* is justified or rational just in case *S* believes it because *S* sees that it is endorsed by *S*'s logic, which itself is among those that are as reliable across as wide a spectrum of possible worlds as can be.

4. THE LIMITATIONS OF JUSTIFICATION INTERNALISM

Nonetheless, it is important to see that internalism has its costs. The Principle of Irrationality entails that on *any* adequate account of justification, our being justified in believing some claim *p* about the world provides no assurance whatever that we are not in the skeptical scenarios – the situations doxastically and perceptually similar to our actual one – in which not only is *p* false, but our evidence for *p* is absolutely useless as an indicator of *p*'s truth. For by the Inter-

rationality Principle we *must* be justified in believing that *p* in each of these situations just as we are justified in believing that *p* in the actual situation. So we are guaranteed to be wrong about *p* in each of the indefinite number of situations similar to ours in which *p* is false and our having the evidence we do is completely unconnected to the truth of *p*; being justified in believing that *p* is true does nothing whatever toward establishing that *p* is not false in any of these ways. Each time justification endorses a belief for someone in some situation, there is an indefinite number of similar situations in which that belief is false but still endorsed on the basis of evidence that has no tie to that belief's truth, and the fact that justification would lead us to think that that belief is true does nothing at all toward ruling out the possibility that we are not in one of these look-alike situations.

None of this means that justification cannot endorse the view that we are not in such a look-alike situation, but if we trust justification's selection and conclude that we are in a situation in which *p* is true rather than a doxastically and perceptually similar one in which our evidence for *p* is useless and *p* itself false, it had better not be because justification is a useful guide to the *correct* selection in such cases. If we follow the selections endorsed by justification only when it offers us some assurance that one rather than another alternative holds, then we will be no more confident that a belief is true and our situation such and such than we are that it is false and our situation is one of the look-alikes. To this extent, the internalist is committed to skepticism, not a skepticism about what we are *justified* in believing, but rather a skepticism about alternatives in the correct selection among which we have some *assurance*. If we adopt the Interrationality Principle, we must say that justification can be helpful only when the situations we are selecting among – some in which *p* is true, some in which it is not – are not doxastically and perceptually similar.

From the standpoint of justification (unlike knowledge) we are not worried about the fact that justification at its best is guaranteed to endorse false beliefs if we rely on it while in locally misleading skeptical scenarios. The goal of justifying beliefs is not to underwrite them in an *infallible* way; we do not mind that situations will arise in the course of our lives in which justification is clearly going to steer us wrong and our evidence is going to be misleading, so that from time to time we will hold false beliefs. But that is because we are confident that justification will not steer us wrong on the grand scale, confident that it will not do so *all* the time rather than just from time to time. But what is the source of that confidence? There is, after all, an

indefinite number of *globally* undermining skeptical scenarios, large-scale pictures in which (a) the grand view we trust is false, (b) all of our evidence misleading, yet (c) similar on the perceptual and doxastic level to the situation we think we are in. And given the Interrationality Principle, justification can provide no assurance that a selection among such look-alike situations is correct, including our world-view versus the skeptic's fantastic world-views, and thus no assurance that we are not misled on a grand scale.

If what we want is for justification to provide such assurance, then an externalist conception of justification can do the job. For example, suppose we adopt the following account of justification:

We are justified in believing that *p* only if we have arrived at *p* through a reliable process, i.e., one that tends to produce beliefs of that sort only when they are true.

Then if we are justified in believing that *p*, we must be in a world in which the source of our belief tends to produce that sort of belief only when true, not one of the look-alikes in which we lack a reliable source; one could scarcely ask for greater assurance than that offered by this sort of justification. However, the price of this assurance is that the Principle of Interrationality must go. I can be justified in believing things in one world even though I will not be justified in believing them in a vast range of doxastically and perceptually similar worlds.

A peculiar predicament, this. We can be justification internalists and retain the principle that we can always tell whether a view is justified for us because undetected features of the world cannot affect the justificational status of our views, but doing so has its price: the fact that justification endorses a selection between two opposing claims need not be any assurance whatever that that selection is correct. Or we can be justification externalists and retain the principle that justification's selections always provide assurance, but then we must say that the justificational status of our view is always elusive in that the world's undetected features *can* affect what we are justified in believing.

From this point of view, the case for internalism does not seem much better than that for externalism. Nonetheless in my view we ought to go with justification internalism, and swallow whatever skeptical implications it might have. One reason is simply the sheer plausibility of the Principle of Interrationality. Another reason I gave earlier: since the doxastic and metaphysical components of knowledge

are disengaged from each other, externalist conditions simply are incapable of circumscribing rational, justified belief.

NOTES

- ¹ Peter Unger (see his (1975) book *Ignorance: A Case for Scepticism*, Clarendon Press, Oxford) is an example of the former, and Hilary Putnam offers at least a version of the latter in his (1981) *Reason, Truth, and History*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- ² *The Problems of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Chapter IV.
- ³ Among the supporters of this view are J. L. Austin: 1961, 'Other Minds', *Philosophical Papers*, 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford; Fred Dretske: 1970, 'Epistemic Operators', *Journal of Philosophy* **67**, 1007–23; and Robert Nozick: 1981, *Philosophical Explanations*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- ⁴ This is Lehrer's version of one of Gettier's examples. See Lehrer's (1965) 'Knowledge, Truth and Evidence', *Analysis* **25**, 168–75.
- ⁵ See Unger's (1968) 'The Analysis of Factual Knowledge', *The Journal of Philosophy* **65**, 147–70.
- ⁶ Mark Kaplan: 1985, *Journal of Philosophy* **LXXXII**, 350–64; John Pollock: 1986, *Contemporary Theories of Knowledge*, Rowman & Littlefield, New Jersey.
- ⁷ One of the earliest defeasibility theories was offered by Keith Lehrer and Thomas Paxson, Jr. (1969) in 'Knowledge: Undefeated Justified True Belief', *The Journal of Philosophy* **66**, 225–37, reprinted in G. Pappas and M. Swain (eds.), *Essay on Knowledge and Justification*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1978, pp. 146–55 (see the other essays in this volume as well); an early version of reliabilism was offered by Alvin Goldman (1979) in 'What is Justified Belief?' *Justification and Knowledge: New Studies in Epistemology*, D. Reidel, Dordrecht, pp. 1–25.
- ⁸ This classification was introduced by William P. Alston (1985) in 'Internalism and Externalism in Epistemology', *Philosophical Topics* **14**, 179–222.
- ⁹ S. Luper-Foy: 1985, 'The Reliabilist Theory of Rational Belief', *The Monist* **68**, 203–25.
- ¹⁰ I offer such an account in 'The Causal Indicator Analysis of Knowledge', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* **XLVII** (1987), 563–587.
- ¹¹ See the Lewis-Stalnaker account of subjunctive conditionals. D. Lewis: 1973, *Counterfactuals*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge; R. Stalnaker: 1968, 'A Theory of Conditionals', in N. Rescher, (ed.), *Studies in Logical Theory*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, reprinted in E. Sosa (ed.), *Causation and Conditionals*, Oxford University Press, London, 1975, pp. 165–79.
- ¹² See Putnam's (1975) 'The Meaning of 'Meaning'', *Mind, Language and Reality: Philosophical Papers Volume 2*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 215–71, and Burge's (1979) 'Individualism and the Mental', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* **4**, 73–121.

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