TWO SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION IN EPISTEMOLOGY

by

Ashley Catherine McDowell

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

2003
INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.
As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Ashley C. McDowell entitled "Two Senses of Justification in Epistemology" and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Keith Lehrer
John L. Pollock
Terence Horgan

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dissertation Director
Keith Lehrer
STATEMENT BY AUTHOR

This dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for an advanced degree at The University of Arizona and is deposited in the University Library to be made available to borrowers under rules of the Library.

Brief quotations from this dissertation are allowable without special permission, provided that accurate acknowledgement of source is made. Requests for permission for extended quotation from or reproduction of this manuscript in whole or in part may be granted by the head of the major department or the Dean of the Graduate College when in his or her judgment the proposed use of the material is in the interests of scholarship. In all other instances, however, permission must be obtained from the author.

SIGNED: [Signature]
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank John Pollock, Terry Horgan, Alvin Goldman, and especially Keith Lehrer for their roles in the production of this dissertation. Each in his own way played good cop, bad cop, mentor, friend, and both actual and imaginary interlocutor. I will never get over the good fortune of having such stellar committee members. I would also like to thank the University of Arizona Department of Philosophy community for providing a uniquely supportive and inspirational environment. In particular, I owe thanks to Dave Chalmers and Tim Bayne for their critical reflections. Finally, I would like to acknowledge a deepest debt of gratitude to my colleague Josh Cowley, whose patience, support, and, most of all, astonishing philosophical acuity were invaluable to this work.
For my husband, Kevin Baker, with love and gratitude.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .............................................................................................................. 8

ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................... 9

CHAPTER 1: MOTIVATION FOR A TWO-SENSE VIEW OF
EPISTEMIC JUSTIFICATION .............................................................................................. 11
A INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 11
B THE INTERNALISM/EXTERNALISM DEBATE ............................................................... 14
  1. Higher-order internalism ............................................................................................ 15
  2. Strong internalism ..................................................................................................... 17
  3. Special-access internalism ......................................................................................... 19
  4. Mentalist internalism ................................................................................................... 21
  5. Ambiguous conceptions and views ........................................................................... 23
C TOWARDS A RESOLUTION ........................................................................................... 28
  1. Externalism ................................................................................................................ 32
  2. Internalism ................................................................................................................ 33
D THE TWO-SENSE INTUITION ....................................................................................... 40
  1. Clairvoyant Sophie ..................................................................................................... 41
  2. Sophie-in-a-Vat ......................................................................................................... 43
  3. The moral of the intuitions ....................................................................................... 44
E CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................. 54

CHAPTER 2: THE AMBIGUITY OF JUSTIFICATION ......................................................... 55
A INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 55
B LINGUISTIC REASONS FOR A TWO-SENSE APPROACH ......................................... 62
C THEORETICAL REASONS FOR A TWO-SENSE APPROACH .................................... 71
D CONCLUSION ................................................................................................................ 81

CHAPTER 3: THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION .............................................. 82
A INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................. 82
B SURVEY OF TWO-SENSE APPROACHES TO JUSTIFICATION ................................... 86
C EXCLUSIVE PAIRS OF SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION .................................................. 94
  1. A subjective/objective distinction .............................................................................. 94
  2. An internal/external distinction ................................................................................. 102
D INCLUSIVE PAIRS OF SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION .................................................. 107
E AN OVERLAPPING PAIR OF SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION: THE
  INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION ........................................................................ 109
TABLE OF CONTENTS - Continued

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE INTERNAL / OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION .................................................. 120
A INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 120
B THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION IN THE AREA OF TESTIMONY ................................................................. 122
1. The intuitive utility of the internal/objective distinction ........................................ 123
2. Utility to agents, assessors, and theorists ................................................................. 135
C THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION IN THE AREA OF NORMATIVITY ................................................................. 146
D THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION FOR CAPTURING FUNDAMENTAL EPISTEMIC DESIDERATA ................................................................. 154
E CONCLUSION .......................................................................................................................... 161

CHAPTER 5: IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE PROJECTS .................................................................................. 162
A INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 162
B IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INTERNALISM / EXTERNALISM DEBATE ................................................................................................. 163
C IMPLICATIONS FOR PARTICULAR THEORIES OF JUSTIFICATION ................................................................................................. 169
1. Coherence theories ......................................................................................................... 169
2. Virtue theories ............................................................................................................... 172
3. Foundationalist theories .............................................................................................. 173
4. Reliabilist theories ....................................................................................................... 174
D OTHER PROJECTS AND IMPLICATIONS .................................................................................. 176
E CONCLUSION .......................................................................................................................... 183

REFERENCES ......................................................................................................................................... 185
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The subjective/objective distinction ............................................................ 95
Table 2: The internal/external distinction ................................................................103
Table 3: The internal/objective distinction ...............................................................110
ABSTRACT

In epistemology, justification is supposed to capture what makes a belief reasonable as opposed to merely true. However, imagine someone in a society where throwing bones to predict the future is completely accepted. Of course this is a terrible way to come to hold beliefs, but if she is being as responsible as she knows how, we want to call her beliefs reasonable or justified in one sense, but not another.

In this dissertation, I argue that we should incorporate two separate senses of justification into epistemological theorizing. Many philosophers have discussed two-sense views, but they have contrasted exclusive senses (e.g., a belief is either internally or externally justified), or included one sense within the other (e.g., all objectively justified beliefs must be subjectively justified as well). I am making a novel proposal, distinguishing between two overlapping senses: *internal* and *objective* senses of justification. They are independent but not exclusive, so that beliefs can be justified in either way independently, but the conditions for being justified in one sense do not fall completely outside of the conditions for being justified in the other sense. Basically, a person’s belief can be reasonable when considered on the inside or it can be reasonable when considered from an objective, all-things considered point of view.

In Chapter One, I survey the internalism/externalism literature, in order to find in it a motivation for finding two senses of justification. I argue that intuitions and differences in use pose a strong motivation for attempting a two-sense view. My second chapter is a methodological one, exploring ways to make linguistic and theoretical arguments for adopting a two-sense view. In Chapter Three, I discuss various ways to disambiguate justification. I argue that the most promising way to make the distinction is between the
internal and objective senses. Chapter Five is an argument that the internal/objective distinction has more theoretical utility and explanatory power than either a univocal sense or than other distinctions. The final chapter is an exploration of the implications of the internal/objective two-sense view for the internalism/externalism debate, justification, knowledge, and epistemology as a whole.
Chapter One

MOTIVATION FOR A TWO-SENSE APPROACH TO EPISTEMIC JUSTIFICATION

A INTRODUCTION

In epistemology, justification is supposed to capture what makes a belief reasonable as opposed to merely true. However, imagine someone in a society where throwing bones to predict the future is completely accepted. Of course this is a terrible way to come to hold beliefs, but if she is being as responsible as she knows how, we want to call her beliefs reasonable or justified in one sense, but not another.

In this dissertation, I argue that we should incorporate two separate senses of justification into epistemological theorizing. Many philosophers have discussed two-sense views, but they have contrasted exclusive senses (e.g., a belief is either internally or externally justified), or included one sense within the other (e.g., all objectively justified beliefs must be subjectively justified as well). I am making a novel proposal, distinguishing between two overlapping senses: internal and objective senses of justification. They are independent but not exclusive, so that beliefs can be justified in either way independently, but the conditions for being justified in one sense do not fall completely outside of the conditions for being justified in the other sense. Basically, a person’s belief can be reasonable when considered on the inside or it can be reasonable when considered from an objective, all-things considered point of view.

In this chapter, I will be making the case that there is good reason to try to distinguish two senses of justification. This constitutes the motivation and background for
the overall project, which is to argue for this particular way to make a distinction between senses of justification: the internal/objective distinction.

Some of the reasons for attempting to find an acceptable two-sense view can be found by considering the literature on epistemic justification, and in particular the literature on the debate between internalists and externalists about epistemic justification. In the first part of this chapter, I will go through some of that literature, presenting various stronger and weaker ways of understanding and exemplifying the internalist and externalist positions. These stances are understood in several different ways, which can lead to philosophical miscommunication and misdirection. I will try to sort out the basic motivations and intuitive underpinnings of the various positions. Many of these intuitions, motivations, and stances will be instrumental in later stages of the dissertation, so it will be helpful to introduce them early.

In addition, this section will serve to describe a debate that needs resolution, and whose foundation seems largely to rest on a divergence in intuitions about justification, both what is relevant to it and what it means. This divergence in intuition serves as a motivation to try one way to resolve the internalism/externalism debate: distinguishing two senses of justification and understanding internalism as talking about one sense and externalism as talking about the other. In order to argue satisfactorily for this, I will need to argue that internalists and externalists either are or ought to be focusing each on a separate explanandum. I will begin that argument here, and continue it in subsequent chapters.

Having shown that there are arguably two divergent stances about the very nature of justification corresponding to the two basic ways to construct theories of justification, I will go on to illustrate more clearly the two basic intuitions. After considering the literature on
justification and on internalism and externalism, I will consider a pair of thought experiments often used in that literature: brain in a vat and clairvoyant cases. I will use those thought experiments to make a more substantive case that there are two distinct stances about justification of interest to epistemology, and that a compelling way to characterize those stances is as focusing on different concepts of justification.

I will contend that these two basic concepts of justification line up well with the basic stances in the internalism/externalism dispute. In addition, these two concepts can be seen elsewhere in epistemology. I will discuss this more in the next chapter, but here I will present some of the questions epistemologists have taken epistemology to be asking, and show how these also reveal the basic divide. This combined with the motivation from the internalism/externalism debate and the thought experiments sets up at least a *prima facie* case for finding two senses of justification.
B THE INTERNALISM/EXTERNALISM DEBATE

The debate over internalism or externalism about justification in epistemology has been raging for decades, and arguably shows little sign of resolution. If anything, there is a feeling in the philosophical air that the debate is pointless, perhaps because it is perceived as stemming merely from conflicting intuitions about justification. I will be arguing that the debate does stem from conflicting intuitions about justification, and that debating about whether internalism or externalism is right is pointless. However, the debate is resolvable. This is because both intuitions are right; both basic positions are right, except insofar as they maintain the exclusivity of their analyses of justification. There are two senses of justification, one basically capturing the internalist position and the other basically capturing the externalist position, and so the debate as it stands can finally be put to rest.

I am not here discussing internalism and externalism about knowledge. I take it that pretty much everyone is an externalist about knowledge, in that everyone accepts a truth condition. I will be talking about justification. In doing so, I will discuss some views that use a term other than justification. Foley talks about “rationality”, for instance, and Plantinga about “warrant.” Since I think these conceptions are variations on the theme of epistemic justification, I will include them here.

I will lay out some ways of understanding what the internalist and externalist positions are, and give some examples of theories of justification that would count as

---

1 For some in agreement, see Rorty, Fumerton 98, Riggs 98, and Pollock & Cruz 99.
2 For one thing, I believe (following Joel Pust 00) that intuitions about Plantinga-style warrant actually amount to intuitions about justification. I will discuss this argument in Chapter Two.
internalist or externalist according to those conceptions. Before laying out the possible ways of defining internalism and externalism, I should say that I will mostly focus on ways of defining internalism. This is partly because this is the method of many of the disputants in the debate; and partly because externalism has usually been understood as the denial of internalism or as the denial that internalist constraints constitute necessary conditions of justification. So for any definition of internalism (e.g., "justification invokes only features of type X"), a definition of externalism automatically follows (e.g., "it's not the case that justification invokes only features of type X").

There is a broad range of possible ways to define internalism and externalism, and most of those possibilities have been discussed or endorsed by someone in the literature. I will call views "stronger" the more they restrict the domain of internalism or externalism. Thus a strong understanding of internalism would be one on which only a small class of internal states can count as justifiers. The corresponding version of externalism would be weak: states outside of that small class can count as justifiers. Following are some broad general categories of definitions, and theories that fall under them.

1. **Higher-order internalism**

   The strongest type of definition of internalism would restrict justifiers to conscious (or even deliberate) access to internal beliefs only, along with higher-order awareness of the justifying function of the beliefs. This comes close to the kind of definition James Pryor has described as saying "that whether we're justified is itself an accessible fact" [01, p. 105]. I

---

3 Whenever one classifies others' theories, one runs the risk of misclassifying them, and I am sure I am no exception. Since I will eventually argue that these distinctions do not hold up well to scrutiny, misclassifications here should not really matter; although the intuitions and commitments will.

4 See e.g., Pollock 86, Pollock & Cruz 99.

will call this "higher-order internalism," since it is the definition of internalism that requires higher-order awareness or a higher-level belief. John Pollock and Joseph Cruz (99) describe this type of view of internalism as one with an emphasis on conscious internal access to relations between beliefs [p. 24]. According to this definition, internalist views are motivated by strong action-guiding and deontological considerations. Higher-order conceptions of internalism are defended by talk about reasons, confidence, acts of justifying, and reflection, among other things. The definition of externalism that corresponds to higher-order internalism is an extremely weak one: any view of justification that is less restrictive would count as externalist.

Laurence BonJour identifies this as a strong version of internalism, according to which the believer must actually be aware of the justifying factors in order to be justified [92, p. 132]. Ernest Sosa (99) calls this type of internalism "Chisholmian internalism," according to which one can find out directly, by reflection, what one is justified in believing at any time. He says this amounts to "the view that we have armchair access to the epistemic status of our beliefs (or at least to their status of being justified)" [148].

Theories of justification that would be internalist according to higher-order internalism would be Keith Lehrer’s (90, 00) "personal justification," as well as the views of Carl Ginet (75, 92), Donald Davidson, and Roderick Chisholm. On Lehrer’s view, for example, internalists explain how a believer knows the truth of her belief, or has a way of knowing that her information is correct. Ginet talks about subjects’ being “justified in being confident that p”; everything that makes them so justified must be “directly recognizable” to

---

*I will later describe another way of understanding externalism.*
the subject, where that means that the subject needs “only to reflect clear-headedly on the question of whether or not that fact obtains in order to know that it does.” Chisholm and Ginet both go so far as to say that a subject can tell at any given time what beliefs are then justified for him [Ginet 92, p. 60].

2. Strong internalism

A less strong, but still relatively strong understanding of internalism is what I will call “strong internalism.” This is a deontological conception of internalism that still appeals to a conscious access to internal doxastic states of the agent. Justification is a function of the epistemic praise or blame one merits and whether one has proceeded in a responsible and blame-free manner [Pryor 01, p. 112]. Thus the definition is the same as higher-order internalism except for the lack of a requirement for higher-order awareness or higher-level doxastic states. If one’s belief $p$ is based on an inferential ground $q$, for higher-order internalism one must have good reason to believe that $q$ constitutes good evidence for $p$. For strong internalism, it merely has to be the case that $q$ in fact is good evidence for $p$ [Pryor 01, p. 106]. The corresponding version of externalism would be one on which states that do not meet these requirements could count as justifiers.

Strong internalism can lay claim to an intuition that a belief can be justified even without any corresponding higher-order state. This kind of internalism can allow for indirect access to justifiers and non-occurrent or potential justification. It does not require justified beliefs or knowledge about justifiers or justificatory status, unlike higher-order justification. It is defended using talk about introspection, judging, justifying, rationality and responsibility, awareness, confidence, reflection, and control. Adherents to a strong internalist conception maintain a commitment to the deontological nature of justification.
Several people have identified this as a possible way to define internalism. It is basically the same as Plantinga's "classical internalism," which he says has a fundamental deontological character. Richard Fumerton's "inferential internalism" (95) also seems to correspond to strong internalism. William Alston identifies two types of internalism that would fall under this category. His "perspectival internalism" is justification by reasons [85, p. 78], and says that only what is within the subject's perspective (something S knows or justifiably believes) can serve to justify [88, p. 270]. His "consciousness internalism" says that only those states of affairs of which the subject is actually conscious or aware can serve to justify [88, p. 271]; but since there need be no higher-order consciousness or awareness, this also is merely strong rather than higher-order internalism. Richard Rorty (79) claims that internalism means that justification has to be by reference to what we accept; since only beliefs or acceptances count as justifiers, that puts his definition of internalism in the category of strong internalism.

Views that would count as internalist on this conception would include all those considered internalist by higher-order internalism, and also the theories of Leslie Stevenson (99), Rorty, and BonJour (85, 92, 01). Stevenson's view is that internalism involves something like conscious access to justifying mental states by a subject. The access is potential rather than actual, but the fact that it is introspective access that is decisive, and that justification involves the subject needing to be able to say something by way of justification to be justified, make this a strong version of internalism. The strong internalist view's emphasis on deontology and a strongly conscious or voluntary access to internal justifiers comes out when Stevenson says, "The normative epistemic status of a belief must depend entirely on facts that are immediately accessible to the subject (i.e., he or she must,
on the basis of introspection alone, be able to make a justified judgment about the relevant facts." [99, p. 485].

Bonjour falls into this category as well. In his (85), he held that justification consists in having a reason in the form of another belief. He often talks about internalism involving deontological factors like rationality and responsibility. And the strength of the awareness dimension comes out when he says things like “The ‘internal’ of ‘internalism’ means primarily that what is appealed to for justification must be *internal to the individual's first-person cognitive perspective*” (ibid; his emphasis), and that the main intuition for internalism is that epistemic justification requires that the believer actually have in his cognitive possession a reason for thinking that the belief is true [92, p. 133]. Externalism, according to his definitions, “allows that at least some of the justifying factors need not be thus accessible, so that they can be *external* to the believer's cognitive perspective, beyond his ken” (ibid).

3. *Special-access internalism*

On this conception of internalism, a theory of justification is internalist if internal or cognitive states are the only justifiers, and the belief’s justification involves some special kind of access to those justifiers. What that special access amounts to is generally left rather vague. The difference between this kind of view and stronger versions of internalism is that the access is less conscious or deliberate than for strong or higher-order internalism. In other words, special-access internalism does not require internalist theories to be deontologically oriented. This is because it does not require access to justifiers to be de se; and as Alston (86) has pointed out, I cannot be blamed or credited for my beliefs in relation to justifiers I do not have access to *de se* [212]. On the special-access view, it merely has to be the case that whether one is justified in believing *p* supervenes on facts which one is in a
position to know about by reflection alone [Pryor 01, p. 104]. The special access internalist can talk about introspection, judging, rationality, awareness, confidence, and reflection. The definition of externalism that contrast with special-access internalism would be such that at least some justifiers could be things to which an agent does not have special access.

Richard Feldman and Earl Conee (01) identify a type of internalism of this sort. They call it “accessibilism,” and describe it as the view that the epistemic justification of a person’s belief is determined by things to which the person has some special sort of access. Fumerton (88) also discusses this as a way to define internalism. He describes it as saying that the necessary and sufficient conditions for satisfying epistemic concepts are conditions to which one has a privileged and direct access. Marshall Swain (88) talks about what he calls an “internalist assumption”: that the reasons on which a belief is based are internally accessible. This also indicates an access definition of internalism. Plantinga (93a&b) discusses a weaker way of defining internalism that seems to correspond to special-access internalism, saying that it involves factors accessible to the agent.

Robert Audi (93) is an example of someone who has a view that would count as internalist on a special-access definition. On his account, one must have dispositional, introspective access to what justifies the belief, in addition to the existence of a causal connection between the justifier and the belief. The justifier itself must be internal for the view to be internalist. It depends on what “introspective access” amounts to how strong this conception is. However, it seems as though to be introspective the access must be something like conscious (although he stipulates that it can be non-conceptual and indirect), which makes the view one on the strong end of special-access views.
4. **Mentalist internalism**

This way of defining internalism says that internalist views make justification a matter only of states internal to the agent, but sets no conditions on what kind of states they must be or how they must be accessed. On this way of defining things, internalist views are ones that make justification a matter that is internally **determined**, where “internally” is construed very broadly. However, one need not have any special access to whether one’s belief is justified, its grounds are adequate, and so forth [Pryor 01, p. 108]; nor need one have special access to the justifiers of the belief. The main intuition for mentalism seems to be something like rationality, along with an anti-externalism intuition. Mentalists tend to cite as a defense of internalism a commitment to what Pollock has called “cognitive essentialism”: the view that you can vary everything about a situation but the internal states and justifiedness doesn’t vary [Pollock & Cruz, p.25]. The corresponding conception of externalism is that at least some justifying conditions are outside of agents.

The main proponents of mentalist internalism are Feldman and Conee, Pollock, and Pollock and Cruz. As Pollock has defined it, internalism is “the view that only internal states of the cognizer can be relevant in determining which of the cognizer’s beliefs are justified” [99, p. 394]. Internalist theories make justification a matter only of the believer’s internal states, where those are the states that are ‘directly accessible’ to the believer. Direct accessibility on this account means accessibility to “the mechanisms in our central nervous system that direct our reasoning,” where access to them doesn’t require us first to have beliefs about them [87, p. 134]. This doesn’t require anything like conscious access to

---

\(^7\) See also Alston 86 (p. 110 in Kornblith).
mental states and doesn’t invoke a deontological notion, so it’s weaker than the other conceptions of internalism. What we have direct access to are internal states, which can include beliefs and also perceptual states, memory states, and so forth [Pollock & Cruz, p. 89]. Pollock and Cruz sum up the view by saying, “the internalist maintains that epistemic norms must be formulated in terms of relations between beliefs or between beliefs and nondoxastic internal states (e.g., perceptual states), and she denies that these norms are subject to evaluation in terms of external considerations” [99, p. 131].

Feldman and Conee coin the term “mentalism,” and describe it as the view that a person’s beliefs are justified only by things that are internal to the person’s mental life. According to the mentalist view, justificatory status strongly supervenes on S’s occurrent and dispositional mental states, events and conditions. This view has been mentioned or seemingly endorsed by others as well. Alvin Goldman (86) defines internalist theories as ones that “invoke solely psychological conditions of the cognizer,” a definition weak enough to count as a mentalist one. Fumerton mentions a definition of internalism of this sort as one possibility: an internalism that holds that the conditions sufficient for justification are always states internal to the subject [95, p. 405].

Both Pollock & Cruz and Feldman & Conee deny that internalism necessitates a guidance-deontological conception of justification, which some theorists like Goldman (99) have considered central to internalism. Both sets of theorists also hold cognitive essentialism. They understand externalism as holding that differences in justification can result from contingent non-mental differences like differing causal connections or reliability. Thus the externalism contrasting with mentalist internalism would say that justification is not merely a function of states internal to the cognizer.
5. *Ambiguous conceptions and views*

Although I have presented the four conceptions of internalism and the corresponding conceptions of externalism as relatively distinct and meaningful, I do not actually think this to be the case. I do think that there is a range of conceptions of internalism that follows the basic progression outlined above, but I will argue that the distinctions between those four stances are not clear, robust, or useful enough to put much theoretical weight on.

This can be highlighted by noting that for every definition of internalism and externalism that fits neatly into one of the four types above, there is another that does not. Similarly, for all the conceptions of justification that instantiate one or the other of the described conceptions of internalism or externalism, there are others that do not. Many views are ambiguous between the concepts of internalism; or even between internalism and externalism. These ambiguous views show us what is shared between definitions of internalism, by illustrating that views could sit happily in more than one of the four camps described. This can help us formulate the most fundamental intuitions divide at work between internalists and externalists. They also show what is not shared between such definitions, which will help us locate various intuitions divides that are not most fundamentally at work. I will first present some ambiguous definitions and views. In later sections I will refer back to them in order to bolster the central claim of this chapter: that the distinction we should take most seriously is between (basically) the internalist and externalist stances.

---

8 Some of the ambiguous definitions that follow are disambiguated in the theories succeeding them; but my point here is that they are ambiguous (or neutral) as general characterizations of the nature of internalism.
One example of an ambiguous conception is that of Hilary Kornblith. He has a view that internalism is about the subjective and what is involved in the inquiry leading to a belief, and externalism is about the objective. This is an ambiguous definition and, taken at face value, not a common one. An internalist view that included no objective considerations at all would be immoderately strong; most coherence views, for example, necessitate considering objective matters about whether coherence obtains [cf. Goldman 86]. However, if we take "about the subjective" to mean something like restricted to factors consciously or otherwise mentally accessible to the believer, it could be a weaker definition.

Louis Pojman (93) has an evidentialist view, according to which internalism says that justification is about following the best evidence available to us. This is an ambiguous conception because there could be a more objective and a more subjective sense of "following evidence". If it means only that we are as a matter of fact, objectively speaking, coming to conclusions in accord with our best evidence, that's a quite weak version of internalism (if it is an internalist view at all). But if it were a more deontological or conscious conception of following evidence it would be a stronger version.

Sosa (99) discusses two definitions of internalism, one weaker and one stronger. What he calls "Cartesian internalism" says that justification "requires only really proper thought on the part of the subject." Proper or appropriate thought "is a matter purely internal to the mind of the subject, and not dependent on what lies beyond" [147]. This is another ambiguous definition, because it depends on how objective the conception of proper thought and being internal to a mind is. If being internal to a mind is merely a matter of cognitive activity rather than conscious thought or something like it, this is a quite weak
conception of internalism. If it were more deontological, it would be stronger. The
definition is probably meant to be inclusive of various possibilities.

Fumerton 88 has a definition of internalism that is ambiguous between higher-order
and weaker versions. He says that internalism involves having facts about which
propositions make probable others “before our consciousness,” and that internalists want
direct acquaintance with the fact that one’s evidence makes epistemically probable one’s
conclusion. Although this higher-order talk by Fumerton makes him sound like he’s talking
about a very strong conception of internalism, there are other things he says that sound like
weaker conditions for internalism. In particular, he says that the defining characteristic of
internalist epistemology is that it takes fundamental epistemic concepts to be *sui generis,* and
that it takes a non-naturalist epistemological stance. This is not nearly as restrictive an
understanding of internalism as his higher-order description indicates.

Similarly, Goldman sometimes seems to define internalism in a higher-order way,
and sometimes in a weaker way. For example, in his (94) he says that what it means to be
internal is for a proposition or relation’s satisfaction to be accessible from a first-person
perspective, where that means that an agent “can always determine correctly whether or not
that property or relation holds of his belief” [313]. In his (92) he says that internalism might
be the view that whether you’re justified in believing a proposition is directly accessible to
you from the internal perspective, or by immediate reflection. This is a strong understanding
of internalism because it is a justificatory relation or status that is accessible, not just the
justifiers. But in other places Goldman defines internalism in weaker terms. In his (86), as
noted above, he defined internalist theories as those that invoke solely internal states of
cognizers.
Foley is an example of someone whose descriptions of internalism are ambiguous between strong internalism and a weaker conception. He identifies internalism as involving confidence of belief, clarity and intensity, and what one would believe on reflection (85). This could be understood as a strong definition of internalism, since one of the features of strong internalism is that there is strong awareness and a deontological character, either of which could be seen in Foley’s description. Elsewhere Foley talks about the proper theory being about what’s ‘within our control’ and ‘from your skin in,’ which is ambiguous (90). From your skin in allows for a very weak version of internalism, but it depends on what it means for something to be within one’s control how strong a conception that leads to. If it’s conscious control that would be a voluntaristic and deontological view, which would be strong. However, if the control is merely a more automatic cognitive activity, the view may not qualify as a strong internalist one.

Alston (85) defines internalism in a special-access way: as holding that there must be a ground of the belief internal to the subject psychologically through fairly direct accessibility. What’s internal about justification “is that whether a belief is justified depends on what it is based on (grounds); and grounds must be other psychological state(s) of the same subject” [78]. In his (88) he identifies this type of internalism as “accessibility internalism” and defines it as saying that only that to which the subject has cognitive access in some specially strong form can be a justifier. However, Alston slips into what seems to

---

9 One should note about Foley that he always talks about rationality rather than justification. This means that any opposition he sees in the externalist camp may be a straw person, since externalists do not discuss whether rationality is internalist or externalist, but justification. It seems likely that many externalists would accept an internalist view of rationality. However, the charitable interpretation of his view is probably to take his rationality as loosely equivalent to justification.
be higher-order talk in the same work when he says that what's central to internalism that externalism doesn't capture is that "we expect that if there is something that justifies my belief that p I will be able to determine what it is" [272]. He argues that this is what the accessibility requirement amounts to. But this isn't one's belief forming system having special access to mental states that justify those beliefs; this is an agent having special access to, awareness of or knowledge of what those justifiers are. The same problem occurs in his (93) when he says that the internalist denies truth-conducivity and asserts reflective accessibility. By this he means that the internalist denies that justification entails an objective likelihood of truth for a belief but asserts that what makes for justification, and hence justification itself, must be knowable by the subject just on reflection. This, again, looks like higher-order talk rather than the weaker special-access type of internalism.

Now that we have gotten some views about internalism and externalism - ambiguous and otherwise - out, let us see what we can glean from them. To begin with, what does it matter whether people are using different conceptions of internalism and externalism, or indeterminate conceptions? If it does matter, how can we resolve the problems caused by this?
C TOWARDS A RESOLUTION

The internalism/externalism debate seems to have two major problems. One is that it looks very unpromising that there will be a resolution either in favor of one side or the other, or of a mixed view. I will discuss this problem at more length later. The other problem is that it's not clear what the debate is meant to be about; or at least it is clear that different disputants (and even the same disputant at different times) take it to be about different things.

Of course it is important in general for disputants to “be on the same page” as other disputants, or at least to be cognizant of which page each person is on. There are some specific problems that can arise because there are different ways of defining externalism and internalism.

Any negative argument in favor of either internalism or externalism (that is, an argument against externalism or internalism, respectively) runs the risk of being merely an argument against some particular type of externalist or internalist theory. Positive internalist or externalist arguments (that is, arguments for internalism or externalism) can miss their intended targets as well. An argument that internalism is correct because only it can do X will not work against versions of externalism that can also do X. For example, some internalists have argued that only internalism can account for beliefs being unjustified because of a defeater in the agent’s cognitive possession. But this objection only applies to

---

10 Goldman 99 is an example of someone who runs this risk; in his case, by arguing that internalist theories are flawed because they involve a guidance/deontological conception of justification.
certain versions of externalism, and wouldn't work against weaker versions that allow for an internal no-defeater condition.\footnote{See Bergmann (97) on these kinds of externalism.}

Another situation that can arise is when arguments that purport to be in favor of internalism or externalism in general actually only work to support a limited subset of possible definitions of internalism or externalism. So for example an argument that internalism is right because it captures the intuition that only beliefs or acceptances can count as justifiers (e.g., Rorty 79) works only in favor of strong or higher-order internalism, not special-access or mentalist internalism.

In addition, an argument that is intended to be against one view can actually be effective against other views as well. An argument against externalism can constitute an argument against mentalist internalism; an argument against internalism can work as an argument against weak externalism. An argument that externalism can't be right because it doesn't make justification depend on a higher-order awareness of the justifying relation (e.g., Lehrer) is actually an argument not just against externalism but against all other forms of internalism, as well.

The issues raised by what we might call "the inconsistent definitions problem" may not be a problem for those whose goal is to argue for a particular theory of justification rather than for internalism or externalism as a whole. What they are a problem for is the internalism/externalism debate, and also our understanding of what is at issue in this debate, what we can learn from it, and what we must account for or respond to in theory of justification.
One way to deal with this situation is to choose some internalism/externalism distinction (such as one of the four outlined above) and convince everyone to engage in debate about that distinction. But why choose one distinction over another? In answering this question, we might actually be led to a different kind of solution to the inconsistent definitions problem. When we discover what it is that's most fundamentally or importantly at issue, we could explore whether there is something else to do with that discovery other than to force a battle to the death between the two sides. Once we discover what is driving internalists and externalists and the nature of the disagreement, we could use that to see whether the two could actually be compatible.

A problem is that a lot of things seem to be driving internalists and externalists, as well as driving ways of demarcating the internalism/externalism divide. Some of the intuitions that seem strongly at work are deontological, doxastic, cognitive essentialist, objective, causal, and reliabilist intuitions. As Alston (93) has pointed out, each of these values has a legitimate place in epistemological discourse. I think there is no convincing way to say that some pair of these intuitions is really behind all the participants' positions on theory of justification. Although I think it is important to try to explain or take into account most of these intuitions, I do not think it is terribly important to try to accommodate them all. Some of the theorists may simply be wrong that some way of marking the distinction is the best or most important way. So I think it is legitimate to use the positions and intuitions in the debate to inform reasons to locate what I think is most importantly at issue.

That project takes place over the course of this dissertation. As a first step, I will simply make a case that the state of the internalism/externalism debate and the intuitions
that drive many of those engaged in it motivates an attempt to distinguish two senses of epistemic justification.

There are two ways to approach formulating a distinction about a concept like epistemic justification. One is to examine how theorists using the term have been using it, in order to find the most prevalent distinction they have taken to be fundamental. Another is to formulate and argue for a distinction that is the most theoretically useful. I will discuss both approaches further in the next chapter, which is the metaepistemological and programmatic chapter. For now, though, I will take an approach that is somewhere between the two. I believe there is a difference between what theorists have taken the central feature of each position to be, and the actual aim that is characteristic of each approach. What I am interested in is the latter: the closest thing possible to a target explanandum common to each of the two basic camps.

We could also understand my focus as the broad intuition divide that puts views with one basic sort of target on one side and those with another on the other. This is more theory-neutral than many characterizations of the central features of internalism and externalism, which can amount to defining one central feature to entail a particular sort of theory of justification, and defining the opposing central feature to be obviously inadequate. Besides which, as noted above, there are many such candidate features. And anyway, any characterization of the central features of the two sides implies a judgment about what distinction is most theoretically useful and interesting, and could of course be wrong about that. So choosing a distinction based primarily on prior characterizations risks inheriting a problematic distinction.
That said, I will start from prior characterizations and instantiations in order to discover what I am after: the aims or targets of the opposing viewpoints. What is driving each side? What do theories and characterizations of each side have in common? What can we identify as the explanandum of each?

1. **Externalism**

As the four types of understandings of internalism have been laid out above, there are four corresponding types of understandings of externalism. As I defined them there, they were merely the denial of each definition of internalism. However, there is a peculiar consequence of this way of letting definitions of externalism be set. It does not make it a requirement of a definition of externalism that it invoke states external to the cognizer. If a definition of internalism restricts justifiers to some subset of cognitive states, the corresponding definition of externalism merely says that justifiers can include states outside of that subset. So a view that includes no external states and is intended as an internalist view by its proponent could end up counting as externalist on this particular way of defining categories; but this seems untrue to the notion of externalism, which ought to involve at least some factors external to the cognizer. We could add a third category, “neither internalist nor externalist,” but this seems needlessly complicated. In fact, I think any distinction that either does not require externalist theories to have external features or leaves a gap between internalism and externalism cannot be an adequate basis for a distinction of senses of justification – but more on this later.

In fact, everyone takes externalism to involve a tie to truth, matter of fact, or states.

---

12 I am grateful to Terry Horgan for pointing out this distinction.
of affairs external to agents however broadly construed. This tie can be one of success, correspondence to reality, reliability, a causal connection to that which is represented, adequacy of grounds for belief, and origins or history of beliefs: these are the various key ideas driving particular externalist theories, but all are aiming at an explanation of justification inclusive of the external world. Although logically speaking a strong or restrictive definition of internalism makes all weaker or less restrictive theories externalist, practically speaking the heart of the debate is between those who invoke an actual-world relation and those who don't. Thus the best way to understand the externalist position is as the contrast to mentalist internalism rather than to any of the other ways of defining internalism.\(^{13}\) We can say that all definitions of externalism say that a view is externalist if it invokes features outside of the cognizer.

2. \textit{Internalism}

So nearly all internalists and externalists take externalism to be talking about a conception of justification and its satisfaction conditions that extends beyond beliefs, beyond accessible states, beyond cognition, and into the contingent external world. All internalists and externalists take in internalism \textit{not} to be extending justification that far. Some take it to be extending only as far as beliefs, or accessible states, or cognition. They take the aim of internalism to be justification exclusive of the external world and confined only to cognition or some subset of it.

\(^{13}\) It is possible to define externalism not as the denial of internalism but as the view exclusive of internalism, as follows: externalist theories hold that justification is \textit{not} a function of states internal to the cognizer, but rather a function only of states external to the cognizer. In practice, this option has almost never been attempted, for reasons that will be elucidated in a later chapter.
As with externalism, various specific key features are focused on by internalists and conceptions of internalism. Some of these key features are meant to restrict the domain of the interesting kind of justification to some subset of cognition, such as beliefs or accessible states. Some of them are what theorists would identify as the fundamental distinguishing feature of internalism. Whatever their theoretical differences, we can still ask whether those with differing conceptions of the aim of internalism are focusing on different explananda, or whether they should be understood as aiming at the same basic thing and giving competing accounts of it.

I do not want to deny that it is possible that there are theorists with differing conceptions of internalism who are actually trying to give explanations of different things. I do think it is not generally the case. What I want to discuss is whether it would be more fruitful for epistemologists to divide them into separate camps with separate aims, or find some common overarching aim to understand them all as basically targeting. My contention is that the latter is more fruitful.

I will argue in this section that the dividing lines between the conceptions of internalism are not clear enough to constitute useful distinctions. This is made especially apparent by looking at the ambiguous views. Those ambiguous conceptions also show a lack of common intuitions about these supposedly defensible distinctions, and although this is not decisive, it is thought-provoking. Furthermore, I will argue, cognitive science doesn't support what are arguably contingent empirical claims about the way epistemic cognition can be divided up. The end result of these arguments is that it is more promising to conceive of the various conceptions of internalism as having a common aim (whether their proponents
would concede this or not) that is to be contrasted with the common aim of externalists than to conceive of them as having different aims.

First, I will give reasons to think that the distinctions proposed between conceptions of internalism – higher-order, strong, access, and mentalist – threaten to break down upon closer examination.

The distinction between higher-order and strong conceptions of internalism is vulnerable to questions about the nature of the higher-order beliefs in higher-order justification. Must those beliefs be actual, or can they be potential? Can they be dispositional rather than occurrent? If dispositional beliefs can count, higher-order justification doesn’t look much different from strong internalism.

The distinction between strong internalism and special-access internalism is also subject to difficult worries. If the main difference is supposed to be whether internalism involves a deontological component such that the access is conscious and controlled, this is a hard requirement to understand. Philosophers and cognitive scientists have reached no easy solutions to the problem of distinguishing conscious from non-conscious mental states, or voluntary mental operations from involuntary ones.

Besides, depending on how one defines the “special access” of special-access internalism, that special access could amount to access as conscious and controlled as strong internalism (or even higher-order internalism) requires. Alston (86) has noted that special access has been “variously specified as direct, incorrigible, and obtainable just by reflecting” [211]. Goldman (80) defined it as being able to tell which doxastic decision principle is
correct.\textsuperscript{14} Kent Bach (85) has said it amounts to an awareness or immediate capability of awareness of what makes a belief justified and why [250]. Pollock (86) and Pollock & Cruz (99) have distinguished \textit{reflective accessibility} from \textit{direct accessibility}, which is accessibility to the cognitive mechanisms directing our epistemic cognition, without a requirement that we first have beliefs about the states accessed.\textsuperscript{15} Only a few of these definitions are such that the access view does not amount to a version of strong or higher-order internalism.

The distinction between special-access internalism and mentalism is also susceptible to questions about the nature of the special access. What counts as the right kind of access could be defined loosely enough that any cognitive states playing a role in justifying a belief must merely be available for the use of the cognitive system in some way (as in Pollock and Pollock & Cruz, cited above); but this would essentially correspond to the mentalist view.

The tendency of these distinctions in conception of internalism to bleed into one another (or even hemorrhage) is highlighted by the many ambiguous views discussed earlier in the chapter. The fact that such views can be classified as comporting with one or the other of the conceptions of internalism provides evidence that there is not enough of a distinction between those conceptions to be of theoretical use. It provides an argument for locating the conceptual divide between the internalists and externalists rather than between different sorts of internalists.

Another argument for this way of locating the conceptual divide comes from the realization that each way of understanding internalism has implications about cognition, and cognitive science is not advanced enough to support distinctions between these implications.

\textsuperscript{14} P. 35; he indicates that the access must even be infallible, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{15} (86), p. 136; (99), p. 133.
Higher-order internalism, for instance, implies that we can or do have higher-order beliefs about each of our justified beliefs. Strong internalism has implications that an agent has control over aspects of all of her justified beliefs, since it is grounded in a deontological conception. Special-access internalism implies that there is some way to distinguish between states to which one has access of a certain kind and states to which one does n't. But these implications amount to empirical claims; we cannot tell from the armchair whether we have access to all of our perceptual states, to what extent doxastic voluntarism (direct or indirect) is something of which we are capable, or whether beliefs are the kinds of states these theories take them to be. In contrast, the divide between the broad internalist and externalist aims—essentially, between “cognitive” and “non-cognitive”—does not depend upon such sophisticated empirical claims.

Another, similar, problem is that with the various conditions that can be put on the various versions of internalism, there is currently no real way to say that there are real distinctions there, or whether certain specific versions of the views are instantiable. Depending on how the views and their constituents are defined, the views look hopelessly difficult to distinguish strongly enough to support a difference in concept. For instance, the beliefs in higher-order internalism could be dispositional, or the control in strong internalism could be spelled out in a relatively non-conscious way, or the access in special-access internalism could be by consciously inaccessible cognitive mechanisms. Each of these interpretations blurs or eradicates the border between two of the supposedly different understandings of internalism. Again, empirical findings from cognitive science could also end up showing us that the distinctions cannot be drawn in ways that yield tidy—or even untidy—separations. The mind is a vastly complicated, interconnected, mutable thing, and
any distinction that tries to draw a sharp line between such aspects of it could very well be doomed to failure.

The reason not to locate the divide between specific theories of justification (declaring that there are separate senses of justification such as "evidentialist justification", "coherentist justification", and "foundationalist justification") is simple: it would be completely useless. If each view is talking about a different concept, we have a situation of theoretical relativism and thus no view would be disagreeing with, talking to, or modifying any other view.

I have been presenting these problems with distinguishing conceptions about internalism as reasons not to locate a sense distinction between them; but the same problems give us reason not to choose one of the narrower conceptions as the most fruitful one to contrast with the basic externalist position. If it is theoretically and empirically difficult to come up with a good way to distinguish the definitions of internalism from one another, that means that it is equally difficult to carve out one of those definitions — say, strong internalism — as the most robust and theoretically useful conception of internalism.

This leaves us with a host of good reasons to lump conceptions of internalism together despite their differences, and locate their common target. Definitions of internalism may vary on how internal to the cognizer a theory's features must be in order for it to count as internalist, but they agree that those features cannot extend outside of the agent. So (not startlingly) a generic way to capture the distinction is to say that internalism is the claim that justification is a function entirely of features internal to cognizers, and
externalism is (as discussed above) the claim that justification is a function of at least some features external to cognizers. 16

It has been tempting for many contemporary epistemologists to conceive of the two basic positions as competing. 17 If we take the basic stances of internalism and externalism to be exclusive and incompatibly competing, in choosing between them we are (obviously) deciding which is the right theory of justification. Thus each presents a particular view of what justification is. How are we to choose between them? Before proposing and answer to this question, I will explore more deeply the intuitions driving each position.

The shared intuition behind internalism is, I have proposed, cognitive essentialism: nothing outside of the cognition of the agent is relevant in whether the agent’s beliefs are justified. In addition, internalism typically incorporates some kind of idea of action-guidingness: factors not part of the agent’s cognition, over which the agent has no control or even access, should not count against the agent’s beliefs’ justification. The shared intuition behind externalism seems to be that at least sometimes factors outside of an agent’s cognition are relevant for the justificatory status of the agent’s belief s. These two intuitions can be brought out more clearly with the use of some classic epistemological thought experiments.

16 This way of making the distinction is widespread. See Alston (86), Foley (85) and (90), Sidelle (02), Conee & Feldman (01), Riggs (98), Fumerton (95), Bach (85), Pollock (86, p. 197), and Pollock & Cruz (99, esp. pp. 24, 26, 133).

17 See, e.g., Goldman (80) and (99), Fumerton (95) and (98), Lehrer (90) and (00, esp. pp. 17, 177), Conee & Feldman (01), and BonJour (78).
D  THE TWO-SENSE INTUITION

In this section, I will use a pair of thought experiments to help identify the two basic intuitions about justification. My intention is to use these intuitions to locate the most fundamental dichotomy in theories and conceptions of justification.

To get our intuitions into the right ballpark, let us first get out a working definition of justification in general. In theory-neutral terms, justification has to do with being reasonable or with fitting well with evidence. Sosa (99) has characterized justification as a philosophers’ term of art, meaning “belief not defectively formed or sustained in a way that reflects poorly on the believer’s mind” [156], Robert Brandom (98) as a term indicating a commitment a believer is “in some sense entitled to” [388], and John McDowell (95) as meaning “a satisfactory standing in the space of reasons” [415]. Many philosophers hold that the belief or commitment must also be based on the right thing. In addition, most philosophers hold that justification has something to do with normativity, and something to do with contributing to the possession of knowledge.  

With this general characterization in mind, let us examine a thought experiment. I will use as my starting point a scene from Douglas Adams’s “holistic detective novel” The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul. In the passage we encounter a patient in a very exclusive mental hospital who seems unable to stop murmuring something ceaselessly. After calling in
a lip-reader, the doctors discover that she is reciting stock market figures. “At first we were all very excited,” a doctor says, “until we realized that they were only yesterday’s figures.” The patient – let us call her Sophie – is reciting stock figures with perfect accuracy, keeping up with the changes in the market, just twenty-four hours out of synch. Although the patient is completely isolated from any source of outside information, the doctors assume that she is using normal channels. “Mustn’t multiply entities,” says the doctor; “Ockham’s Razor, and all that.” Of course, if the figures were tomorrow’s, he concedes, it would be a different kettle of fish, and there would be absolutely no difficulty finding funding to research the phenomenon.

Now I will recast the example so that it fits the model of two classic epistemological thought experiments. First, I must stipulate that Sophie believes that what she is uttering is a string of stock market figures, and believes their contents: e.g., that AOL stock is at 16 and a half.

1. Clairvoyant Sophie

Clairvoyant Sophie
As in Adams’s version, it turns out that these beliefs actually correspond correctly to the real stock figures, and (contra the wise doctors) are caused by some reliable or proper process or connection such as genuine extra-sensory perception. However, although Sophie cannot help but believe these propositions, she does not possess any information about the true, reliable nature of the connection.  

Most people have the intuition that something is going right, epistemically speaking, in this case. Whatever is going right in Clairvoyant Sophie may not be adequate for knowledge, but it is epistemically relevant nonetheless. In fact, what Sophie’s clairvoyance confers on her

---

22 The original clairvoyant example is in BonJour (80). Brandom (98, pp. 376-77) has discussed this kind of epistemic merit in relation to “chicken sexer” and “super blindsight” cases; if they are more intuitive, substitute them in what follows.
beliefs looks like it meets the theory-neutral characterization of justification above on one construal of the characteristics in that characterization. There is arguably a legitimate way to say that her beliefs are reasonable and fit well with the evidence: there are in fact good reasons and good evidence for them. Given how successful her stock market beliefs are at reflecting the actual stock market figures, we can say they are formed and sustained in a way that reflects quite well on Sophie’s mind. She is arguably entitled to the belief, in the sense that her extraordinary ability earned it for her; Wayne D. Riggs (02) has talked about deserving “credit” for using reliable methods, for instance. 23 Her belief has a satisfactory standing in the space of reasons objectively understood.

In the external sense of normativity, what is going right in Clairvoyant Sophie’s beliefs can be seen as a normative matter. Pollock (80) has described this sense of normativity as analogous to the objective sense used in ethics: “what a person should believe given what are in fact good reasons for believing things.” 24 Sophie’s belief that AOL stock is at 16 and a half, perhaps in virtue of the process that resulted in it, is something like epistemically worthy of praise; and it seems clear that it can contribute to knowledge. 25 Although it is reasonable to think that Sophie’s beliefs in the stock market figures are unjustified from a first-person point of view, from a more objective, third-person point of

---

23 There is somewhere in the literature an analogy of this case to an agent in a community without vision who is born with vision. Such a person seems a good example of someone entitled to the product of his reliable belief-forming mechanism, even if everyone around him reacts with scorn and disbelief to his visual assertions, thus preventing him from having knowledge based on his vision.
24 p. 110. The ethics analogy is not exact, and Pollock denies the relevance of the objective sense of normativity to the epistemological project, but others find this a reasonable type of normativity (e.g., Riggs (02), Kvanvig (84), Fumerton (95), Zagzebski (02)). I will come back to its relevance later.
25 to see this, notice that a brain in a vat (such as Sophie-in-a-vat, whom we shall meet shortly) cannot hope to have knowledge without something like what Clairvoyant Sophie has.
view they look highly justified: we would not hesitate to rely on them if we knew the true nature of the connection, for example.

2. Sophie-in-a-Vat

Sophie-in-a-Vat
Let us reimagine Sophie as a victim in the mental hospital. She is a patient there, but an unknowing one; actually, she has been wired up to a supercomputer feeding her a completely robust interactive virtual-reality life in which she seems to have extrasensory perception. Sophie-in-a-Vat has a marvelously coherent and mutually supporting cognitive system on which beliefs that appear to her to be the result of clairvoyance seem perfectly reasonable. In her virtual world, clairvoyance is as well-documented and as normal as hearing. Her beliefs in stock market figures are as well-supported as her auditory beliefs, although neither corresponds to anything in the actual world.

Most people have the intuition that something is going right, epistemically speaking, in the beliefs of Sophie-in-a-Vat. It may not be robust enough for knowledge; this would be especially clear if we were to stipulate that the beliefs were true. But the situation is, again, something like epistemically worthy of praise. It seems clear that Sophie’s beliefs are legitimate from a first-person perspective even though from the third-person perspective we can see that they lack objective legitimacy. We have an impulse to call her beliefs justified in some way.

In fact, the thing that is going right in the case of Sophie-in-a-Vat also seems to meet the theory-neutral characterization of justification given above. There is a sense in which Sophie-in-a-Vat has beliefs that are reasonable and fit well with her evidence; and given the way her mind is set up, the formation and sustenance of her beliefs reflect well on her mind. She is—because of her blamelessness—entitled to her beliefs, and they have satisfactory standing in the space of her reasons. Sophie-in-a-Vat is, viewed on the inside, a paragon of epistemic virtue, and her belief system is admirable as a thing in itself. In the internal sense
of normativity, what is going right in Sophie-in-a-Vat's beliefs can be seen as a normative matter; and it seems clear that it can contribute to knowledge.  

3. The moral of the intuitions

The purpose of presenting these two thought experiments is to show that a reasonable person should be able to experience an intuition shift between what seem to be two distinct types or senses of justification. I believe that the natural reaction to these examples is to think that the concept of justification is being used in more than one way here. Our intuitions are pulled to give each of these situations an epistemic stamp of approval, but not the same stamp of approval. They both meet the general characterization of justification, but they meet it in different ways, by construing ideas such as "reasonable" and "normative" in different ways.

Thus one promising way to answer the question, "how are we to choose between the internalist view of justification and the externalist view of justification?", with which I introduced the last section, is to say that we need not choose between them. We could instead determine that the two sides either are talking about different concepts, or, if they're not, that they should be. In other words, the fundamental explanandum identified by internalists is a separate explanandum from that identified by externalists: there are two senses of justification.

Distinguishing between two senses of justification is a way to make sense of our seemingly conflicting intuitions about justification. When presented with a case like Clairvoyant Sophie, we have the intuition that her stock market beliefs are in some sense

---

26 to see this, we need only note that without what Sophie-in-a-Vat has, Clairvoyant Sophie cannot hope to have knowledge.
justified. But we also have the impulse to say, "she's connected in a good way to the world, but something so important is lacking in her subjective reason structure that we shouldn't call her beliefs truly justified." When presented with a case like Sophie-in-a-Vat, we are able to shift from an intuition that her beliefs in some sense have justification to an impulse to say, "the subjective reasoning structure seems to be functioning as well as we could expect, but she's just not connecting in the way she should with reality, so we shouldn't call her belief truly justified." If justification were univocal, I contend, not all of these impulses could be right; but if there are two senses of justification, they can each be right. A two-sense view would make it permissible rather than indecisive to have all of these intuitions.

There is a further intuitive reason to attempt a two-sense approach to justification. It comes from the observation that if justification were a univocal concept, a single theory of justification ought to be able to explain it adequately. But intuitively and historically, a theory good at explaining one of these situations is ill-equipped to explain the other. Any theory that can do a good job of explaining what is going right in the case of Sophie-in-a-Vat is one that can take Sophie's internal and subjective states as relevant to justification and factors external to her as irrelevant to it, at least for the justification being explained. Any theory that can do a good job of explaining what is going right in the case of Clairvoyant Sophie is capable of doing the opposite: taking factors external to Sophie as relevant and some factors internal to her as irrelevant. The basic idea is that the targets to which these two examples point theories of justification seem to differ.

This can be highlighted by noting that whatever each Sophie lacks, it does not seem to be more of the same. We do not say "if only Clairvoyant Sophie had an even more reliable process forming her beliefs, her beliefs would be fully justified" or "if only Sophie-
in-a-Vat had beliefs formed on the basis of more careful reasoning, her beliefs would be fully justified." We think that each needs this other kind of thing – the kind the other Sophie has. I am not here arguing that it is impossible that a single theory of justification could include resources that would adequately explain the different targets these examples point to. I do, however, think that it is unlikely. Theories that are good at explaining what makes beliefs reliably formed, for instance, are notoriously poor at explaining how subjective states or the lack of them affect justification. Theories that are good at explaining what makes beliefs internally consistent, coherent, or well-founded in regard to each other are notoriously poor at explaining how any connection to the outside world can get worked into justification. They are each good at aiming at something – they are simply good at aiming at different things.

The basic point here has been made indirectly by participants in the internalism/externalism debate, who have often pointed out that there are features important to justification that cannot plausibly be accounted for by either an internalist or an externalist theory.

For instance, as just noted, many have argued that internalism cannot work the outside world into justification. In the terms of the argument I am exploring, this would be understood as the assertion that a theory aimed at what internalist theories have had as their target would be inappropriate for capturing the externalist target. On the other side, many have argued that externalism cannot work the subjective into justification (e.g., subjective

---

27 Hence BonJour's original clairvoyant example, for instance. cf. also Fumerton 95 and Davidson 89, for example.
28 see Sturgeon 95, for instance.
29 For instances or discussions of such arguments, see, e.g., Goldman (80), Pollock (86, p. 134), Pollock & Cruz (99, pp. 131-3), Davidson (89, p. 157), Foley (90, pp. 184-5), and McDowell (95, p. 417).
defeaters). As Christopher Hookway (98) put one such point, “no wholly externalist account of justification will meet our needs and address important issues about the respects in which justifiers must be ‘accessible’” [911]. In my terms, a theory aimed at one target is not appropriate to aim at the other.

I have characterized two basic epistemological aims with the help of the two Sophie thought experiments above. Others have discussed something along the lines of a difference in aim; although the aims discussed may not be the same, the point is that many have recognized that there may be two conceptions such that a theory of one is inappropriate as a theory of the other, and no one theory is likely to be able to explain both. For instance, David Henderson & Terence Horgan (00) talk about two legitimate epistemological foci which are complementary and not competing [528]. Jonathan Kvanvig (00) has argued that there is an ambiguity in the concept of a means to a goal between an intentional means and an effective means [34-35], which can be transferred to an ambiguity in the aim of theories of justification.

Alston (86) points out that a deontologist and a truth-conducivist can have different emphases, and “each conception omits the crucial emphasis of the other”. For the truth-conducivist, “so long as one forms one’s belief in a way that is well calculated to get the truth, it is of no concern how well one is carrying out intellectual duties. Conversely, the deontologist has nothing to say about truth conducivity” [81]. Linda Zagzebski (99) holds that one can aim at two different senses in which knowledge is good: a natural good, like

---

30 For instances or discussions of these arguments, see, e.g., Lehrer (90, 00), Kvanvig (84, 00), BonJour (80), Fumerton (98b), and Pollock & Cruz (99, p. 118).
beauty, wit, or strength; or a good like the moral good that has to do with responsibility, praise, and blame [95].

I will come back to precisely pinning down the two aims or senses. However, the point here is that there is reason to think they are — or must be — noncompeting, distinct, and not susceptible to a unified explanation. Although this is not a knock-down argument, it seems to me that history and intuition combine here to indicate that we ought to try something other than a univocal sense of justification.

I have argued that there is good reason to locate a sense distinction between two basic conceptions of justification. I argued that such a distinction should be drawn from a broad understanding of the internalist/externalist positions, rather than between versions of internalism or between a narrow conception of internalism and some conception of externalism. I then explored the two broad intuitions arguably aimed at by these positions, using classic thought experiments and a general definition of justification. I presented some reasons to think that the two broad intuitions are independent, both legitimate within the rubric of justification, and likely not susceptible to explanation by a single theory.

I would like now to propose a general characterization of the two senses of justification that theorists and intuitions seem to be picking out. These are not precisely the two senses I will eventually argue ought to be adopted by epistemologists (they are too vague to ground theories of justification, for instance), but rather first approximations meant to be neutral between various ways of distinguishing two senses of justification. Again, in this chapter I am painting with a broad brush, so to speak, so these senses are just meant to give labels and basic characteristics to the fundamental division.
Personal justification: The kind of justification the brain in a vat has and the clairvoyant lacks. This sense of justification will have something to do with the inside of persons: their cognitive systems and subjective consciousness. A belief is personally justified if it is well-situated in regard to some aspects of the person such as her internal states, beliefs, and processes.

Matter-of-fact justification: The kind of justification the clairvoyant has and the brain in a vat lacks. This sense of justification will have something to do with objective matters of fact: matters of fact about the actual world and the belief's relationship to it. A belief is matter-of-fact justified if it is well-situated in regard to some objective facts, such as facts about the person and the external world.

In the next chapters, I will give reasons to think that a particular way to specify the broad personal/matter-of-fact distinction is robust enough to hang a conceptual difference on. In the meantime, my intention is to show that an attempt to make the broad distinction – which looks like it will not rely on questionable divisions conceptually and within cognition – is motivated by intuition and practice.

To further illustrate the presence of the two basic senses of justification in the epistemological literature, and show the ease of locating those two senses in the epistemological endeavor, I'd like to finish by presenting a selection of the questions various epistemologists have taken epistemology to be asking. 31

GROUP A:
Questions that have a personal orientation:

- **Bonjour** 80: Do I have any reason to think that any of my beliefs are true or that any of my ways of arriving at beliefs are reliable? (says this is the most fundamental and broadest epistemological question)
- **Davidson** 89: How can a person tell if his beliefs are true, or apt to be true?
- **Chisholm** 64: What justification do I have for thinking I know this?
  - What are the criteria (if any) in terms of which we believe ourselves justified in counting one thing as an instance of knowing and another thing not?

---

31 Some of these are discussed rather than endorsed by their authors. Some have been paraphrased in question form.
• Davidson 89: A person has all his beliefs about the world – that is, all his beliefs. How can he tell if they are true, or apt to be true? (answer: not by connecting beliefs to the world)

• Feldman & Conee 85: How should we epistemically evaluate attitudes given the evidence S does have, however S came to possess that evidence?

• Foley 93: What am I to believe?

GROUP B:

Questions that reveal a more matter-of-fact orientation:

• Stroud 89: How is any knowledge at all possible? How does anything we currently accept count as knowledge?

• Goldman 86: What makes a cause, or a causal process, the right kind of process for producing knowledge? What distinguishes knowledge-producing causes from other causes?

• Goldman 80: What features are necessary and sufficient for an already formed belief to count as justified?

GROUP C:

Questions that are overarching, and serve to capture various aspects of high-order concepts like epistemic justification in general, or epistemic warrant. Within each of these, one could propose answers corresponding to either of the senses of justification.

• Sosa & Kim 00: Under what general conditions is one epistemically justified in believing a proposition?

• Sosa 80: What requirements in addition to being believed must a belief fill in order to be knowledge?
  • Two key questions:
  • What do we know? (answer would be a list of types of knowledge)
  • How do we know? (answer would give criteria, canons, methods, principles that would explain how we know whatever we know)

• Alston 88: What would have to be specified to carry out a successful justification of the belief?

• Riggs 98: What distinguishes accidental (or unintentional, random, etc.) true belief from knowledge?

• Stroud 89: How do we know the things we know?

• Steup 96: What is knowledge/the nature of knowledge? (question of analysis)
  • What do we know? (question of extent; locus of skeptical problem)
  • What is it for a belief to be justified? (analysis)
  • Which of our beliefs are justified? (extent)
GROUP D:

Questions that are either ambiguous or neutral, and could be read in either way. These could be meant to indicate one commitment or the other, or to be ecumenical, but the language is ambiguous so it is hard to tell.

- Goldman, in conversation: How can or do we have justified beliefs? (amounts to: what processes/mechanisms are there to be used by which justified beliefs can be acquired?)
  (my note: it depends on the processes and mechanisms, and what makes them yield justified beliefs)
- Haack 99: What makes evidence better or worse? What makes inquiry better or worse conducted?
  (my note: it depends on the nature of evidence and how objectively "better or worse" is meant)
- Fumerton 88: When do we achieve satisfaction of concepts that resolve philosophical curiosity and doubt?
  (my note: it depends on what “achieving satisfaction of concepts” means and whose philosophical curiosity and doubt is intended)
- Kaplan 00: What can we learn based on our practical knowledge -attribution in everyday life about what we are warranted in counting as knowledge?
  (my note: it depends on what “we” means - the believer or the theorist)
- Pollock & Cruz 99: Of a belief: is it all right to believe it?
  (my note: it depends on what “all right” means)

GROUP E:

Questions that acknowledge two perspectives, arguably personal and matter-of-fact in nature:

- Foley 90: What am I to believe? (mentioned by him as “the egocentric question”) (personal)
  - What is it rational for me to believe? (helps with the egocentric predicament) (personal)
  - What is our position in the world as inquirers? Are people’s cognitive equipment & ways of employing it sufficiently well-suited for their environment as to be prone to produce true beliefs about it? (questions that arise from taking skeptical possibilities seriously – unanswerable but can be useful) (matter-of-fact)
- Kornblith 85: 1a) How ought we objectively speaking to arrive at our beliefs? What processes available to us are conducive to truth? (matter-of-fact)
  - 1b) How ought we subjectively speaking to arrive at our beliefs? What processes available to us seem conducive to truth? (personal)

---

32 In some cases, the author goes on to disambiguate the question by taking a theoretical stance.
• 2a) What actions ought we, objectively speaking, to perform to make processes by which we arrive at our beliefs more conducive to truth? What actions will make our beliefs be formed by processes conducive to truth? (matter-of-fact)

• 2b) What actions ought we, subjectively speaking, to perform to make processes by which we arrive at our beliefs more conducive to truth? What actions available to us would seem to make our beliefs be formed by processes conducive to truth? (personal)

• Stevenson 99: What ought we rationally to believe? (our most fundamental motive for doing epistemology (personal))

• What am I (or are we) now justified in believing? (we can also ask this more externalist question)) (matter-of-fact)

Although several of the basic intuitions at work in theories of justification are represented here, the strongest and most articulable is that between the personal and the matter-of-fact. This seems to me relatively clear in the contrast between Group A and Group B, which I have labeled personal-oriented and matter-of-fact-oriented questions. Here the main locus of difference in target seems to be the contrast between the inside of persons, and matters of fact that include matters outside of persons.

It also seems clear in Group E, in the contrast theorists have drawn between the types of questions they take epistemology to be asking when they do acknowledge two perspectives. Each could be interpreted as identifying two distinct targets of epistemological thinking: one about persons, their beliefs, their internal rationality, and their subjective states; and the other about the world, our environment, and the objective perspective.

The questions in Group C, which identify justification and the epistemological project in a generic way, capture any sub-concepts of epistemic justification. This is not problematic: as I will argue in the next chapter, I could make a blanket characterization of justification in general and that wouldn’t mean epistemic justification and legal justification weren’t still different concepts.
I would argue that the ambiguous questions in Group D readily warrant a need for disambiguation between personal and matter-of-fact interpretations. This can be brought out by considering our examples again. When we ask one of these questions of Sophie-in-a-Vat or Clairvoyant Sophie, we can recognize that the answer depends on the interpretation of the question. Is each Sophie's inquiry better or worse conducted? Well, each is better in one sense, worse in another. Is it all right for each Sophie to believe what she believes? For one it is all right from the inside, for the other it is all right from the outside. How does each Sophie do at satisfying concepts that resolve philosophical curiosity and doubt? They can be understood as satisfying different concepts, each of which arguably resolves some philosophical curiosity and doubt.

The ambiguous Group D questions could also inspire a question of disambiguation between other contrasts, e.g., higher-order and weaker understandings of justification. But as I have argued above, such contrasts turn out not to be robust. To illustrate, contrast the question "do you mean what you say to be from the inside or from the outside?" with the question "do you mean what you say to be from the inside or from the really inside?" This may not be a fair characterization of the alternative contrast, but it should convey something of the worry I have about the general type of contrast. A better division would be between the personal and the matter-of-fact.
E CONCLUSION

This chapter has constituted the initial motivation for attempting to distinguish two significant senses of epistemic justification, somewhere in the neighborhood of what I have called personal and matter-of-fact justification.

The discussion of internalism and externalism constitutes both an inspiration and a challenge. The inspiration comes from noticing the broad and fundamental division of intuitions that has been brought out by that debate. Those intuitions, and the targets at which the two sides are aiming their theories of justification, help to locate an existing concept distinction and a reason to develop a theoretically sophisticated distinction. The challenge comes from the need for some resolution of this debate. If it turns out that internalists can be directed toward talking about one concept and externalists toward talking about another, the dispute could be dissolved.

The Sophie thought experiments help solidify the two basic intuitions and stances. By being so extreme, they throw into high contrast the two different targets at which those doing epistemology might point their interest. The two concepts seem on a first examination to be relatively independent, and each to be of importance both intuitively and to knowledge. I will now go on to discuss how we might refine those concepts in a philosophically satisfactory way, and then proceed to do so.
Chapter Two

THE AMBIGUITY OF JUSTIFICATION

A INTRODUCTION

We now have a reason to attempt to formulate two viable senses of epistemic justification. But how does one go about doing such a thing? In this chapter, I present an exploration of the nature of ambiguity and the reasons to distinguish more than one sense of a term, and begin the task of arguing that ‘epistemic justification’ is a term for which such a disambiguation is appropriate. In particular, I will explore the nature of two separate kinds of arguments for disambiguating: linguistic and theoretical. To oversimplify a bit, linguists distinguish senses of a word when it is used in two different ways. Philosophers distinguish senses when it is of theoretical use for them to do so. Both reasons have some legitimacy within a philosophical project. I will go through some of the kinds of arguments linguists use and show how they can be made for the basic personal/matter-of-fact distinction. I will then go through some of the kinds of arguments philosophers can use, to set up a programme for further argument in later chapters.

Let me recapitulate the two broad senses of justification, and qualify them a bit, then begin to outline the arguments for distinguishing and refining them.

Personal justification: The kind of justification the brain in a vat has and the clairvoyant lacks. This sense of justification will have something to do with the inside of persons: their cognitive systems and subjective consciousness. A belief is personally justified if it is well-situated in regard to some aspects of the person such as her internal states, beliefs, and processes.

---

1 This chapter owes a great deal to a discussion of linguistic issues with Adrienne Lehrer.
2 By “disambiguation” I will usually mean dividing a word into two senses, not determining which of two senses is being used as in the ordinary use of “disambiguation”
Matter-of-fact justification: The kind of justification the clairvoyant has and the brain in a vat lacks. This sense of justification will have something to do with objective matters of fact: matters of fact about the actual world and the belief's relationship to it. A belief is matter-of-fact justified if it is well-situated in regard to some objective facts, such as facts about the person and the external world.

One thing about these definitions worth noting again is that they are necessarily vague and slippery. They are to some extent metaepistemological, since my point is one that is neutral between a variety of specific theories of justification. It is best, I think, to define the senses of justification so that they neither necessitate nor exclude particular theoretical perspectives, at least as much as possible. If I am right and 'justification' is ambiguous, then the epistemological study of justification must take these vague, theory-neutral senses of justification and fill in more specific definitions and explanations of each sense and their relationships to one another and to other epistemological concepts. The first step is my argument that there is a broad distinction here. In the next chapter I will specify the more specific way I think the broad distinction ought to be made, and in the following chapter I will give more arguments for making the distinction in that way. What I will not be doing is giving theories of either sense of justification here.

I would like here to say something briefly about what I mean by a "sense distinction." What I essentially mean this phrase to denote is a distinction of concepts. I will be arguing that each sense of justification can be present without the other, and on any theory of concepts, if this is the case there are two different concepts. What I do not want is for these to be understood as two different types of justification, as granite and shale are different types of rock. In the case of different types, there is no ambiguity or misunderstanding; everyone agrees of any particular instance that it is a rock. In type
differences like this, something cannot be both a rock and not a rock, whereas with sense or concept differences, something can be both, say, a bank and not a bank. I will argue that a belief can be both justified and unjustified in this way, and so that two separate concepts are at work.

One alternative that could be compatible with my thesis is contextualism. A contextualist might interpret what I am saying as that "justification" means something different in different contexts, and thus has different satisfaction conditions and so forth in different contexts. I do not mind people interpreting the view that way, although I will not phrase it in those terms here.

With the working distinction between personal and matter-of-fact justification in hand, I can now begin to show that 'justification' is ambiguous between the two. There are, I think, three demands here. One, I must give an argument that there is an ambiguity between at least two senses of justification. Two, I must give an argument that there is not an ambiguity between more than two senses. And three, I must give an argument that there is an ambiguity between the two particular senses on which I will be focusing. In the first chapter, I began the argument to answer the first demand, and I will continue that project here. In this chapter, I will also be exploring the methodologies for such arguments, as well as beginning the arguments for the responses to the first two demands. The remaining arguments for all three responses take place over the course of the remainder of this dissertation.

3 I owe this point to Josh Cowley.
4 Thanks to Terry Horgan for making this more clear to me.
First, I shall give some understanding of the nature of ambiguity. There are several kinds of lexical (as opposed to syntactic) ambiguity distinguished by linguists. First, there is homophony or homonymy. This is where the words are essentially unrelated, as in ‘bank’ of a body of water and ‘bank’ as in financial institution. Homophony/homonymy is taken to indicate distinct *words*. This clearly is not the kind of ambiguity (if any) in ‘justification’.

Second, there is polysemy. This is where the meanings are more closely related, as in ‘mouth’ of a river and ‘mouth’ of a person, ‘open’ in the senses of unfolding and revealing, or ‘newspaper’ as in object or organization. Cases of polysemy are those taken by lexical semanticists to indicate distinct senses of one lexical entry or word. Third, there is ambiguity of use. This is the kind of ambiguity active in sarcasm, where the word itself has one meaning but the speaker means to use it in some other, nonstandard way.

If I am to successfully argue that ‘justification’ is ambiguous, it is clearly polysemy that I am arguing for. Is ‘justification’ a case of polysemy? There are several routes semanticists use to demonstrate polysemy. For one thing, it seems to be the case that a good indication of the presence of ambiguity in general is that one cannot use the expression in question in both of two ways at once. D.A. Cruse says an ambiguous expression “resists, as it were, the simultaneous activation of more than one of its senses.” (86) So, for example, one cannot use ‘bank’ in both senses described above at the same time. This can be expressed by saying that with ambiguous terms, when the context does not determine in which way the word is meant, one can be forced to ask, “Wait a minute, do you mean (meaning x) or (meaning y)?” For example, “Wait a minute, do you mean India Indian or Native American Indian?”
This brings up a *prima facie* reason to dismiss out of hand any claim of the ambiguity of 'justification'. There clearly is a use of 'justification' and its cognates that does *not* resist the simultaneous activation of multiple senses, and thus fails this test for ambiguity (even when context doesn't specify either a personal or a matter-of-fact meaning). Consider the sentence “Justification is an epistemically evaluative notion.” In this case, there does not seem to be any compulsion to stop and ask “wait a minute, do you mean personal justification or matter-of-fact justification?” or any other such question. Everyone in the justification debate agrees on this statement, and it does not cut anyone out (except Quineans). So it seems unambiguous.

However, consider the sentence “The brain in a vat's perceptual beliefs are justified.” Here, I argue, it is much more plausible to feel an impulse to stop and ask, “wait a minute, do you mean personally justified or matter-of-fact justified?” (or some similar question). The disambiguating question certainly makes sense. Other epistemologists have been moved by examples like this to make a distinction between senses or types of justification. Another example would be from Goldman’s (88) “Strong and Weak Justification,” where an agent is using the best methods at his disposal, or at least those he has been completely trained to think are the best methods, but where those methods are unreliable. If one tries to determine the justifiedness of this agent’s belief, as Goldman argues, it is natural to think that there is one sense in which it is and another sense in which it is not justified [127].

So there is a use of 'justified' that fails the test for being ambiguous, and another use that passes it and indicates ambiguity. To illustrate this even further, we can see that there can be a further ambiguity of 'justification' at what we might call a higher level. Consider the
sentence “Being justified has to do with appropriateness or rightness” as opposed to “A belief can be unjustified even though it constitutes knowledge.” In the former case no disambiguation is necessary between any type or sense of justification, including, for example, non-epistemic kinds of justification like pragmatic and moral justification. In the latter we have to check and see whether the speaker is talking about some type of justification other than epistemic justification.

So the word ‘justification’ sometimes passes the ambiguity test and sometimes fails it, indicating that it is sometimes ambiguous and sometimes not. Does the fact that there is some unambiguous use of a word mean that there is no ambiguity in the word, or that it does not have different senses? No. Consider the examples of polysemy listed above, ‘mouth’ (as in that of a river or a person) and ‘newspaper’ (as in object or organization). There are instances in which either of these words calls for the disambiguating question when context doesn’t specify which meaning is intended, and others in which the question is not called for. “Mouths must be openings” fails the test for ambiguity: both senses are activated at once, and one need not ask which sense is intended. “Newspapers did not exist in the 9th century” fails the test in the same way. However, this does not mean that there are not different senses of the words, as accepted by semanticists. To see the ambiguity that is in these words, consider the sentence “Travelers to this region should be advised that tsetse flies congregate around mouths” and the sentence “Bill Gates is buying a newspaper.” In each case, a disambiguating question would be quite appropriate. So the fact that

5 See, e.g., Foley (90, pp. 183-4).
'justification' can be used in an unambiguous way does not mean that there are not different senses of justification.⁶

However, the fact that 'justification' can be used in an ambiguous way does not mean that it should be used in such an ambiguous way, that there are different types of justification, or that it is a genuine case of polysemy such that there are what semanticists would consider different senses of the word (much less two and only two). How does one go about arguing for different senses of a word?

Furthermore, how does one argue that there are different senses of a word rather than different theories of "the single concept" named by the word? If a term is the object of philosophical argument, it is of course rare that a disambiguation will solve the problem. For instance, it does not seem plausible that in the dispute over moral goodness what is really going on is that different theorists are talking about different senses of goodness (for example, utilitarian goodness as opposed to Kantian goodness). In most cases, opposing sides are talking about a univocal word and merely disagreeing on how that word should be analyzed or theoretically explained. Another example is cause, where the opposing camps seem pretty clearly not to be talking about two different kinds of cause, but disagreeing about the nature of one univocal term.⁷ A third example is personal identity, where there is plainly a neutral, univocal concept being disagreed about: whatever it is that makes one the same person over time. So what might motivate a distinction into different senses?

---

⁶ In conversation, John Pollock provided a great example of an ambiguous word being used in both senses at once. When observing two groups of people in a flooding town suddenly threatened by the collapse of a bank building and of the bank of a river, one might shout, "The bank is collapsing!" and simultaneously warn both groups.

⁷ I owe this example to Alvin Goldman.
B LINGUISTIC REASONS FOR A TWO-SENSE VIEW

One way to argue for a disambiguation is the way linguists do it. On this approach, one shows that there are already two senses of the word at play in people's uses of or intuitions about the word, whether this is generally recognized or not. To do this, one shows that 'justification' meets common conditions for ambiguity: for example, there are significant cases where two senses cannot be activated at the same time, and the disambiguating question can reasonably be asked if context does not indicate one sense or the other. In this section, I will explore those conditions and argue that justification meets them.

A question might arise at this point: why should epistemologists care about whether 'justification' has different senses according to linguistic criteria? After all, perhaps people have been using the term in a confused, theoretically untenable way, as has been the case with many scientific terms.

A first answer to this concern is that I am not relying wholly on linguistic criteria to argue for a disambiguation. Most of this dissertation will actually constitute an argument for distinguishing two senses on theoretical grounds rather than linguistic ones. However, I think it is of some value to locate a distinction in a way at least rooted in the existing theoretical and conceptual framework; although the value is, naturally, defeasible. Doing so lessens the risk of merely "changing the subject" in the way Quine has been accused of doing. It gives us a reason to believe the distinction is a robust one. It also improves the chances of being able to use the senses to solve traditional problems and resolve existing disputes in epistemology, since those disputes and problems have arisen within a general
conceptual framework. Staying true to that framework at least to the extent of being derived from it makes it more likely that problems within that framework can be addressed.

A linguistic argument is particularly forceful when the uses examined are technical uses by academics or researchers studying the phenomenon, as in the sciences. In fact, this might give us reason to think both a linguistic and a theoretical argument are appropriate for ‘justification’. At the folk level, there may be no real ambiguity in the concept of epistemic justification (as is probably the case with many scientific terms that scientists consider to have more than one meaning). Despite the lack of ambiguity among the folk, a theoretical argument for distinguishing two senses is perfectly legitimate. At the academic or research level, there may already be an ambiguity that doesn’t exist for the folk; and this ambiguity can be teased out using a linguistic argument and used to inform any theoretical arguments that could be made.

Furthermore, some linguistic criteria are not particularly distinguishable from theoretical ones. For instance, I will shortly be discussing differences in referents as a reason to disambiguate. For philosophers, naturally enough interested in ontology, if there are two different sorts of referents for a term, that is a reason for them to disambiguate as well.

In a general linguistic determination of ambiguity, one can use several types of reasons. First, one can look for differences in truth conditions between the two putative senses. For instance, to determine that ‘fast’ has the two senses corresponding to speed and promiscuity, one can see whether the truth conditions for the two purported senses differ: could a person be chaste and yet run quickly? could she take an hour to run a mile and be promiscuous? Since the answer to both is yes, because there are different truth conditions for one than the other, there is evidence for a difference in sense.
Showing that 'justification' passes the truth-condition test is complicated by the fact that it depends to some extent on the theory of justification what the particular truth conditions for a belief being justified turn out to be. But personal and matter-of-fact senses of justification can be characterized as having certain general types of truth conditions. For personal justification, the truth conditions will include something like a proper organization and situation of beliefs vis-à-vis the agent's other internal states and processes. For matter-of-fact justification, the truth conditions will include something like a proper connection or relationship of a belief to objective and external facts. Can a belief satisfy one set of truth conditions and not the other? This certainly looks possible. In fact, our thought experiments in Chapter One were designed to illustrate precisely such circumstances. Sophie-in-a-Vat satisfies the truth conditions for personal justification, but not the truth conditions for matter-of-fact justification; and Clairvoyant Sophie is in the opposite position. Note that it is not necessary that beliefs have either one set of truth conditions or the other, but not both; just as with 'hot,' in the sense of temperature and spiciness, it may be that the two concepts are frequently both instantiated in the same objects.

Another, similar, reason for determining ambiguity is to look at the class of denotations of a term, and see whether there are two (or more) types of objects denoted. Looking at the total class of denotations for hot food, for instance, would reveal two basic classes of denotations (although both could be present at once as well). Even more clearly, the word 'dog' can mean an animal or a cad; examining the class of denotations would readily reveal two groups of objects as the denotations of the term.

One way to highlight the satisfaction of this test for 'justification' is to think about subsets of beliefs and see if we would use the word 'justification' in one or the other sense.
for one subset (in some circumstances) but not use the other sense for that subset (in those circumstances). So for instance, just as we can distinguish perceptual beliefs from memory beliefs, in the Clairvoyant Sophie case we can talk about the belief subset of clairvoyance beliefs. My argument in Chapter One can be restated as that our temptation for these clairvoyance beliefs is to say that they are denoted by one concept of justification but not the other. Similarly with the perceptual or testimonial beliefs of Sophie-in-a-Vat: they are denoted by ‘justification’ used in one way, but not in the other.

As already discussed, one can also examine whether it is possible to activate both putative senses of a term to check for ambiguity. This does not mean that one case of double activation shows lack of ambiguity, since there may always be uses such as puns that do activate both senses even of an ambiguous word. It means looking at a broad segment of the uses of the word to see whether there tends to be an inability to activate both senses. Again, this can be determined also by seeing whether the disambiguating question, “wait, do you mean meaning x or meaning y?” is a reasonable one in a number of cases.

It is important to note that this requires thinking of justification in a technical epistemological way, rather than in a general (folk) way. In casual use, we might be able to call beliefs epistemically justified and mean that they are epistemically justified in toto, or in every sense. As discussed above, this doesn’t mean there is no ambiguity. Because we can talk about arguing in general, that doesn’t mean there aren’t two concepts of argumentation: the philosophical kind and the fighting kind. The key idea is that there are a reasonable number of cases where the disambiguating question must be asked when context does not indicate one sense or the other.
It is my contention that in fact this is the case. In Chapter One, the thought experiments presented can be construed as raising just this point: if one were to assert that Sophie-in-a-Vat’s perceptual beliefs are or are not justified, the disambiguating question would arguably be very much called for. Similarly with Clairvoyant Sophie’s clairvoyance beliefs. Again, this is perhaps made less obvious by the fact that the senses of justification normally co-occur, so the disambiguating question does not come up except in unusual circumstances. But in extreme thought experiments the legitimacy of the question is highlighted. In a more real-world example, think back to the kind of case Goldman (88) presented of a person in an “intellectually benighted” culture who forms beliefs on the basis of objectively illegitimate practices, such as throwing bones. If his motivations are sincere enough, his inculcation in bone-throwing norms complete enough, and his defeaters unobvious enough, it looks most apt to say that in any assertion that his bone-throwing-based beliefs are justified or unjustified, the disambiguating question is called for.

The legitimacy of the disambiguating question can also be seen in the study of the ways in which epistemologists have defined justification. Many proposed definitions of justification can be interpreted in two separate ways (or as the conjunction of two separate ways of satisfying the same definition). I would argue as I did in Chapter One (in the context of the thought experiments and the questions epistemologists take epistemology to be asking) that each of the two main ways to interpret these definitions could be satisfied fully; that they are independent. The following is a list of some attempted definitions that have this susceptibility to two distinct readings. Many of these were presented in Chapter

---

8 In many cases definitions that I will call ambiguous are explained more fully by the philosopher such that the ambiguity is removed. In these cases, the author generally reveals a commitment to one or the other basic
One as well. I will note after each definition the disambiguating question that could be asked.

**Ambiguous (neutral) definitions**

A justified belief is one such that:

- the person has good grounds for believing it (Pollock & Cruz)
  (it depends on what count as good grounds: objectively good? good for what?)
- it is 'epistemically permissible' (Pollock & Cruz)
  (permitted by the person's norms or objective norms?)
- it is shown not generally problematic, or true to the external world (Prado 1988)
  (shown by the person, or by an objective assessor?)
- it is reasonable or rational (these are virtually synonymous with justified) (Cohen 1984)
  (rational according to the person's standards, or objective standards?)
- it is the one that fits a person's evidence (Feldman & Conee 1985)
  (evidence available to the person or possessed? does information not true to the external world (e.g., hallucinations) count as evidence?)
- "It may be a philosophers' term of art, meaning: 'belief not defectively formed or sustained in a way that reflects poorly on the believer's mind.' Of evaluative terms ordinarily applied to beliefs, 'reasonable' comes perhaps closest to this." (Sosa 1999)
  (what reflects poorly on someone's mind? Is it inside or outside of the person?)
- it has evidence or supporting reasons (Kant, *Critique*)
  (matter-of-fact evidence or evidence according to the person?)
- it is evidentially supported (Bernecker & Dretske 2000)
  (matter-of-fact supported or supported as far as the person can tell?)
- it is a commitment a believer is "in some sense entitled to" (Brandom 1998)
  (is the entitlement matter-of-fact or is this a virtue-style entitlement?)
- it is a belief for the right reasons (Zagzebski 1999)
  (are "right reasons" right for reasons on the insides of persons or on the outsides?)
- it is based on evidence (Sturgeon 1995)
(actually based (e.g., causally) on something worthy, or cognitively? What makes something count as evidence rather than misinformation or delusion?)

- it is *permissible* and *reasonable*, from the epistemic point of view, for us to hold it, and it would be *epistemically irresponsible* to hold beliefs that contradict it (Kim 1988)

(does the "epistemically irresponsible" imply a deontological conception? or does "the epistemic point of view" imply something more objective and matter-of-fact?)

The ways in which people define 'justification,' like the thought experiments and intuitions they use, do not just show that an ambiguity could be present, or that the disambiguating question could be asked. Once pointed out and specified as I did in the last chapter, we can see that the signs of ambiguity are already present. There are two basic pulls or stances that can be brought out by consideration of these definitions. One way to strengthen this intuition is to imagine each statement being made about one of Sophie-in-a-Vat’s beliefs or one of Clairvoyant Sophie’s beliefs. I think before agreeing with the statement in the case at hand, one would be inclined to ask something along the lines indicated in parentheses above.

In other cases, definitions have been proposed that focus on one of the aims for which I argued in Chapter One: personal justification or matter-of-fact justification. In terms of the internalism/externalism dispute, these definitions would essentially beg the question against the opposing view. In light of a distinct ion in sense between the personal and the matter-of-fact, they can be seen rather as focusing on one of the two fundamental epistemological aims for theories of justification. This focus would not beg the question against the other focus, but merely not to address it. In some cases something like this is explicitly stated by the author of the definition, with a statement that the other desideratum is either not the author’s current subject or is not of epistemological importance or interest.
I will return to this topic later, but in the meantime I will present some of these one-sided definitions as evidence that the uses of 'justification' can cluster on one side or the other of the intuitive divide.

One-sided definitions

( personal)

A justified belief is one such that:

- it is what allows us to suppose that we know something to be true (Chisholm 1964)
- there is a satisfactory answer to the question, “what more can I do to verify or confirm that this is so?” (Dewey (Problems of Men 1946), described by Chisholm 1964)
- it is a belief to one’s own deep intellectual satisfaction (Foley 1990)
- epistemic justification and epistemic reasons for believing P must minimally make probable for the believer the truth of what is believed (Fumerton 1995)
- it is the product of epistemically responsible action (construed in a deontological way) (Kornblith 1983)
- it is held in compliance with the cognizer’s epistemic norms (Pollock & Cruz 1999, p. 156)\(^9\)
- the subject’s acceptance is based on adequate evidence of hers (Lehrer 2000, p. 15)\(^10\)

(matter-of-fact)\(^11\)

- it is a belief acquired by means of the same sorts of capacities, faculties, or process that yield knowledge in favorable circumstances (in the actual world) (Goldman 1992)
- it is the means to the goal of truth (Kvanvig 2000)

---

\(^9\) As Greco (90, p. 265) has pointed out, there is an ambiguity between accordance with and conformance with norms – Pollock & Cruz’s ‘compliance’ is more like conformance, but a neutral definition could easily be made out of their definition by adding neutrality about this norm-following ambiguity.

\(^10\) In this case, the definition is of the subject’s justificatory status, not the belief’s.

\(^11\) There are fewer matter-of-fact oriented definitions because, first, many externalists have conceded the term ‘justification’ to internalists and used other terms (e.g., ‘warrant’ or ‘information’; or they have focused merely on knowledge). See, e.g., Dretske, Armstrong, and Plantinga. Second, more externalists have recognized the internalist insight and tried to accommodate it in their definitions than internalists have the externalist insight.
We can apply the arguments from Chapter One to these definitions. Those arguments show that the most promising way to demarcate the distinction between the one-sided definitions is as the personal/matter-of-fact distinction. That distinction is also the best way to understand the two intuitive interpretations of the ambiguous or neutral definitions.

Of course I am not the first person to notice the signs of different senses of 'justification' being used. Another part of the linguistic argument for ambiguity will be to survey the widespread recognition of two schools of thought, intuition camps, or senses of justification. In the next chapter, I will briefly conduct such a survey. I will argue there that my more specific way of making the distinction is most plausible. In addition, the mere existence of many recognitions of some kind of ambiguity or multivocality goes a long way toward providing a linguistic argument for ambiguity or multivocality, since a large part of the determination of ambiguity in linguistics is based on actual use and practice.

This discussion of linguistic arguments for the ambiguity of 'justification' has been necessarily brief, but should have gotten across the basic point: there is arguably already a distinction between ways of understanding 'justification' as it is used in the literature.
C **Theoretical reasons for a two-sense approach**

As mentioned already, a linguistic argument is not necessary to show that a term should be separated into two senses. More compelling to philosophers is a theoretical argument: an argument that two concepts are theoretically better than one. How does one construct this kind of argument?

Some examples from other areas of philosophy and other disciplines might help. Take, for instance, ‘velocity’. Thomas Kuhn (64) points out that Aristotle failed to distinguish average velocity from instantaneous velocity, and that this had disastrous repercussions for his physics. Ned Block (94) has used this example to argue that there are concepts that can be used in a way that does not involve ambiguity, but where an ambiguity should be introduced (he uses this to argue that ‘consciousness’ should be seen as ambiguous although it may not be ambiguous in common usage). Block says, “There is no ambiguity in ‘velocity’ or ‘speed’ in ordinary English, but the seeds are there, and a distinction is needed for some purposes” [217].

Imagine that at one time some theorists were interpreting ‘velocity’ as a term for average velocity, and showing all the ways in which this captures intuitions, helps solve theoretical problems, fits into an overall physical theory, and so on. At the same time other theorists were interpreting ‘velocity’ as a term meaning instantaneous velocity, and using the same kind of arguments for their interpretation. In a sense there is a neutral term about which these theorists are talking – velocity meaning, roughly, speed. But there is no neutral term about which they are disagreeing, because the disagreement is at a level of greater specificity and precision than the neutral term. They are talking about different senses or subconcepts of the same overarching concept. Evidence for this is that as soon as the term
is disambiguated into two types or senses – instantaneous and average velocity – the dispute collapses and the project gains new concepts each with its own theoretical utility. Suddenly the overarching term becomes a more general, commonsense term with its own place, but the two lower-level senses are what should really be used in physics. Whenever velocity has a place in a calculation, a theory, or a prediction, the sense must be specified. In addition, the relationships between the two types of velocity can now be studied, and their relationships to other physical concepts can be examined separately.

A real disambiguation cannot be done based on just any old division into types or senses. There may be many possible types or senses of velocity (e.g., velocity caused by x, velocity towards x, velocity through such-and-such a medium, visible velocity, velocity of objects of type x, and so forth), but not every distinction is one that ought to motivate physicists to take multiple senses of velocity seriously. A disambiguation that should be incorporated into theorizing in a subject must be one that will substantially clear up an existing, robust dispute or division of intuitions, conditions, definitions, and so forth and one that looks theoretically fruitful. What is distinctive about these terms as opposed to those where disambiguating does not seem called for?

One family of theoretical arguments for disambiguating a term try to show that a pair of senses best captures the underlying commitments, intuitions, and aims that theorists about the concept tend to have. Part of this project is to show that two senses can do a better job at capturing these things than one sense. Another part is to show that a particular sense division lines up well with an intuitive division one can see among theories, about cases, and within problems and issues. I will here outline the methodology of this kind of
theoretical argument, and indicate briefly how I intend to give such arguments in future chapters.

A first task, then, is to show that the two sides of a dispute could coexist if two senses were recognized rather than a univocal concept. One way to see that is to decide whether the dispute would collapse if we just took away any clause attached to one side or another that says “and that is a complete analysis of this concept.” So as long as the instantaneous velocity theorists and the average velocity theorists in my story above do not say, “and that is a complete analysis of velocity,” they can both be right. This does not seem to be the case with, for example, moral goodness, as noted above. If we took utilitarianism and Kantianism and said, “they are both right, they are just not complete analyses of goodness,” that would not clarify things at all. Similarly, such a tactic would not work with many religious disputes, for example which of two omnipotent creator gods is actual.

Another way to put this is that if we take the word away from the dispute, nothing remains to argue about. In the case of our imaginary velocity dispute, if we simply told the average velocity theorists they were talking about “avocity”, and the instantaneous velocity theorists they were talking about “instocity”, there would be no dispute left. At least, there would be no dispute about which one was right and which wrong about some common thing. They might still be able to argue that there is no such thing as avocity or instocity, but the views are no longer competing.12

The challenge for ‘justification’ is to show that this is the case for the two senses there. If we were to rename the two basic intuitive subjects “personal merit” and “matter-

12 Thanks to David Chalmers for his discussions of this argument with me.
of-fact value," would there be anything left for theorists swayed by one or the other to disagree about, such that only one could be right?

One option would be the fill-in-the-blanks kind of functional role that epistemologists have often focused on: "that thing which added to true belief yields knowledge" or "that thing which added to true belief and a Gettier condition yields knowledge." This would make internalists and externalists back into competitors trying to give accounts of the same thing. But for one thing, this way of formulating things puts the cart before the horse. It presumes that only one thing will fill in the blank; and in a post-Gettier world, that is pretty presumptuous. Second, this leaves open the possibility that the thing-that-fills-in-the-blank is an overarching concept with more than one component (whether a disjunction or a conjunction).

Both formulations of the fill-in-the-blanks definition have particular problems, in addition. The second formulation (J = (K-TBG)) presumes that the Gettier condition will lie entirely outside of any concept of justification, which should not be asserted without argument. And, as Joel Pust (00) has argued, the first formulation (what Plantinga calls "warrant": J = (K-TB)) cannot have many of the properties we think interesting about justification. It is something about which we have no independent intuitions (as we do about justification); cannot be possessed by a false belief (as can justification); and cannot come in degrees (as justification can), since knowledge does not come in degrees.

In any case, I will make clear in subsequent chapters that there is a way to make the distinction such that there is no one thing about which the disputants need be disagreeing.

---

13 For instantiations or discussions, see, e.g., Plantinga (93a and 93b), Kvanvig (84, esp. pp. 76, 84), Bach (85, p. 248), Pollock & Cruz (99, p. 114), and Bergmann (97).
In addition, I will address the further kinds of arguments that might arise between such disputants, such as whether one or the other concept is legitimate, or theoretically useful, or epistemologically important.

So a two-sense theory can allow the two intuitive subjects to be independent and noncompeting subject matter for theorists who had been deadlocked in an effort to win a competition between them. Another kind of theoretical argument along these lines is that a distinction can divide up intuitions about examples, desiderata, and theoretical problems correctly.

Of course this should not be a matter of letting intuition dictate theory; but thoughtful, widespread intuitions are often shortcuts capturing a wealth of information and reasons. Our brains, after all, are very good at classifying things in ways to which we do not have access. To present a parallel, if I were giving an account of the subjective and objective distinction in ethics, I would need to show that my account was good at capturing intuitions – this would be a prima facie consideration in favor of the account. If it divided up intuitions in the wrong ways (made people morally blameworthy for acts committed while an infant, or made some consequentialist theories turn out to be theories of subjective rightness, or made moral luck a subjective issue) that would count against my account. An account that accords with these various kinds of intuitions is preferable unless it can be shown to be otherwise theoretically inadequate; and I will be arguing that my distinction is not.

A related type of theoretical argument is that a sense distinction would have merit if it could clear up existing disputes among theorists in the area. The argument that separating 'justification' into personal and matter-of-fact senses will be theoretically useful is based partly on an argument that a disambiguation holds out good promise for resolving the
internalism/externalism debate. Basically, if there are two senses of justification, we can see the two sides as talking about different senses rather than disagreeing about one. This has been discussed in the literature, although it is not completely generally accepted (and certainly not generally accepted in one particular formulation). If a disambiguation could deflate that debate, it would be a good thing, theoretically speaking, since the stalemate there is likely doing theoretical harm (or at least preventing theoretical good). In the imagined debate over velocity, the arguments about whether velocity is "really" average or instantaneous are unproductive and divisive, preventing the theorists from integrating what are actually two types of velocity into a thorough theory of physics. Similarly with justification, I believe, arguments over whether justification is "really" internal or external (or personal or matter-of-fact) are at this point unproductive and divisive. I will come back to this in Chapter Five.

A further advantage of clearing up a dispute is if it can be done in a way that divides up theories in a satisfying way. In the ethical parallel, a sense distinction that put some consequentialist theories on the subjective side would be rightly regarded with suspicion as a theoretically useful sense division. The same is true in epistemology. Although this kind of argument – like nearly all arguments based largely on intuition – is defeasible, it can constitute a strong *prima facie* reason in favor of or against a proposed sense distinction. I will argue that my particular distinction divides theories up better than alternatives. Similarly, I will argue that it concords with our intuitions about cases and epistemological problems and issues.

A good distinction would not only draw a satisfying dividing line between theories, intuitions, and problems. It would also help us theorize about those things. An argument
for a particular sense distinction should show that theories of each sense would arguably be more tenable and robust than theories of other possible senses, or of a univocal concept. By this I mean that the theories would be less susceptible to criticism, would be more unified and less *ad hoc*, and would be focused on useful and interesting concepts. One way to show this would be to show how existing theories could be reformulated and improved in these ways with the adoption of the proposed sense division. It is surely the case that Aristotelian theories of physics were improved by incorporating a recognition of the two senses of velocity; for that matter, these two senses surely helped improve Newtonian theories and develop quantum ones. I will argue that my proposed sense distinction shows good promise of allowing the formulation of theories inspired by existing epistemological theories, but incorporating the two-sense framework, which are more tenable and robust than the single-sense versions.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a theoretical argument for a sense distinction should show that the two senses have more explanatory power than a univocal sense or than other pairs of senses. An example from philosophy is 'free will'. Although the folk understanding of this term may generally be univocal (something like 'the person could have done otherwise'), some philosophers have introduced a second sense of the term in an attempt to resolve the problem of determinism. As Block would say, it may be that the seeds for a concept like 'in accord with one's own deepest preferences' are present in commonsense usage, but this sense of free will is mostly a concept introduced for theoretical utility. Whether this concept of free will is a legitimate one or not, the reason for introducing it was to try to solve the philosophical problem of determinism. At this point, there does not seem to be much point in arguing whether 'free will' really means one or the
other concept, or whether one or the other is the commonsense concept. Rather, it is more fruitful to assess the explanatory power of each, attempt to find accurate analyses of each, and to examine the relationships of each to the other and to the philosophical topics for which they might be of use.

Explanatory power can include explaining why we have the intuitions we do about theories, cases, and problems. It also includes being able to work on problems in the area better. For instance, it could be that some problems are more tractable when in the domain of one or the other of the senses than when under a univocal sense; and that some problems are more tractable when approached independently by each of the two senses than by the two lumped together. Perhaps a good example would be from the ethics case discussed above. The classical issue of punishment might best be handled independently from the subjective and objective perspectives. Subjective morality allows theoretical work on the relation to punishment of blameworthiness, intentions, and culpable ignorance. Objective morality allows theoretical work on retributive or consequentialist aspects of punishment. In contrast, an approach to morality based on a univocal conception would be more unweildy and ad hoc if it tried to do all of these things. I will argue that my sense distinction holds out good promise of theoretical utility in epistemology.

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned that there are three basic challenges to anyone arguing for distinguishing two senses of a concept. The first was to show that some disambiguation is called for, which was the subject of Chapter One. The second was to show that we should recognize two senses rather than more.

My first impulse in response to this challenge is to say that I am not arguing that there are two and only two senses of justification. Rather, I am arguing that there are two
legitimate senses of justification: two senses that capture existing divisions of intuition and use and hold out good promise for future epistemological theorizing. It may be possible to talk about other senses of justification as well. We can already talk about moral, pragmatic, and epistemic justification. There may be other types or senses we can distinguish: for instance, aesthetic, cultural, political, emotional, or legal justification. Similarly, within epistemic justification there are other distinctions that could be made. One could talk about various sorts of internalist and externalist justification, but also one could talk about a belief's being justified with absolute certainty, phenomenally justified, deductively justified, third-order justified, consciously justified, voluntarily justified, or any number of others. In fact some of these and others have been discussed. But just because one can do something does not mean there is good theoretical or linguistic reason to do so. To return to my old favorite, there may be many senses of ‘velocity’ that could be distinguished (as mentioned above, there could be velocity caused by x, velocity towards x, velocity through such-and-such a medium, visible velocity, velocity of objects of type x, etc.), but that does not mean ‘velocity’ is legitimately ambiguous between these concepts, or that these types of velocity should be generally accepted and studied by physicists.

In the face of an indefinite number of possible discriminations, there are reasons to settle on certain discriminations as legitimate. The main reason derives from the purpose that the discriminations (if any) are to serve. Many of the non-epistemic types or senses of justification mentioned above are perhaps legitimate and interesting for some theoretical purposes, but not for epistemological purposes. In consciousness studies, people have tried out lots of different distinctions, and some have become generally accepted (e.g., access consciousness and phenomenal consciousness) and others have not. But it is not the case in
consciousness studies that just any distinctions are okay, and can be made for no particular reason and are thereafter immune from criticism. Discriminations must be made for theoretical reasons and defended against charges that they are not helpful, collapse into one another, do not capture intuitions, and so on.

The argument laid out in response to the first challenge, by motivating a distinction between personal and matter-of-fact justification, has gone some way toward showing that this particular distinction is one that can be made for good reason. Thus a good case is made that at least two senses are a good idea, epistemologically speaking. I think a good response to the second question, "why not more senses, while you are at it?", is simply, "why would we want more? These two look like they may do just fine." By this I mean that there is an argument to be made (and that will be made in later chapters) that they substantially capture the difference of use and intuition in the literature, and hold out good promise of theoretical utility by themselves. Considerations of simplicity can be used to argue that we should try out these two until a case can be made that there is a need for more.

This leads naturally to the third challenge, which is to explain why this distinction is the best one rather than some other distinction. The quick answer based on all the discussion above is that it seems to work. As a mere working hypothesis, this particular distinction looks to be yielding all the things we might want from a distinction, without leaving any glaring holes or ignoring any obvious alternative uses of the term. However, the challenge deserves a more thorough response than this, which is why it is the topic of the next two chapters.
CONCLUSION

This chapter has now laid out at least a *programme* for a full argument in favor of a two-sense view. I have completed what I will do here on the linguistic front, except for a brief literature survey in the next chapter, which provides more evidence that an ambiguity already exists in the concept of justification. I will now move on to the theoretical front. In order to provide convincing theoretical arguments in favor of a distinction, I need to specify more precisely the senses I propose we distinguish between. In doing that, I must also argue that other ways of making the distinction are not as good. Those projects will be the subject of the next chapter. I will provide good reasons to think personal and matter -of-fact senses of justification should be distinguished and studied as such.
Chapter Three

THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION

A  INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will do some work to try to sort out the best philosophical specifications of the basic personal and matter-of-fact senses of justification. I will discuss the literature on senses of justification, to get a feel for the kinds of senses and sense distinctions that might be plausible. I will explore the two initially attractive ways to make a distinction between two senses of justification: an exclusive pair of senses and an inclusive pair of senses. I will focus on two of the more obvious ways to construct an exclusive distinction: a subjective/objective distinction and an internal/external distinction. I will show that while each pair of senses has advantages, each pair has a member that is unacceptable. I then discuss the possibility of an inclusive pair of senses, and give reasons to find it unsatisfactory. I go on to argue that the two senses of justification not found untenable in the discussion of exclusive pairs of senses — the internal sense and the objective sense — actually comprise the best way to make the distinction. This is an overlapping distinction rather than an exclusive or inclusive one. The internal/objective distinction best explains our intuitions and holds out the most promise of theoretical utility. The probable initial bar from considering this distinction — that it is neither inclusive nor exclusive — turns out actually to be a strength.

In this chapter, my arguments will largely be on the basis of intuition.\textsuperscript{1} This is a highly precedented strategy in epistemology, but admittedly not universally popular.

\textsuperscript{1} For more on intuition in philosophical argument, see, e.g., Alston (86), Cohen (98, p. 918), Moser (98, p. 363ff), and Pollock & Cruz (99, pp. 154-55).
However, in determining legitimate senses of a term, since intuition helps us understand both what we mean by the term and how we are tempted to use it, intuition is an appropriate tool to use. This is particularly so in the case of a term that is largely a term of art like 'epistemic justification'. That said, I think there are other ways to show that the internal/objective distinction is a good one, such as showing that it has more explanatory power on particular epistemological issues than other distinctions. I will be making those arguments in the next chapter, once I have refined my two concepts.

I will start here with the general characterization between the two senses: the personal/matter-of-fact distinction. Before beginning my exploration of ways to improve this distinction, however, I want to say a bit about why I have chosen to call the broad senses personal and matter-of-fact rather than internalist and externalist. Given my assertion that internalists and externalists largely differ in their focus on one or another of two senses, the natural inclination may be to think of the two senses as internalist and externalist. I think there are several reasons to resist such an inclination.

For one thing, 'internal' and 'external', and their cognates, are too theory-laden at this point in epistemology. Everyone brings to the table preconceptions about what it means to be internal and external – what the terms indicate factors to be internal to, for instance (as seen in Chapter One). Using new and less theory-laden terms avoids this. For another thing, the internal/matter-of-fact distinction I wish to make lines up pretty well with the internalist/externalist division in theories of justification, but not precisely.

Another reason to use a personal/matter-of-fact distinction is that the terms 'internalism' and 'externalism' have a well-established place in epistemology as competing concepts, whereas 'personal' and 'matter-of-fact' really do not (although Lehrer uses the
term 'personal' for a sense of justification, it is not widespread). So one could clarify the debate by keeping the terms (and defining them in terms of cognitive essentialism), just saying “we are not to think of these as competing accounts of the concept of justification any more, as we’ve done since the terms were introduced, but rather we should now think of them as noncompeting perspectives on epistemic justification corresponding to different senses of the term.” But this seems to me more confusing and dangerous than just adopting new terms.

Finally, there are some other conventions to take into account that give us reason to prefer 'personal/matter-of-fact' to 'internalist/externalist'. ‘Internalist’ and ‘externalist’ have been used in the field to refer to theorists and theories more than anything else, so it could feel at best awkward and at worst like a category mistake to suddenly start applying them to senses of justification and not to types of theorists or theories. Since ‘personalist’ and ‘matter-of-fact-ist’ do not have a presence in the epistemological literature, this kind of confusion could not arise for these terms. Furthermore, ‘internal’ and ‘external’ have corresponding -isms. That is, there are positions corresponding to the terms – they are not just modifiers of other terms. ‘Personalism’ and ‘Matter-of-fact-ism’ do not exist in the epistemological literature either, and the terms ‘personal’ and ‘matter-of-fact’ can easily be used as modifiers of other terms.

So I will persist in using as my broad distinction personal as opposed to matter-of-fact senses of justification. However, there are lots of ways that broad distinction could be made more specific. My goal here is to explore various plausible distinctions in an attempt to discover the most important and interesting way to make this distinction: one worthy of serious consideration and incorporation into epistemological theorizing. In order to do that,
it is important that the definitions of each attempted sense of justification be *theory-neutral*. My interest is in finding a distinction not by being theory-driven but by being driven by intuition, linguistics, and theoretical utility. Whatever distinction turns out to be best for those reasons may end up putting *constraints* on theories of justification, but the reverse does not occur². For that reason, my characterizations of theories cannot be in terms of the specific conditions for justification, since that would beg theoretical questions. I cannot say *in virtue of what* a belief is justified (e.g., in virtue of what specific states of affairs). I must try instead to give general descriptions of the senses.

² Terry Horgan, in conversation.
B  SURVEY OF TWO-SENSE APPROACHES TO JUSTIFICATION

Many epistemologists have discussed the possibility of there being separate senses or concepts of justification. I cannot do justice to them all here, but I will go through some examples. Some of the distinctions proposed are not sense distinctions of the type I am addressing. Some are, I will argue, distinctions that can be made for some purposes but will not serve the purpose here. That purpose is formulating a distinction that best captures the broad intuition divide about justification argued for in Chapter One; and that divides up theories of justification satisfactorily, helps resolve the internalism/externalism debate, allows for robust theories of justification, and has explanatory power for epistemological problems and issues. Other distinctions are meant to serve this purpose. I will first simply present those views. Then, since many of the distinctions are not put forward with details about precisely how they are to work, I will go through the possible ways of understanding those two-sense views, and ultimately argue that I have a more tenable proposal.

First, I should discuss proposals suggesting that different philosophers and theories are engaged in different projects rather than differing in the senses of justification upon which they are focusing. The basic gist seems to be that they are talking about the same concept, but answering different questions about it.

Some of the most thorough examinations of this kind of proposal have been done by Pollock and Pollock & Cruz, so I will use their proposals to stand for the class in this discussion. Pollock & Cruz (99), for example, propose a distinction between structural theories of epistemic justification and analytic theories of epistemic justification. Structural theories are "descriptions of the overall structural relations that give rise to epistemic justification"; foundationalism, coherentism, and direct realism are good examples of structural theories.
Analytic theories are high-level theories that tell us "why epistemic justification has the general structure it does"; reliabilism is an example of an analytic theory. [152]

As an analogy, we might consider a concept like politeness and ask different questions about it:

- When is it present?
- What does it supervene on?
- What does it mean to be polite?
- What's the best way of understanding the underlying theme, desideratum, or truthmaker for norms of politeness?
- What must a person do, or what conditions must obtain, in order for an act to be an instance of politeness?

I agree readily that these questions can lead to quite different projects. What I do not agree with is that this is the kind of thing that explains the divergence in approach and emphasis in epistemology explored in Chapter One. It is true that these projects can be undertaken separately: but they can each be undertaken for each of two different concepts.

We can see this in the case of politeness. When we ask a theoretical question like “what does it mean for an action to be polite?” we can be asking “what does it mean for a person’s action, conceived internally to that person, to be polite?” or we can be asking “what does it mean in a broader, more objective sense, not in the context of any one person’s internal mental life, for an action to be polite?” Similarly, if we want to know of a particular action whether it is polite, we could be wondering whether it is polite in a sense internal to the person or in a more objective sense. This can be seen easily by considering acts considered polite in one society but not others. If a stranger entering that society omits such an act, is she being impolite? For instance, if an American fails to bow to her host at a Japanese social event, is her failure to bow impolite? Well, in one sense it is not, because (assuming she has good intentions and is blamelessly ignorant of Japanese bowing customs)
she has behaved as politely as one could expect of someone in her interior situation. But in another sense her failure to bow is impolite; from an outside perspective, she has behaved rudely (albeit inadvertently so).  

The other questions can be handled similarly. They can be approached from a conception of politeness as an interior matter, making reference at least in part to the subjective states (intentions, for instance) of the agent. They can also be approached from a conception that ignores the subjective perspective of the agent and includes factors from outside of her ken and outside of herself.

To apply this back to Pollock & Cruz's specific epistemological proposal, it is not clear to me why the two projects could not be undertaken in regard to each concept of justification. Structural theories tell us how the various constituents of cognition fit together to give us justification. It seems possible to me to construct a structural theory of matter-of-fact justification, as long as external influences and success-indicators are allowed to play a role (as with, perhaps, "perfect pitch", about which we could undertake the same project, but not without considering success in the external world). Similarly, it seems that the analytic project could be attempted upon a personal concept: why does personal justification have the general structure it does?

There is no real equivalent to knowledge in the case of politeness, but imagine the closest possible concept – call it successful politeness. How do the various constituents of cognition fit together to give us successful politeness? This could be broken up into two

---

3 Of course the analogy breaks down somewhat here, unless one holds that objective epistemic norms are merely relativized to social practice. The basic point holds, though: these questions can be asked of differing senses of the term.

4 Of course this project could be defined such that only internal factors could play a role, but this would, I think, beg the question. I will return to this in a moment.
questions. First, how do they fit together to give us the internal, intentional component (e.g., how does our cognition put together norms with beliefs and perceptions and produce the right behavior from our personal perspective)? Second, how do they fit together to give us the matter-of-fact component (e.g., how do we do at picking up social cues, and how do those who are better at that differ from those who are worse)? The second kind of question – why does successful politeness have the general structure it does? – could similarly be broken up into questions about why personally-construed politeness has the structure it does (e.g., why intention and attitude play the roles they do), and why politeness on a matter-of-fact construal has the structure it does (e.g., what it has to do with random customs and with ethical issues).

In the case of epistemic justification, of course it could very well be that certain internalist have focused on one question and certain externalists on another. It may also be (as Pollock & Cruz argue) that some theories are better at answering one question than another (e.g., as they argue, reliabilist theories are better at giving analytic theories than foundationalist, coherence, or direct realist theories [p. 152]). What this does not show is that the distinction for which I have argued is not a legitimate one. What it shows is that there are several epistemological projects that become apparent when this distinction is recognized, a subject to which I will return in Chapter Five.

What theorists should not do is define a project in such a way that it can only be satisfied by one concept of justification (e.g., an action-guiding one), and then say that others cannot answer the same basic question under different definitions. Pollock (99) runs the risk of this when he distinguishes the project of procedural epistemology from others. He defines a concept of justification as one such that a belief is justified if and only if it was arrived at or
held on the basis of procedures that are epistemically praiseworthy: an internal concept of justification. He then states that “procedural epistemology is about this concept of epistemic justification.” [475] Although Pollock does not do this, it would be disingenuous at this point to say that it is the project that distinguishes the internalist and externalist approaches rather than the concept, since the project has been defined such that it can only be undertaken upon one concept. If he is only saying that there are projects that can be done in regard to the internal concept of justification that cannot be done in regard to other concepts, I would not hesitate to agree; I will be discussing just this as an advantage of a two-sense view in this dissertation. However, this does not mean that interesting projects cannot be done in regard to each of two legitimate concepts; and, in fact, some of the same projects defined broadly, as with the politeness examples above.

None of this is meant to indicate that I think the different projects and questions distinguished by Pollock and others are illegitimate or uninteresting. I am merely pointing out that, first, they do not preclude making the kind of distinction I am attempting to make; second, they are not competitors to “my” distinction, since that same distinction can be made in regard to the subject matter of various distinct projects; and third, they do not explain (or explain away) the intuition divide for which I argued in Chapter One. 5

Other distinctions have been made that do not serve for the purpose here, which is to elucidate the intuition- and theory- divide for which I argued in Chapter One. They include Sosa’s (97) “same-world justification” versus “actual-world justification”, Scott

---

5 For another well-worked-out two-project conception of this kind, see Goldman’s (92) “two-stage theory”. I would argue there also that each stage could be approached from either an internal or an objective perspective.
Sturgeon's (95) justified and justifiable beliefs, and Feldman's (88) occur rent and dispositional senses of justification.

Many other distinctions proposed are meant to be distinctions between concepts or senses of justification. It is worth noting also that they are pairs of senses such that one falls within the broad "personal" conception of justification I have picked out, and the other within the broad "matter-of-fact" conception. Thus these proposals are roughly competitors of my eventual proposal for a pair of senses that best captures that broad division. I will go through some briefly in order to get across a feel for the kinds of sense divisions that have been found appealing.

First, there are those who argue that there is one concept of justification that is about a person's being justified, and another that is about a belief's being justified. These can be understood as focusing on deontology, internal normativity, or action-guidingness as opposed to a more objective, impersonal standpoint. If justification is not "of the person," that indicates it goes beyond what is of the person, and so extends outside of the person as I have described objective justification as doing. It is not always clear whether "the person" is meant to indicate a subjective or merely an internal standpoint, but in general it seems to be related to considerations of virtue, praise, and blame, which indicates that "the person" means the person's subjective awareness.

Many distinguish a sense of justification that is about the subjective and consciously accessible from something else. They tend to use language from deontology, as well as mentions of "reasonability" or "rationality." Some call this a subjective/objective distinction, as do Feldman (88), Hookway (98), and Sosa (99). Others make a distinction
that is clearly about the contrast between more subjective elements, such as deontology, and things outside of the subjective. Goldman (88) gives a theory that incorporates a “weak” and a “strong” sense of justification, where weak justification is subjectively understood. Philip Kitcher (83) contrasts “apsychologistic” and “psychologistic” approaches to justification, Zagzebski (99) distinguishes a sense of justification tied to right motives from one not so tied, Foley (90) differentiates a sense of justification that is about the egocentrically rational from one that is from a more objective perspective. Stewart Cohen (84) contrasts a sense he calls “reasonability or rationality” with a sense he refers to as “reliabilist justification”. Fumerton (95) makes a distinction between inferential and noninferential justification; BonJour (01) differentiates the internalist sense of justification, which must be “internal to the individual’s first-person cognitive perspective”, from some other (undefined) sense of justification. Riggs (98) contrasts a responsibilist sense of justification with a truth-conducivist sense. Lehrer (00) gives accounts of both “personal justification” and “undefeated justification”.

In some of these cases, both the sense on what I would call the personal side and the sense on the matter-of-fact side are clearly defined (e.g., Riggs, Lehrer, and Kitcher). In other cases, the sense contrasting with the more subjective or personal sense is unclear or merely the negation of the subjective sense (e.g., BonJour, Zagzebski, Cohen, and Fumerton). In other cases, the distinction is simply a broad one between internalist and externalist conceptions, or between personal and matter-of-fact concerns, broadly construed. For instance, Conee & Feldman (85) distinguish truth-connectedness from being

---

*See Zagzebski (99, 00), Bach (85), and Feldman & Conee (85).*
“epistemically justified or well-founded”, McDowell (02) talks about a sense of justification he calls “rational/doxastically blameless” as opposed to one he calls “entitlement/justification”. Davidson (89) draws a sense distinction between justification and information, Bach 85 between internalist and externalist justification, Sosa (89, 97) between internal justification and external warrant or aptness. Henderson & Horgan propose a noncompeting distinction between a wide focus, which includes all epistemically relevant states, and a narrow focus, which includes only accessible states [528]. Sosa (80) distinguishes warrant and “being in a position to know (from the point of view of a K, e.g., a human being)” [149-50], where the latter is relative to the community of human beings, and so external to the person.

It is apparent that the distinctions relevant to this project are each pointing at some distinction that would fall under the personal/matter-of-fact rubric. Since they are often no more worked out than as I have presented them above, and since it would be a lengthy project of its own to engage in exegesis about each proposal, I will simply go through what I see as the obvious conceptual space. I will do so using the proposals listed above as inspiration, drawing upon them for ways in which one might be tempted to make this division in concepts.
C  EXCLUSIVE PAIRS OF SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION

1.  A subjective/objective distinction

One inviting way to make a sense distinction is to make the two senses exclusive.

One way to make an exclusive sense distinction is to distinguish subjective from objective justification.

**Subjective justification:** first-person justification, or justification by one's own lights. A sense of justification on which only conditions currently in or accessible to the subject's conscious awareness are relevant in determining which of the subject's beliefs are justified.

There could be stronger and weaker theories of subjective justification. Some theorists think that for a person's beliefs to be first-person justified, she must be aware of the justificatory status of her beliefs. These stronger theories tend to be motivated by deontological concerns, on which the blameworthiness or praiseworthiness of the believer is important. They capture our impulse to say of Sophie-in-a-Vat, "She is doing a good job as far as she can tell," or "she doesn't have any reason to think her beliefs are wrong."  

**Weaker theories of subjective justification** would require only that justifiers be accessible to the subject's conscious awareness, not that the subject be aware of the justifiers as such, or have beliefs about the justificatory status of his beliefs. This captures the intuitions of many contemporary internalists that one's reasoning cannot be blamed for things that go beyond its ken.

---

7 cf. BonJour 92, Pollock & Cruz 99, Sosa 99, Fumerton 88, Goldman 92, 94, Lehrer 90, 00, Chisholm, Davidson 89, Rorty 79, Ginet 75, 92 (some of these are descriptions of a strong form of internalism and what it takes justification to be)

8 For discussions or instantiations of the deontological or "fairness" impulse regarding epistemic justification, see, e.g., Alston (86, pp. 81 & 101), Kornblith (88, p. 183), Cohen (84, p. 282), Lehrer (00, p. 190), BonJour (80), Ginet (75), Goldman (99, p. 208), Foley (90, pp. 183, 189), and Sosa (99, p. 149).

9 See Feldman and Conee 01, Fumerton 88, Swain 88, Plantinga 93a and 93b, Audi 93, Alston 85, and Goldman 94 for descriptions of senses of justification like this, or of theories of justification that take justification to be like this.
**Objective justification:** third-person justification. A sense of justification on which only objective matters of fact (i.e., matters of fact not dependent upon the subject’s actual or potential awareness of those matters of fact) are relevant in determining which of the subject’s beliefs are justified. Objective conditions about states both internal and external to the agent’s cognitive system are relevant, but subjective conditions are not.

In other words, whether or not something is in or accessible to the subject’s conscious awareness is irrelevant to its objective justificatory status. The matters of fact in objective justification can be about relations between beliefs or between beliefs and nondoxastic states. If an objective matter of fact also happens to be in or accessible to the subject’s conscious awareness, that does not prevent objective justification; it is simply irrelevant to it.

In the following table, the left column includes descriptions of conditions for subjective justification, and the right column conditions for objective justification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective Justification</th>
<th>Objective Justification</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Higher-order conditions)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Internal conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ awareness that something justifies one’s belief</td>
<td>♦ matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to <strong>other internal states</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ conscious possession of reasons for thinking a belief is true</td>
<td>♦ e.g., matter-of-fact coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ e.g., <strong>perceived</strong> coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states, recognized as such</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Weaker subjective conditions)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(External conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ conditions to which one has special access are the justifiers</td>
<td>♦ matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to <strong>external states</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ e.g., coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states to which one has introspective access</td>
<td>♦ e.g., matter-of-fact reliability, probability, causal relationship to the external word, or evolutionary history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: The subjective/objective distinction**

In terms of our examples from the last chapter, Clairvoyant Sophie’s stock-market beliefs are not subjectively justified, because what gives them legitimacy is beyond her or her
reasoning's ken. She does not have access to the justificatory factor, which is something like the matter-of-fact reliability or good causal connection of her clairvoyant power; and her beliefs don't have the kinds of characteristics relevant to subjective justification, such as coherence with her other mental states. Clairvoyant Sophie's beliefs are good candidates for being objectively justified, because from a third-person perspective the process that generated them can be seen to be highly reliable, and there is a good matter-of-fact connection between her beliefs and their objects. These characteristics are lacking in Sophie-in-a-Vat's beliefs, which makes them objectively unjustified. However, they are subjectively justified because from her own perspective she is doing as well as she can - the things to which she has access ratify the beliefs to her.

This subjective/objective distinction is similar to the subjective and objective senses of right action in ethics. That distinction is the subject of debate in metaethics as this one is in epistemology. Epistemologists discussing it have characterized it in various ways. Pollock & Cruz (99) describe it as the distinction between saying that given what one believes to be the case one has an obligation to do something, and saying that one would have an obligation to do something if one were apprised of all the relevant facts [140]. BonJour (78) says it is the distinction between judging the moral worth of an action only in terms of that person's subjective conception of what he is doing, and in terms of what results from it [272-3]. Goldman (80) says it is the distinction between specifying features of actions that

---

10 This depends on the specific theory of objective justification. For instance, proper function theories of objective justification might need a redrawn example on which Sophie's clairvoyance is something like an evolved capacity in its normal environment (see Millikan or Plantinga for an account of this kind) in order to count as objectively justified.

11 This also depends on the specific theory of subjective justification. Details may need to be added to make her beliefs sufficiently coherent, inferentially grounded, or whatever is demanded of them by a particular theory.
confer moral status (usable or not), and guiding the agent in regulating or choosing behavior [38]. Conee & Feldman (01) say that the “internalist” view of ethics is that accepting a moral obligation to act in a certain way entails being motivated to act in that way [235].

Of course, these epistemologists have been using the analogy to make epistemological points of their own, which may explain some of the differences in characterization. In fact, perhaps the best way to understand the ethical distinction epistemologists are using is to divide it in the same broad terms we did for approaches to justification: as a matter-of-fact/personal distinction.

It is important not to rely on the analogy too heavily, in any case. For one thing, as illustrated, there are quite different ways to formulate the sense distinction in ethics, so the analogy may add more controversy than clarity.

For another, the analogy is unlikely to be exact. There is a disanalogy that in ethics, the objective moral assessment of actions need not be concerned with the agent’s beliefs or internal states whatsoever (as BonJour (78) colorfully puts it, objective moral assessments can judge an action in terms solely “of what happens, willy-nilly, to result from it” [273]). Epistemic assessments of beliefs must, by definition, be concerned with beliefs and so be relativized to a subject’s mental states. In a related point, Pollock & Cruz (99) argue that an objective moral obligation is to do what one would be obliged to do if one were apprised of all the facts; but the epistemic corollary of this would be to believe what one would be obligated to believe if apprised of all the facts, which would simply amount to believing the truth.

Goldman (80) has also pointed to a disanalogy in that ethics is concerned with individual actions, which are under a good amount of control and thus the proper objects of
self-guidance and regulation; it is unlikely that beliefs are under so much voluntary control [39]. Finally, there is also a disanalogy in that subjective justification of moral acts may appeal to epistemological terms without committing any circularity (e.g., "one is subjectively morally obligated to do what one is justified in believing is the morally best action"), whereas senses of justification cannot "piggyback" upon epistemological concepts in this way. 12 

The subjective/objective distinction has several advantages. First, the subjective sense takes seriously intuitions many of us have about deontology and the importance of praiseworthiness and blameworthiness in justification. 13 We have a tendency to think that one very important consideration in assessing the epistemological worth of someone's belief is whether he was doing the best he knew how, or what he thought was best, regardless of whether that "best" has any objective merit. The subjective sense also takes seriously a sort of fairness consideration: it is not fair to make the justificatory status of someone's beliefs extend beyond his ken. The objective sense, on the other hand, captures our third-person, matter-of-fact intuitions. It allows us to examine someone who is (subjectively blamelessly) using belief-forming methods we are confident are faulty (for instance, divination practices), and declare the beliefs not to be justified in an important sense. 14 The objective sense also allows us to use as justificatory factors things outside of the subject's awareness, both inside and outside of cognition. And it provides a sense of justification that cannot be tainted by what beliefs or propositional attitudes the agent happens to have.

12 I owe this point to someone in the literature, but regrettably cannot recall to whom.
13 See note 8 above.
14 Recall Goldman's (88) example of someone in an intellectually benighted culture doing the best he can but using terrible methods to form a belief. He says we feel a tension or tug in opposite directions. "There is a strong temptation to say, no, this belief is not justified or warranted. Yet from a different perspective one feels inclined to say, yes, the belief is justified." Liaisons, p. 128
The problem with this distinction is that subjective justification is not ideal as a specific characterization of one of the senses we are trying to clarify: the personal sense. It may be a sense useful for some projects, but it is not sufficient to capture the broad and pervasive ambiguity for which I argued in Chapter One. It fails to adequately capture our intuitions, it divides up theories of justification in the wrong way, and it lacks promise as the target for robust theories of justification.  

One problem is that cognition contains many elements and operations that take place without conscious awareness, and it seems likely that those at least sometimes play a role in making our beliefs justified in the way that Sophie-in-a-Vat’s beliefs are justified. As Pollock & Cruz put it, “Cognition works by accessing our beliefs, noting that we have certain beliefs, and using that to trigger the formation of further beliefs. However, it is cognition that must note that we have certain beliefs – we do not have to note it ourselves”. Henderson & Horgan (00) have argued that recent cognitive science indicates that much of the information we would consider to be beliefs or involved in belief-fixation has morphological content. That is, the information

(i) is implicit in the standing structure of the cognitive system (rather than explicitly represented in the system’s occurrent cognitive states), and (ii) gets accommodated in cognitive processing without getting explicitly represented in occurrent cognitive states, either conscious or unconscious [516].

In other words, subjective justification asks of us what we cannot do. “In doing a good epistemological job,” they write, “our belief generating and sustaining processes must deal

---

15 For problems with a subjective sense of justification, see, e.g., Goldman (80, pp. 54-5), Alston (86, pp. 84-5, 88, 89-90), Foley (93, pp. 164, 170, 174-5), Conee (88, p. 397, Brandom (98), Haack (99, p. 228), and BonJour (01).
with information without that information being represented in occurrent states” [526].

Another problem with this distinction is that it seems not to divide theories and intuitions up in the right way. Pollock, for instance, holds a view on which beliefs are justified that arise from cognition that conforms to our epistemic norms, which are articulations of our built-in procedural knowledge of how to cognize (Pollock & Cruz 99). On the subjective/objective distinction, a view like Pollock’s would count as talking about objective rather than subjective justification, because not all the cognitive access and factors are conscious. But for one thing, a view that (like Pollock’s) includes unconscious cognitive processing still seems to be talking more about the intuition drawn out by Sophie-in-a-Vat than Clairvoyant Sophie (that is, about personal rather than matter-of-fact justification). And for another, this lumps such theories all in the same camp as externalists such as reliabilists, and Pollock and others of his ilk are insistent that their views are about something different from the views of externalists (e.g., Pollock 87, Feldman & Conee, Pollock & Cruz).

Similarly, the subjective/objective distinction would construe holistic coherence theory and a purely externalist theory of justification as talking about the same sense of justification. Holistic coherence theory says that whether a belief is justified depends on whether it as a matter of fact coheres with other beliefs in the cognitive system. But this kind of matter-of-fact global coherence is almost certainly an inaccessible condition, which makes the theory objective on this distinction. But holistic coherence theory is not alone in including inaccessible conditions: other internalist theories include at least some matters of

16 Although they do not put it in such terms, their argument would work against the necessity of dispositional states in these cases as well – since if they cannot be represented occurrently, they cannot have the disposition
fact of this kind as determiners of justification. Any theory that wants to include some factors within the agent’s cognition, but outside of the agent’s conscious awareness, would count as talking about something entirely different than theories of subjective justification. This also means that such theories, even if they disallow any factors outside of the agent’s cognition, count as talking about the same thing as theories of objective justification. But on both counts this seems to draw the distinction in the wrong place. Such theories seem, like theories of subjective justification and unlike theories of objective justification, to be talking about the intuition drawn out by Sophie -in-a-Vat rather than Clairvoyant Sophie (both Pollock’s direct realism and holistic coherence theory would want to count Sophie -in-a-Vat as having justified beliefs and Clairvoyant Sophie as having unjustified beliefs, for instance).

It seems that plausible theories of personal justification are going to have to contain at least some non-consciously-accessible conditions for justification. Any sense of justification that does not allow any plausible theories looks to be a less-than-useful sense of justification; and the subjective sense of justification we have tried is not inclusive enough to allow many plausible theories.

2. An internal/external distinction

One important thing that seems to be missing in the subjective sense is the ability to have non-cognitively-accessible conditions that are nevertheless part of the cognitive process. Maybe we should try to draw an exclusive distinction in a different way – one that preserves the basic stance that what matters on one hand is “stuff inside the head” and non-external facts about that stuff (like coherence and logical relations), and on the other hand,
the external world is what matters. One way to attempt a distinction preserving that stance is to distinguish *internal* from *external* justification.

**Internal justification:** justification from the inside, or well-set-up cognition. A sense of justification on which only internal states of the subject's cognitive system are relevant in determining which of the subject's beliefs are justified. Objective conditions about relations among those internal states as well as subjective conditions are relevant, but conditions from the contingent external world are not.

**External justification:** justification from the outside, or accurate world-representation. A sense of justification on which only states external to the subject's cognition are relevant in determining which of the subject's beliefs are justified.

Internal justification is about beliefs' justificatory status vis-à-vis an agent's cognitive system – accessible to consciousness or not. Thus what goes on in inaccessible cognitive processing (for instance, "black box" norm-following and subconscious cognition) is relevant to whether a belief is internally justified; what goes on in the contingent external world is not. Facts about states internal to the agent are relevant to internal justification, as long as those states and facts do not extend into the contingent external world. So objective facts about internal states can constitute part of the internal justification of a belief: for instance, logical consistency. Although the fact of logical consistency may not be a subjectively represented fact about the agent's states, it is not something that varies with changes in the external world, so it does not count as external. The basic intuition here is that of cognitive essentialism.

External justification is about beliefs' justificatory status vis-à-vis the actual world outside of the agent's cognitive system. The idea is that there is a sense of justified belief on

---

17 For discussions of this, see Goldman (80, p. 49), Schmitt (93, p. 182), Henderson & Horgan (00, pp. 497, 501, 512, 516), Conee & Feldman (01, esp. pp. 248-9), Foley (90, p. 189).

18 I owe this basic formulation to John Pollock.
which the issue is how accurately the belief or the process that produced it portrays the thing in the world that it is about. What makes a perceptual belief justified in this sense is whether the thing perceived is really like the belief "says" it is. 19

The following chart represents the internal and external senses of justification. Notice that the contents of the chart have not actually changed; they have merely moved around. Internal justification has the same conditions and justifiers as subjective justification plus the internal portion of objective justification; external justification has the external factors that were among the conditions for objective justification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Justification</th>
<th>External Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• awareness that something justifies one's belief</td>
<td>• matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to external states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conscious possession of reasons for thinking a belief is true</td>
<td>• e.g., matter-of-fact reliability, probability, causal relationship to the external word, or evolutionary history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., perceived coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states, recognized as such</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Higher-order subjective conditions)</td>
<td>(External conditions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conditions to which one has special access are the justifiers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states to which one has introspective access</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Weaker subjective conditions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to other internal states</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., matter-of-fact coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Objective conditions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The internal/external distinction

19 Actually, it is a little more complex than this, of course; otherwise the external sense of justification runs the risk of amounting to a truth condition. How this works would depend upon the specific theory of external justification – it might be construed in terms of process reliability, causation, or probability, for instance.
In terms of our examples, Clairvoyant Sophie’s beliefs are externally justified because they are ratified by the external world; the process that produced them is reliable at getting at the external world, for instance. Clairvoyant Sophie’s beliefs are likely not internally justified, because what ratifies them is external to her cognition altogether, and she lacks most justificatory factors within her cognition. Sophie-in-a-Vat’s beliefs are not externally justified, because they are not ratified by anything in the external world; but they are internally justified, because her cognition works as well as if she were not envatted, so justifies her beliefs just as well.

The internal sense of justification looks a lot better than the subjective sense. It still includes subjectively accessed states, and so deontological conditions could take place within it. It still seems to capture the intuitive stance that first came out in the example of Sophie-in-a-Vat. Our approval of Sophie-in-a-Vat’s beliefs is arguably based on limiting our view to her internal system. On an internal rather than a subjective sense, we can also take into account objective relations between Sophie’s beliefs and cognitive states such as coherence or logical relations whether those are accessible to her consciousness or not; and cognitive operations, norms or connections not accessible to her conscious awareness. We now would say of Sophie-in-a-Vat something like “her beliefs are as justified as they can be given her internal states and constitution,” and that is quite different from what we want to say about Clairvoyant Sophie.

---

20 again, what conditions to build into the example to make this so may depend on the specific theory of external justification.

21 It seems to me more apt to say that Sophie-in-a-Vat’s beliefs look justified when viewed on the inside rather than from the inside, since it could very well be that from her subjective perspective Sophie doesn’t have any views about the justificatory status of her beliefs at all (or at least not about the justificatory status of particular beliefs; or enough views about their justificatory status to constitute sufficient justification for them).
An internal sense of justification may not give us the pretheoretical punch of being able to say "what matters for Sophie-in-a-Vat is that her beliefs are justified as far as she can tell," which subjective justification could do. But such deontological concerns can be incorporated into internal justification while avoiding the problems of subjective justification.

The problem with the internal/external distinction is that the external sense of justification is inadequate for the purpose of constituting a theoretically useful specification of the broad matter-of-fact sense of justification. Like the subjective sense, it does not adequately capture our intuitions, draw the dividing line between theories or intuitions in the right place, or serve as the basis for robust theories of justification.

For one thing, external justification cannot deal with entirely internal epistemic situations. So for instance if there is a situation where the belief, the process that produced the belief, and the target of the belief are all inside of the person's cognition (say, in introspection), there is no fact of the matter outside of the person's cognition. Everything relevant to the belief is inside of the cognitive system, and there is nothing in the external world at which to point and say something like, "the belief is produced by a process doing a good job at getting at that" or "the belief is at the end of an epistemically good causal chain leading back to that." Thus it looks as if theories of external justification cannot give beliefs in this situation a positive epistemic status.

In addition, external justification cannot deal adequately with the justification of ordinary beliefs that intuitively have internal factors involved in their justification. Take a normal sort of inferential belief, expressed by the sentence "That woman is an impostor!" A person who believes this will believe it on the basis of various states and processes. An
agent notices that a person who purports to be Ms. Jones is several inches shorter than the real Ms. Jones, whom the agent has met. In other words, something in the external world leads to a visual stimulus on the part of the agent, which leads to a perceptual experience, which combines with a memory and an inference to produce a belief that the woman is an impostor. But notice that external justification, as defined, cannot include any talk about the effects of memory or inference as justifiers of the belief. Memory and inference are conditions internal to the agent's cognitive system.

So external justification only has resources to deal with the external aspects of the justification of a belief like this, which cannot adequately explain what makes the belief justified. Merely saying, "well, as far as the external world goes, that belief is fine" is singularly uninformative and unhelpful. Theories of justification that can only deal with external factors look like nonstarters as plausible theories. In fact, virtually no theory of justification has restricted itself only to external factors. Thus this distinction does not capture theories of justification properly.

To sum up our progress so far, although two of the senses we have come up with, the objective sense and the internal sense, seemed very appealing, the problem is that their contrasting senses did not. So both of the exclusive distinctions - the subjective/objective distinction and the internal/external distinction - seem wrong for constituting good senses for epistemology to focus on, and for capturing our intuitions.

---

22 For discussions of this, see, e.g., Riggs (02, esp. pp. 94-5), Goldman (99, p. 222), Fumerton (98, p. 396), Lehrer (00, p. 189), and Swain (88, p. 461).
The distinctions I have presented so far have been chosen partly on the assumption that, other things being equal, an exclusive distinction is better. The other broad way to distinguish senses of justification is to formulate an inclusive pair of senses: a pair such that one includes the other. There are different ways to make such a distinction, but a common way is to make the matter-of-fact sense sufficient for the personal sense. Another way is to say that a belief is not justified unless it is matter-of-fact justified, but that personal justification is sometimes a component of matter-of-fact justification. In the first case, a belief cannot be matter-of-fact justified but not personally justified; in the second, a belief cannot be personally justified but not matter-of-fact justified. In both cases personal justification is included in matter-of-fact justification, but in the first case that inclusion is necessary for matter-of-fact justification, and in the second it is necessary for personal justification.

In order to reject inclusive sets of senses of justification, I will refer back to arguments made in Ch. 1. There are two basic problems with inclusive sets of senses: they don't allow for plausible theories of the two broad senses of justification we are attempting to specify, and they don't allow the two senses to be independent.

The first argument is that inclusive senses don't allow plausible theories. In Ch. 1 I made a case that given the different targets involved in the two broad senses, it is unlikely that one theory could adequately capture both senses. As I said there, theories that are good at explaining what makes beliefs reliably formed, for instance, are notoriously poor at
explaining how subjective states or the lack of them affect justification. Theories that are good at explaining what makes beliefs internally consistent, coherent, or well-founded in regard to each other are notoriously poor at explaining how any connection to the outside world can get worked into justification.

The second argument is that inclusive pairs don't allow the two senses of justification to be independent, and that this is problematic. The force of this argument can be seen in the original Sophie-in-a-Vat and Clairvoyant Sophie cases. Those cases were constructed precisely to illustrate that one of the broad senses can be present and the other absent.

This second argument will be given more support in the next chapter, where I will argue that neither exclusive nor inclusive pairs of senses hold out good promise of theoretical utility. For now, though, I will rely on the intuitive plausibility of the claim that a belief could be personally justified without being matter-of-fact justified, or the reverse.

The problem with inclusive sets of senses of justification is that they include too much. A theory good at capturing conditions at the subjective extreme within justification is unlikely to be good at capturing conditions at the external extreme, and vice versa. Furthermore, an inclusive pair of senses includes too much to allow each sense of justification to be instantiated independently.

---

23 Hence BonJour's original clairvoyant example, for instance. Cf. also Fumerton 95 and Davidson 89, for example.

24 See discussions in, e.g., Sturgeon (95), Goldman (80, pp. 57-8), Pollock (86, p. 134), Davidson (89, p. 157), Foley (90, p. 184), and McDowell (95, p. 417).
AN OVERLAPPING PAIR OF SENSES OF JUSTIFICATION: THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION

The problem with each of the two exclusive sets of senses of justification is that one sense is too far to the extreme in terms of factors that could be relevant for justification. Each pair has a sense that includes too little, too far to an extreme: subjective justification is too subjective, and external justification is too external. The sense that captures the Sophie-in-a-Vat intuition could use more internal, non-subjective factors, and the sense that captures the Clairvoyant Sophie intuition could use more non-external factors. Adding non-subjective (but still internal) factors to subjective justification yields internal justification; adding non-external (but still objective) factors to external justification yields objective justification. The factors added in each case are internal objective factors; and once we do this, we have the two most plausible senses of justification. Neither sense includes too little, as with the exclusive pairs, or too much, as with the inclusive pairs. So why not locate the distinction for which we have been searching here? I propose that the best distinction is this one: the internal/objective distinction.

The chart below reflects the new distinction. The bottom row represents objective justification, and the left column represents internal justification. Notice again that nothing new has been added; this is simply the subjective/objective and internal/external charts overlaying one another.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• awareness that something justifies one's belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• conscious possession of reasons for thinking a belief is true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., perceived coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states, recognized as such</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• conditions to which one has special access are the justifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states to which one has introspective access</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to <strong>other internal states</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., matter-of-fact coherence, logical status, or foundational relations between mental states</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• matters of fact about beliefs and their connections to <strong>external</strong> states</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• e.g., matter-of-fact reliability, probability, causal relationship to the external word, or evolutionary history</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The internal/objective distinction

As a reminder, the internal way to think about justification is as solely a matter of factors inside of the agent’s cognitive system (what Pollock has called “cognitive essentialism” and Conee and Feldman have called "mentalism"). It cares about “stuff inside the head”, including both subjective and objective conditions concerning that stuff. Internal justification would include both subjective and objective factors about states internal to cognitive systems (things like the possession of seeming defeaters, coherence, foundational relationships between mental states, logical relationships between mental states, degree of confidence, and so forth). The objective way to think about justification is as a matter of
factors as they would be judged from a third-person or god's-eye perspective, and concentrate on that. It cares about third-person objective matters of fact both internal and external to cognitive systems (things like reliability, causation, and probability as well as objectively defined conditions about internal states like coherence and foundational and logical relationships).

Perhaps the most novel thing about this distinction is that it is an *overlapping* one. Each sense makes justification partly a matter of objective matters of fact internal to the cognizer, like coherence between beliefs. On the chart, this is the bottom left quadrant. I will call such conditions "internal objective" conditions, as contrasted with subjective or external conditions; although theories of each sense of justification may not include the *same* internal objective conditions. I take the overlap between these two senses to be an explanatory virtue of this distinction: it helps explain, for instance, why epistemologists sometimes seem to be talking about the same thing and sometimes about different things.

The overlap means that the two senses have something in common: the internal objective kind of conditions that we saw are needed to make a sense of justification workable. But it's a *distinction* with an overlap, and what makes each perspective distinct is what it is and is not willing to let in in addition to those internal objective conditions. The internal sense of justification lets in subjective factors and does not let in external ones; the objective sense lets in external factors and does not let in subjective ones. Thus we end up with two senses of justification, but two senses neither of which is implausibly extreme or implausibly ambitious.

One worry that might arise is the way that the objective sense does not let in subjective factors. Subjective defeaters - mental states in our subjective awareness that
constitute defeaters for the justification of our beliefs – are so obviously related to justification that it is hard to imagine calling a belief justified when one is present.  

Insofar as they are objectively related to the belief in question, subjective defeaters are relevant to objective justification – as relevant as anything else. But they’re no more relevant than objective defeaters, within or outside of the person’s cognitive system (e.g., the person’s memory is faulty in a way to which he has no access). So beliefs can affect justification, as can all cognitive states that are subjectively accessible, just not per se. Unconscious desires can also affect justification, if they are playing a role in the holding of the belief.

Another worry is that what I’m calling subjective states and factors are objectively observable, and available from the third-person perspective. A well-informed third person looking at an agent could see the agent’s subjective states and the role they play in his reasoning; perhaps even better than the person himself. How can I tease apart subjective considerations from objective ones?

One way to think of the distinction is to take an objective stance on each sense of justification. For internal justification, we can take an objective stance on whether the agent’s beliefs are reasonable considering her as a self-contained cognitive system susceptible to praise and blame. For objective justification, we can take an objective stance on whether the agent’s beliefs are reasonable considering her as a potential representor of the world and reality, assessed for success judged by standards independent of her own. This objective

---

25 For an argument that externalist theories do and should contain a “no-defeater” internalist condition, see Bergmann (97).
stance would take into account her position in that world, her capabilities, and her cognitive system — but not as an object of praise or blame.

So in a way the labels are somewhat misleading, but I think capture the fundamental focus of each sense as well as possible. The internal focuses all and only on the internal, both objective and subjective. The objective focuses all and only on the objective, both internal and external. Objective facts about the subjective _per se_ do not count on this understanding of the objective — although objective facts about the states to which an agent has subjective access do count.

Although I have not presented the senses as each merely being able to have conditions in one extreme or the other — the subjective or the external — I actually believe theories of these senses _must_ have conditions in the extreme. The internal sense of justification should include some subjective factors, and the objective sense should include some external factors.

One reason is that this is the best way for the sense distinction to adequately capture the personal/matter-of-fact distinction for which I argued in Chapter One. That distinction rested to a large degree on intuitions about those two extremes. The personal sense, and the brain-in-a-vat kind of example that helped motivate it, is attractive in part because it can capture our intuitions about deontology, praise and blame, fairness, and judging a belief by what is available to the agent’s awareness. The matter -of-fact sense, and the clairvoyant kind of example that helped with its motivation, is attractive partly because it can capture our intuitions about success, a truth connection, and holding someone to a higher standard than she is capable of being aware of. If the internal sense does not include a subjective component or the objective sense does not include an external component, those senses fail
to capture our intuitions and the distinction for which I argued. In addition, I will argue in Chapters Four and Five that the internal/objective distinction holds out good promise for theoretical utility in solving epistemological problems, constructing theories, and being of use to agents, assessors, and theorists; those arguments depend upon the construal of the senses as each including conditions in its extreme component.

It should be relatively clear how the objective sense puts a special emphasis on external factors. It may not be so clear how the internal sense puts special emphasis on subjective factors, since it, like objective justification, can approach an agent's cognitive states from an objective point of view. But internal justification, unlike objective justification, also takes into account subjective states per se. This is largely because of the deontological and action-guiding aspects of internal justification. When assigning praise or blame to agents in relation to their beliefs, what beliefs and other states agents have potential or actual awareness of in relation to those beliefs is all that can be relevant. To see that whether they are veridical or not is irrelevant to praiseworthiness and blameworthiness, consider the brain in a vat, or a false subjective defeater. To see that objective considerations are insufficient to account for praiseworthiness and blameworthiness, imagine that the demon victim is having her internal states manipulated such that she is convinced there is a defeater for the justification of some belief no matter what. We can make the belief as coherent with her other beliefs, as logically entailed by her evidence, or as well-founded as we want, but that subjective conviction of defeat is still relevant to the internal justification of that belief.

To illustrate how the internal/objective distinction would work from a particular theoretical perspective, I will now explore the application of the distinction to evidentialism.
Evidentialism is, broadly speaking, the view that a belief is justified if it fits best with evidence.²⁶ How would a version of evidentialism that is talking about the internal sense of justification work, and how would a version talking about the objective sense of justification work?

A version of evidentialism talking about internal justification would construe the relevant evidence in an internal way: evidence possessed by the agent. What counts as evidence would also be construed in an internal way: perhaps something like information that is internally well-founded. This well-foundedness could be construed in different ways, for example in coherentist or foundationalist terms. A belief would be justified if it fit with the person's possessed evidence.

An evidentialist theory of internal justification would have room for objective conditions about internal states: for instance, what belief best fits with one's evidence is an objective matter of fact. Let's say an agent has a defeater for his possessed evidence for a belief, but he is unaware of that defeater. An evidentialist theory of internal justification could take that defeater to be relevant to the justificatory status of the belief, even if the person has no conscious access to it: this is because objective facts about internal states can matter in internal justification.

It would also make room for subjective conditions: conditions where the states that a person has conscious access to have special justificatory importance. Let's say the agent above holds a belief that only seems to him to be a defeater for his evidence, but in fact it is not. For instance, he commits the fallacy of affirming the consequent in a deductive

²⁶ For one account of evidentialism, see Feldman & Conee (85). Note that on their account they explicitly deny that external facts matter for the concept they're talking about, although they acknowledge that there is another
argument for a proposition. An evidentialist theory of internal justification can also take his conviction of defeat to be relevant to the justificatory status of the belief, and can take it to defeat the belief’s justification, even though it is only what we would objectively call *seeming* evidence. This is because of the subjective component of internal justification. In addition, it can take a seeming defeater to which the agent has conscious access much more seriously than a seeming defeater buried deep in the agent’s memory or subconscious; the fact that the person currently, consciously thinks there’s a defeater for his evidence is of importance on a theory of internal justification.

An evidentialist theory of objective justification, on the other hand, is focusing on an objective third-person perspective, and does not take considerations of whether states are in the subject’s consciousness to be relevant to justification. The states themselves are relevant, as are all states; but their being present in conscious awareness or not is irrelevant. An evidentialist theory of objective justification would say that a belief is justified if it fits best with the person’s evidence. Note that an objective account, unlike a very strong external account, would not say a justified belief fits with the *actual* evidence in the world; this is because of the internal objective component of objective justification, and is a good thing, because an account that made a belief justified if it fit with the actual evidence would be a non-starter. On an objective version of evidentialism, though, external considerations will be relevant: for instance, "evidence" might be defined as something like information that is both internally and externally well-founded. Well-foundedness could be interpreted in different objective ways, for example according to reliabilist or causal standards. Thus
seeming defeaters would not count as evidence, and would not affect the objective justificatory status of a belief. Nor would defeaters or evidence of which the agent is consciously aware have more justificatory force than defeaters or evidence otherwise available to his cognition.27

The most fundamental advantage to this internal/objective distinction is that these two senses best capture our two kinds of intuitions in a form that is defensible. In a rough-and-ready characterization, the intuitions are that the two most important perspectives in looking at the epistemic status of beliefs are the perspective that takes seriously the inside of the agent and the perspective that takes seriously actual matters of fact. We can ask of a person, “how well is she doing independently of the external world?” as well as “how well is she doing inclusive of the external world and independently of her subjective opinions about her justification?” The same basic intuition can be applied to beliefs: how well-situated are they independently of, and inclusive of, the external world? How reasonable are they relative to the agent’s available information in the cognitive system, and how reasonable are they relative to everything? The internal and objective senses can, between the two of them, answer both types of questions.

A second strong motivation for separating justification into two senses is that doing so might help resolve a long-standing dispute in contemporary epistemology: that between internalists and externalists about justification. As we have seen, other distinctions do not do a good job of capturing the fundamental intuitions that probably underlie internalist and externalist theoretical stances, nor do they do a good job of dividing up internalist and externalist theoretical stances, nor do they do a good job of dividing up internalist and

27 Sturgeon (95) has pointed out a distinction like this, in proposing a distinction between what he calls ‘justifiable beliefs’ and ‘justified beliefs,’ where the former exist when one has good evidence for one’s beliefs,
externalist theories. I will argue in Chapter Five that the internal/objective distinction does a better job of both. And with such a distinction, we can see internalists and externalists as fundamentally talking past each other rather than disagreeing, thus largely dissolving the dispute.

A third advantage of the internal/objective distinction is that it holds out good promise for working on specific epistemological problems and issues. As BonJour (01) has put it in the context of internalist and externalist approaches,

> there are some perfectly genuine and important epistemological questions for which an approach that is partially or perhaps even wholly externalist in character is entirely reasonable and appropriate... [and] there are also genuine and important epistemological questions in relation to which an internalist approach is quite indispensable. [ms p. 2]

With the objective sense, we can talk about external defeaters, ignored evidence, connection to the world, objective likelihood to be true or to yield true beliefs, and naturalizing epistemology. With certain issues, it is useful to be able to talk about success at getting at the actual world (which could be thought of as success at getting knowledge). This is even more apparent in cases where we are assessing other people's beliefs by way of assessing their processes, methods, norms, or cognitive systems. With external factors in the mix, we can talk about intuitively epistemically praiseworthy situations that lack subjective justification or where subjective justification does not seem like enough to make a situation as praiseworthy as we think it is.

With the internal sense of justification, we can talk about epistemic responsibility, deontology, acceptance, declarative knowledge, and the psychological grounds for belief. and the latter exist when one holds one's beliefs on the basis of good evidence.
We can examine cognitive systems and norms in abstraction from contingent facts about the external world. This can help us understand not just justification, but rationality better. We can also use this perspective to work on certain epistemological problems, such as *a priori* knowledge, skepticism, and self-knowledge.

One final promising aspect of this two-sense view is that it holds out good prospects for helping us to understand knowledge. It seems quite possible that internal justification and objective justification are both necessary for knowledge. What prevents Clairvoyant Sophie from having knowledge rather than mere true objectively justified belief seems to be her lack of internal justification. What prevents Sophie –in-a-Vat from having knowledge rather than mere true internally justified belief (if we stipulate that her beliefs happen to be true) seems to be her lack of objective justification. Exploring the connections between these senses of justification and knowledge looks like a promising epistemological project.

Each of these advantages will be explored at greater length in the next two chapters. In the meantime, though, I have completed a refinement of the broad personal/matter-of-fact distinction into a fresh and promising distinction: an overlapping one between internal and objective senses of justification.
Chapter Four

THEORETICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION

A INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to argue that recognizing internal and objective senses of justification, as I have defined those, has greater promise of theoretical utility than alternatives. To that end, I will argue in the following way.

First, I will argue that there are epistemological issues best approached using the internal and objective senses of justification. I will speculate that many issues could benefit from the distinction, but in this chapter I will focus in particular on the issues of testimony and normativity to illustrate the points. I argue that these issues can and should be handled in two different ways, and that the best two ways correspond to internal and objective senses of justification. This will show that having these two senses of justification has the advantage of providing different tools in order to tackle problems that should be approached using different tools.

Finally, I will use two fundamental epistemological desiderata and argue that each can best be handled by one of the two senses of justification and not the other. For the desideratum of a truth connection not just for beliefs but for the justification of them, I will argue that the best way to approach it is by separating out internal and objective senses of justification and leaving the matter of truth connection as an issue for the objective sense. For the desideratum of action-guidingness or deontology, I will argue that the best way to approach it is similarly by separating out internal and objective senses of justification and leaving the
internal sense as the locus for capturing this desideratum. This will show that having the two senses of justification has the advantage of providing appropriate tools to approach the differing epistemological desiderata, and the related advantage of not necessitating the use of inappropriate tools to approach them.
B THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION IN THE AREA OF TESTIMONY

In this section, I will show that this distinction has good theoretical utility for dealing with epistemological issues and areas. By issues and areas I mean problems at the level of epistemology, not metaepistemology. That is, I do not mean problems about the basic aims of epistemology or the meaning of its terms, but some of the problems epistemology is generally thought to be meant to solve. Among such epistemological issues we could include, for instance, self-knowledge, skeptical problems, a priori knowledge, and perceptual knowledge. I will focus in this section, and in the most depth, on the issue of testimony. In providing the basic argument that the internal/objective distinction has advantages in dealing with epistemological issues, I will use testimony to illustrate and provide examples. I will then illustrate the same arguments using the issue of normativity.

The arguments for the theoretical utility of the internal/objective distinction basically go as follows. First, this distinction best captures a legitimate intuition divide about epistemological problems. Specific issues within epistemology can be seen to contain the ambiguity I have been arguing for in the basic concept of justification. That ambiguity is best explained and approached with internal and objective senses of epistemic justification. I will argue that such an ambiguity exists, show how the internal/objective distinction would demarcate the divide, and argue that this distinction is better than others for handling specific epistemological issues. Second, this distinction is most useful above and beyond its use at capturing intuitions. I will argue that the internal/objective distinction is useful for agents, assessors, and theorists. Each sense of justification is useful for each of the epistemic parties; and having a distinction is useful to each, as well.
1. The intuitive utility of the internal/objective distinction

One of the things relevant in determining the justificatory status of a belief is its source: it could be from memory, introspection, perception, and so forth. One source of beliefs is testimony: basically, information based on others' say-so. A major epistemological question is in what circumstances a belief based on testimony (hereafter, a testimonial belief) is justified.

One perspective says that a testimonial belief is justified when an agent is justified in believing that the source is a reliable or trustworthy one. We must have reason to think that a proposition is true in order to be rationally justified in believing the proposition, the view says, and the mere fact that someone else has asserted it does not give us reason to think it is true. A reductivist about justification claims that hearers must base their beliefs based on others' testimony on reasons for trusting those others, generally inductive reasons. The justification of testimonial beliefs reduces to the justification for induction, as well as any other sources for the belief such as memory and sense-perception.¹

Another perspective says that a testimonial belief is prima facie justified in the absence of available defeaters.² For instance, Tyler Burge endorses an Acceptance Principle that says “A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are stronger reasons not to do so.”³ Foley asserts that it is reasonable to grant fundamental authority to the opinions of others “even when we have no

¹ Lackey 99, p. 474. Reductivist views are held by E. Fricker and J. Lyons.
² Alston (86) defines prima facie justification as: “One is prima facie justified in believing that p provided that one is so situated that one will be (unqualifiedly, all things considered, ultima facie) justified in believing that p, provided there are no sufficient ‘overriding’ considerations.” [73]
³ Burge 93, p. 467.
special information indicating that they are reliable." This kind of view may be motivated by the argument (of C.A.J. Coady and others) that we do not have enough evidence to make inductive inferences to the reliability of speakers. 5

Goldman 2001 has argued that whether or not one has evidence about the trustworthiness or expertise of a source is at least relevant to the justification of one's testimonial beliefs based upon that source. 6 He gives as an example an agent walking down the street who passes someone who "assertively utters a sophisticated mathematical proposition." Surely, he says, whether the agent is justified in believing this proposition depends on whether the stranger is a mathematician of her acquaintance or a nine-year-old child. He points out that accounts like those of Burge and Foley could say that this kind of evidence either bolsters or defeats prima facie entitlement to accept the proposition. But Goldman's point is that all-things-considered justification of testimonial beliefs is surely affected by empirical evidence about sources.

Saying that a testimonial belief is prima facie justified could be read as an externalist account based on a presumed actual reliability or trustworthiness of testimony. Other views about testimony have gone beyond questions of the internal states of agents by proposing transpersonal, transmissional, or preservationist accounts of justification. On these accounts, a hearer is justified in believing testimonial belief p only if the source justifiably believes p; the source's justification is transmitted or preserved in the exchange from source to hearer. 7

---

4 Foley 94, p. 55.
6 Goldman 01, p. 142.
7 Goldman 02, p. 202. Burge 93 and Schmitt 94 have proposed such accounts.
With some background understanding of the issue of testimony in hand, I can now go on to use that issue to argue for the utility of the internal/objective distinction in senses of justification. First, I will show how the internal and objective senses of justification could be used in the area of testimony, and show why two separate senses of justification intuitively seem called for.

According to the internal/objective distinction, there are actually two senses in which a testimonial belief can be justified, and it can be fully justified in either of those senses. To be internally justified, the testimonial belief must be justified by factors internal to the agent's cognition, regardless of contingent external matters. To be objectively justified, the testimonial belief must be justified from a third-person perspective, regardless of subjective matters.

Let us take an example and work with it. Take the example from Goldman cited above: You are walking down the street and someone passing you asserts a mathematical proposition. You form a belief in the proposition. Now, is the belief justified? Well, imagine that you believe the person to be a brilliant mathematician, and you have gained this belief in an intellectually exemplary manner. Even if the person isn't a brilliant mathematician but an impostor, the belief seems as justified as it needs to be for you. The belief is internally justified.

On the other hand, imagine that the person is a brilliant mathematician who happens to be a nine-year-old child (and you form a belief in the proposition even though you don't know about his mathematical abilities). It seems that if the question were asked, "does the testimony justify the belief?", one legitimate answer is yes. From a third-person perspective, the testimony provides good reason for the belief, and that belief is one that you ought to
have (whether it's true or not). One way of putting this may be to say that if you were aware of your actual situation not vis-à-vis the truth or falsehood of the proposition but vis-à-vis the epistemic trustworthiness of the testifier, you would have good internal reason to adopt the belief. The belief is objectively justified.

These examples essentially echo the point I have been making throughout this dissertation, that it is reasonable to feel the force of two separate senses of justification. Rather than rehearse all the arguments I have given for this point, I am going to assume that I have established that we have at least a *prima facie* reason to distinguish two senses of justification. My next task is to show that the internal and objective senses are better at capturing this intuitive divide than other senses of justification. I will first argue that the internal sense of justification is preferable to the subjective sense, then that the objective sense is preferable to the external sense. This is similar to the general arguments to this effect given in the previous chapter. It constitutes an argument for an overlapping pair of concepts rather than exclusive senses, since one member of each plausible pair of exclusive senses is unsatisfactory, and the best two senses have an overlap. I will then argue that this overlapping pair of senses is preferable to an inclusive pair of senses. Throughout, I will use the issue of testimony to provide illustration and examples.

The subjective sense of justification, as discussed in Ch. 3, is unsatisfactory because, among other things, it does not allow cognitive factors inaccessible to conscious awareness to play a role in justifying the belief. So for instance if there are black-box cognitive processes taking place that play a role in your forming the belief but to which you have no access, those still seem like they ought to get to count in the personal sense of justification. If, for instance, your cognitive system has gathered various subconsciously perceived cues
about the speaker – a protractor in his pocket and chalk dust on his hands, say – even if the process by which that information bolstered your conviction in the belief isn’t accessible to you it ought to get to count in favor of the internal justification. To bring back our old friend the brain in a vat, imagine two envatted brains with the exact same consciously accessible justifiers for the belief in this mathematical proposition, but where one has in addition the unconscious cues. It seems that the one with the unconscious cues in addition to whatever the other one has, has a more justified belief, and this is not because of anything external to her. So the internal sense of justification, since it can fully capture our intuition that the belief is justified in a way not dependent on factors outside of the agent, is preferable to the subjective sense.

The objective sense of justification is preferable to the external sense because it is not restricted to merely considering factors outside of the agent’s cognition. To make this clear, imagine that you form a belief in the mathematical proposition, then immediately deduce a consequence of that proposition and form a belief in it. Although the new belief relies on the testimonial belief, it also relies on factors inside of your cognition, such as deduction and how good you are at it. Even on a reliability account, the reliability of your deduction may not merely be a matter of how often your deduction gets things right external to you, as the external sense of justification would require. What really matters is how good a job your cognition is doing from a third-person perspective, not how good a job it is doing excluding any facts about the rest of your cognition. The latter view, put that way, just seems bizarre.

As discussed before, one way to avoid having an exclusive pair of senses of justification is to have an inclusive pair of senses – one on which one sense of justification
includes the other and goes beyond it, as with Lehrer's personal and complete justification. I contend that an inclusive pair of senses is unsatisfactory, however. As argued in Chapter One, this is basically because a sense of justification that tries to be all things to all people is susceptible to being accused of being *ad hoc* and insufficiently explanatory. Including one sense in the other when the *aims* of the two senses seem not just different, but essentially to hold each other as irrelevant, looks less promising than allowing each sense to stand alone.

In addition, being able to take *either* a purely objective stance or a purely internal stance is unavailable to an inclusive sense, and that seems to me to be a valuable thing. When assessing someone's belief structure or the set of events that led to a belief, it is useful to be able to utterly neglect subjective considerations — e.g., what the person *thinks* about the belief or its structure or cause. This isn't to say that such a perspective rejects the importance of subjective factors; merely that it is not interested in them. Similarly, when assigning praise or blame to a belief, it is useful to be able to utterly neglect external considerations — e.g., whether the process that caused the belief is *actually* reliable. Such a perspective does not reject the importance of external factors, but merely ignores them.

We can draw an analogy between distinguishing two senses of epistemic justification and distinguishing pragmatic from epistemic justification. If we were to make the pragmatic/epistemic distinction an inclusive one — if, say, being epistemically justified were defined as being sufficient for being pragmatically justified — there would be a couple of problems. For one thing, a belief could never be epistemically justified but *not* pragmatically justified. Similarly in epistemic justification, it seems to me important to allow at least for

---

8 See, e.g., Pollock & Cruz p. 90.
the possibility of a belief's being objectively but not internally justified, or vice versa. For another thing, it would preclude talking only about epistemic conditions; one would always have to include in a theory of epistemic justification conditions that captured pragmatic justification as well. This strikes me as a mistake between objective and internal senses of epistemic justification just as it would be between epistemic and pragmatic justification.

To make the internal/objective distinction more clear, I’d like to illustrate and go over some issues of interest using a testimonial example. I will use the example to show what it might be for a belief to be both objectively justified and internally justified, and each without the other. I will then use it to show how internal justification is different from and superior to subjective justification, and how objective justification is different from and superior to external justification.

This task is complicated to some extent, as usual, by the fact that I am making a metaepistemological point about the best way to divide senses of justification; I am not adjudicating between particular theories of each sense of justification. For the most part in what follows I will mention this difficulty and then use particular examples of theories of justification to illustrate how one possible account might go. In general, I will use a coherence theory of internal justification and a process reliabilist theory of objective justification as my default sample theories.

Many ordinary testimonial beliefs are both internally and objectively justified, assuming we are not radically deceived. Most of the time a belief based on testimony corresponds to what one ought to believe both on the inside and from a third-person
perspective. For instance, take the following case⁹: Stu Cuckold is being cheated on by his wife, Bella Causa-Cuckold. They have a mutual friend, Fred. Fred sees Bella entering a room at the No-Tel Motel with another man, and tells Stu about it. Stu comes to believe on this basis that Bella is having an affair. In this case, it looks like Stu’s belief is both internally and objectively justified. Of course we might need to fill in some details depending on the theories of each sense of justification – for coherence theories, make Fred’s testimony and Stu’s belief consistent enough with other mental states; for foundations theories make the foundational relationships from Stu’s belief downwards sound ones; for reliabilist theories make the process of inference based on testimony a reliable one. But if everything goes right, we want to say that Stu’s belief is adequate in both ways.

To make the belief retain its internal but lose its objective justification is a bit tricky, because it depends both on the theory of objective justification and on the theory of testimonial justification. But let us say that the following plausible theory of testimony is right (although I believe the subsequent arguments will work on other views of testimonial justification as well). Testimonial beliefs are internally justified depending on the person’s possessed evidence for the reliability of this source, an absence of defeating evidence, and the meeting of other internal conditions (e.g., memory and inference are working fine).

On this understanding of testimonial justification, Stu’s belief is internally justified in the original example. However, if we change some things about the external world, that belief can lose its objective justification. The easiest way to do this would be to make Stu a demon victim, but we can do it in a more normal world as well. Say, for instance, that men

⁹ I owe this example and some of its permutations to Keith Lehrer.
in Stu’s world are inveterate but not invariable liars. This would affect the reliability of male testimony such that it would not provide objective justification for the belief. Nevertheless, if Stu is unaware of this fact (and blameless for being unaware), his belief retains its internal justification.

The easiest way to rob Stu’s belief of its internal justification is to insert a subjective defeater into his belief system. Say, for instance, Stu thinks that Fred is a liar. Even if Fred is not a liar, and the inference Stu draws from Fred’s testimony is a perfectly reliable process, if Stu nevertheless believes that Bella is cheating on him on the basis of Fred’s testimony, that belief is not internally justified (on most theories of internal justification). The belief is still objectively justified because a third-person perspective disregarding Stu’s subjective states would say he has in his possession good reason for believing that Bella is cheating on him.

Showing that a belief can be objectively but not internally justified or internally but not objectively justified also serves the purpose of showing that an overlapping pair of senses of justification is superior to an inclusive pair of senses. With senses of justification in which the more external or objective sense includes the other sense or is sufficient for its presence, it is not possible to have each sense present without the other.

The last version of the example illustrates that subjective conditions may be necessary for internal justification, as I have argued before. However, it should not be thought that subjective conditions are sufficient for a robust sense of justification. Certainly what Stu thinks he is justified in believing does not make him justified in believing that. If the example were such that all men are liars, Stu knows this and knows that Fred is a man, believes that Bella is cheating on him on the basis of Fred’s testimony, and just dogmatically
thinks Fred’s testimony justifies his belief, that doesn’t make it so. Even on the broader conception of subjective conditions I am using, those conditions are not sufficient for a full sense of justification.

To see that subjective conditions alone cannot support our intuitions about personal justification, consider the following case. Fred is not a liar but Stu does not know him very well, and so does not have good reason to believe his testimony to be generally reliable. But say there are many subconscious cues in Stu’s cognitive system that Bella is having an affair – late nights working, whiffs of cologne, funny credit card charges, or whatever. Stu does not put these together consciously to use them in forming a belief – in fact, he does not even know they are in his subconscious. Nevertheless, when Fred tells him what he has seen, they play a role in Stu’s coming to believe that Bella is having an affair. Again, Stu is unaware of the role these subconscious cues are playing, but without them Fred’s testimony would not be enough to justify a belief. With them I believe it is plausible that his belief could be justified. This is similar to the case of medical doctors, whose diagnoses on the basis of “intuition” (in fact, subconsciously registered cues and unconscious cognition) often yield justified beliefs.

But Stu’s subconsciously-influenced beliefs, and the intuitive beliefs of doctors, would be subjectively unjustified, because subjective justification requires that all justifiers be accessible to conscious awareness. Note that in both kinds of cases although the beliefs might be objectively justified, if we changed the situations to make them objectively unjustified, that does not seem to change our judgment that they are still in some sense justified. If Stu or the medical doctors were in fact envatted, their beliefs based partly on subconscious and unconscious factors would remain just as justified in the personal sense.
Thus subjective justification does not give a satisfactory account of the personal sense of justification.

An external sense of justification would hold that the external world ratifies a belief, so to speak. I have argued above that this is an unsatisfactory sense of justification, since on such a sense any cognitive process in which purely internal factors are involved — e.g., introspection — could not yield a justified belief. A very strong version of an external sense of justification would not be acceptable either — one on which there simply is evidence for the belief. The third-person justification of a belief cannot be the same as its truth, nor the evidence that merely exists for it. If I believe there are an even number of stars in the galaxy and there are, the mere fact does not justify my belief, nor does the fact that there is some objective evidence for my belief. Nor does making the evidence accessible to me change the situation. There are books on my shelves to which I have ready access that would tell me the year of Descartes’ birth. But if I merely decide randomly to believe that he was born in 1596 (questions of doxastic voluntarism aside) my belief is not justified by the mere fact of evidence to that effect available to me.

Most externalist theories have resources for picking out a justificatory relationship between belief and the external world. Causal theorists would hold that there must be a causal chain of the right sort between the fact of the matter and the belief. Process reliabilists would hold that the process I use to form the belief must be reliable relative to the external world. Neither of these allows for facts of the matter to provide justification for beliefs merely by existing and corresponding to those beliefs.

10 See Fumerton (98, p. 930) for more on this.
So imagine that the woman Fred saw entering the No-Tel Motel with a man was actually Bella's identical twin. If Stu based his belief on Fred's testimony, then even if Bella is having an affair and there is (other) evidence to that effect, his belief is not objectively justified. It may be externally justified on some understanding of external justification, but this merely serves to highlight how unsatisfactory external justification is.

Imagine a more difficult case, however. Stu comes to believe Bella is having an affair on the basis of Fred's false — but blameless — testimony, based on his seeing Bella's twin entering the No-Tel Motel. In this case, imagine that everything goes right such that Stu's belief is internally justified (in particular, Stu has good internal reason to trust Fred, and is unaware of the existence of Bella's twin). Imagine further that Stu has in his subconscious actual evidence of Bella's infidelity: credit card charges, cologne whiffs, and so forth. But in this case, Stu does not base his belief upon those subconscious cues at all. His cognition simply does not utilize that information in forming the belief in Bella's infidelity.

Must a theorist of objective justification say that Stu's belief is objectively justified by the unused but possessed evidence? No. As mentioned above, most externalists (whom I've argued are really best construed as talking about objective justification) have resources for necessitating the right relationship between the external facts and the belief. Since the process Stu uses is unrelated to the accurate evidence, its accuracy does not justify the belief.

However, there are two interesting wrinkles here. First, in this case it looks like at least one theory of objective justification — process reliabilism — would say that the belief is objectively justified on the basis of the testimonial evidence, insofar as the process of forming testimonial beliefs of that sort is a reliable one. Second, it looks like at least one theory of internal justification — holistic coherence theory — might say that the belief is
internally justified on the basis of the **subconscious** evidence, insofar as the belief is coherent with that evidence\(^\text{11}\).

This just serves again to highlight that what will count as justified on each sense of justification depends largely on the **theory** of each sense of justification chosen, and so my thesis cannot be expected to yield pat answers to questions about whether certain kinds of beliefs would or wouldn't count as internally or objectively justified. What is really important is to ask what each theory of justification takes the crucial factors justifying a belief to be, when it says a belief is justified. If those factors reach into the contingent external world (as with process reliabilism), the theory is talking about objective justification. If those factors stay within the internal cognitive system of the agent, the theory is talking about internal justification.

In this section, I have illustrated the internal/objective distinction in action on a particular epistemological issue, testimony. I have argued that some distinction of senses of justification is intuitively called for, and that this distinction is the most promising. The internal sense is preferable to the subjective; the objective sense is preferable to the external; and thus an overlapping distinction is preferable to an exclusive one. In addition, an overlapping distinction is preferable to an inclusive one. I have used variations on an example in the area of testimony to illustrate the intuitive superiority of the internal/objective distinction at dealing with cases and allowing theories of justification plausibly to deal with cases.

2. **Utility to agents, assessors, and theorists**

\(^{11}\) The holistic coherence theory would have to be one in which not all justifiers need to be consciously accessible.
**Utility to agents**

In this section, I will give arguments about the usefulness of this distinction beyond its utility at capturing our intuitions about cases and theories. Again, I will use testimonial cases to illustrate. I will first discuss the usefulness of this distinction, and of each of the two senses of justification, for agents.

Objective justification is likely often to be useful to agents pragmatically; that is, having beliefs that are objectively justified is likely to be pragmatically useful. For instance, if an agent is believing testimony in a way that would be approved of by a third-person observer, that probably means she is using belief-acquisition and -sustaining methods or processes for testimonial beliefs that yield many true beliefs. Having true beliefs is, more often than not, more useful than having false beliefs. The fact that the agent cannot know whether her beliefs are objectively justified doesn’t diminish the usefulness to her of their being so.

However, the concept of objective justification can be useful to agents as well. I have appealed before to an analogy with science. The scientific community has no more certainty that its methods and practices are objectively good ones than individuals do. Nevertheless, the concept of such objective goodness is instrumental in the community’s self-monitoring practices and in the actions it takes to change or preserve its methods. This is true in the case of testimony, which is a crucial issue in science. Scientists routinely and necessarily rely on the trustworthiness of others’ reports. Although they may not have certain access to which ways of getting testimonial beliefs are truly objectively best, they use

---

12 See, e.g., Kornblith (88, p. 120), Foley (93, p. 175), and Brandom (98, p. 374) on this.
13 This is more true in same or “normal” worlds. Cf. Goldman 86, Sosa 97.
the desideratum of using such objectively best ways in their decision-making processes. Evidence that a way of getting testimonial beliefs is not in fact conducive to true belief-acquisition constitutes a defeater for that method. For instance, the rejection of non-blind peer review of articles for publication is on the basis of the probable actual disvalue for reliability of such a method.

To put it simply, the actual objective epistemic value of methods or processes isn’t used directly by agents; but the concept of actual objective epistemic value is. This needn’t be in explicit terms in order to be so. It need’s only to be the case that agents alter their reasoning or epistemic methods based on what they have reason to think is actually the case. And agents do, in fact, alter their reasoning or methods in response to perceived matter-of-fact epistemic value. Once one realizes that websites can be deceptive, one stops automatically giving credence to everything on them. If one recognizes in oneself a tendency to garble news reports in one’s memory, one tries not to rely on one’s memory of news reports. It is the concept of objective, not internal, justification that one is implicitly relying on in such cases. Thus objective justification is useful to agents both in itself and as a concept utilized by them.

Internal justification is useful to agents largely because it is the locus of the guidance-deontological aspect of justification. Whereas objective justification can guide one’s decisions and reasoning only indirectly, internal justification can do so directly. This can be in explicit, conscious ways, as in when one decides to construct a formal argument to judge the truth of a proposition. It can also be in a cognitive sense, as when one’s automatic reasoning yields a belief using norms to which the agent does not have conscious access.
In the area of testimony, it is useful to agents to have justification-conferring norms guiding belief-formation, both implicit and explicit. A traveler watching the local news in an unfamiliar town sees the local weather forecast. Assuming that most weather forecasters are at least reliable enough to provide justified beliefs, if the traveler has some process or norm that yields an internally justified belief in what the forecaster says, that is a good thing.

Imagine, however, that unbeknownst to the traveler, the forecaster is actually senile and completely unreliable. He is kept on by the television station merely for sentimental reasons. Members of the community are aware of this, and don't rely on his weather predictions. Our traveler, having no reason to believe the forecaster to be unreliable, comes to believe that it will be sunny and mild tomorrow. Is his testimonial belief justified? My assessment should be familiar by now. In one sense the belief is justified, and in another it is not. The traveler is blameless in his belief, and internally speaking the belief is well-founded and coheres with his other beliefs such that it is what he ought to believe. In another sense, though, he may well not be justified in believing that it will be sunny and mild tomorrow. The source of his belief does not justify it, or perhaps the process he's using in this instance is not reliable.

The fact that the traveler would revise his belief were he to learn the facts of the matter regarding the forecaster does not mean his belief is not internally justified while he is ignorant of those facts. That he would revise the belief if aware of relevant information does indicate that his belief isn't objectively justified. And in fact this shows how each sense of justification is useful to the traveler. Were his belief objectively justified, that would be actually useful to him, in for example choosing what to wear the next day. (Of course, it wouldn't be as useful as having a true belief, since sometimes objectively justified beliefs can
nevertheless be false.) The objective justification of the majority of his testimonial beliefs based on weather forecasts is useful to him. The belief's internal justification is useful to him because it reflects what guides his cognitive system to form a belief that is of a kind that would normally be useful. The concept of objective justification (if not in those terms, something closely equivalent) is useful to the traveler because it is this concept that would cause him to revise his belief were he to become aware of the situation regarding this forecaster.

In addition, having a distinction between the two concepts of epistemic justification is useful to the agent. Having a concept like that of objective justification, separate from internal justification, is useful to agents in the ways described: as a touchstone or goal to help in self-assessment, reasoning, and the modification of epistemic methods. If objective justification were not distinct from internal justification, the higher-order goal of “doing the best I could do” would not be distinct from “doing the best I can do.” As I have argued above, it is the concept of objective justification that drives our self-assessment, not the concept of internal justification: we would be more moved to make our belief-forming methods more accurate than to make them more consistent with our old mental states at the expense of accuracy, for instance. We need internal justification to assess ourselves and change our reasoning; we need objective justification to guide our assessment and changes; and we need them to be separate so that one can be a guide for the other.

Pollock (86) and Pollock & Cruz (99) have argued that external considerations cannot be used to alter internal norms, because anything used by an agent to alter internal norms is already present internally. This, they argue, shows that if there is an external (objective, in my terminology) sense of justification, it is of no use to agents. It is true that
the higher-order goal of “doing as well as possible epistemically” is present internally, and acts to cause one to revise one’s more specific methods. However, I argue that this higher-order goal only makes sense if we have a concept of objective justification. Thus although the external facts themselves may not be used to alter internal norms, considerations of external facts must be used to alter internal norms. The higher-order norm that says “change norms when it looks like they’re unreliable” isn’t changed by external considerations, but lower-order norms are changed by precisely such considerations – i.e., perceived external considerations. That is what it is to say that a norm looks unreliable: that it is not properly getting at matters of fact. This shows that the objective sense of justification is of crucial use to agents.

One might respond at this point that saying that we have to have a concept of objective justification doesn’t establish that there has to be something matching the concept in reality. Perhaps we need a concept of personal identity, or of free will, to get along; but that doesn’t mean personal identity and free will necessarily exist.

My response is that unlike in those cases, it doesn’t look like there is any reason not to say that there is such a thing as objective justification. Objective justification is just the concept that one’s beliefs are situated well vis-à-vis one’s actual cognitive system and the external world. Although it’s possible that there is no external world, that contingency threatens the instantiation of countless concepts, not just objective justification. And if there is an external world, all it takes is its existence, plus the existence of agents’ beliefs and cognitive systems, for objective justification to be instantiated. The conditions predicated by various theories of objective justification may not be instantiated, but that doesn’t threaten
the reality of objective justification any more than the non-instantiation of phlogiston threatens fire.

*Usefulness to assessors*

The usefulness of the internal and objective senses of justification and of the distinction to *assessors* is similar to their usefulness for agents’ self-assessment, except that there is no implication that criticism implies a need to change oneself. Before getting into the argument that this particular distinction is useful to assessors, however, I would like to discuss the usefulness of assessment. Why might we want to assess others’ beliefs, reasoning, methods, and so on, at all?

One reason is to determine blameworthiness and praiseworthiness, or epistemic virtues such as reliability and power. This could be useful in all kinds of situations. For example, in the area of testimony an important factor is epistemic trust: a judgment or expectation of how likely a source is to provide one with epistemically valuable information. In many cases, epistemic trust must be on the basis of very little evidence. When feasible, however, epistemic trust can be based on evidence and assessment. A person who is internally consistent, or follows her own epistemic norms, or whose beliefs are well-founded with regard to each other, deserves more epistemic trust than someone without those qualities. A person whose norms, processes, and methods are as a matter of fact more likely to generate true beliefs than false ones is more worthy of epistemic trust than someone not so situated.
Usefulness to assessors is especially apropos to the topic of testimony. To the extent that we do conduct inferences about the epistemic trustworthiness of others, we might want to see if their beliefs are likely to be true.\textsuperscript{14}

We can assess others for their intellectual rigor and integrity, "common sense", intuitiveness, ability to spot inconsistencies, logical acuity, perceptiveness, attention to detail, and so on. We can also assess others for the objective successfulness of their methods or processes, at least as far as we can tell. There could be reasons to focus on each separately.

Imagine an "idiot savant" who unfailingly performs arithmetical calculations accurately. If what we want in some situation is merely a human calculator, we need only look at the objective justification of his beliefs. We don't need to know whether his belief is meeting internal criteria for justifiedness. In fact, it could be the case that he mistrusts his abilities and is constantly unsure of himself, or even thinks he's probably wrong although he persists in his belief anyway. We can still say of the beliefs that they are objectively justified, from our perspective as assessors.\textsuperscript{15}

Now imagine a candidate for graduate school, who has a brilliant and careful mind but has unfortunately been taught unreliable methods of belief-acquisition. We might say the internal justifiedness of her beliefs is important to an admissions committee in a way their objective justifiedness isn't. After all, they might reason, we can always retrain her to use more accurate methods. Her mind is such that she will probably take to them right away. What we are interested in is the internal rigor and care she exhibits in her belief-formation.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. Hookway (98, p. 907).

\textsuperscript{15} Another good example might be that of "blindsight".
Thus assessors can use one sense or the other to assess agents for different purposes that call for the emphasis of one area, and perhaps even the express ignoring of the other area. Insofar as epistemic praise and blame is of interest to assessors, the distinction helps them in that area as well. In determining whether to sanction a scientist whose experimental results seem garbled; in judging a court case in which there is some question of whether the defendant exercised due care; in teaching a child and determining whether mistakes are mistakes given the child’s cognitive resources or problems concerning those resources; in all these cases and more, a question of epistemic praise and blame can arise. If, for instance, we determine that a child is not being intellectually sloppy in her classroom behavior, we might look for an environmental or pathological cause for her mistakes: poor vision, say, or a learning disability. We can judge a scientist according to his own standards or according to ours. Of course his garbled experimental results would not be any more acceptable to us if he was cognizing well according to his own norms in drawing his conclusions. However, if he was acting in good epistemic faith and merely neurologically impaired, socially inculcated in using poor methods, or something else objectively but not internally problematic, we might choose to get him help rather than bring him before a board of inquiry.

Usefulness to theorists

The usefulness of this distinction to epistemologists has constituted a large part of this dissertation, so I will not belabor the point. I will merely briefly mention a few of the benefits.

The internal/objective distinction is good at capturing our intuitions in a way that yields senses capable of supporting plausible theories. It cuts up existing theories of justification well, and makes them more comprehensible and plausible. It is good at
handling issues, such as testimony, in different ways each of which is of epistemic interest. It is good at resolving the internalism/externalism debate in epistemology. It holds out good promise of helping us understand the concept of knowledge. And as I shall discuss later in this chapter, it does a good job of separating out two fundamental epistemic desiderata, action-guidingness and a truth connection.

To highlight how this distinction might be of use to theorists on a particular epistemological issue, let us think about testimony. As discussed above, there are two basic camps in theory of testimonial justification. One camp holds that testimonial beliefs are justified on inductive grounds. The other camp holds that testimonial beliefs are justified on something more like a prima facie or automatic basis. With the internal/objective distinction in hand, we have the ability to separate these camps and understand them in terms of the two senses of justification.

It strikes me as a promising approach to say that testimonial beliefs get their internal justification inductively, and get their objective justification prima facie. Thus in order for a testimonial belief to be justified for the person on the inside, it could be important for it to be linked with the person's past experience, general views about the trustworthiness of others, possessed evidence about the testimonial source, and lack of a subjective defeater for an induction. In order for a testimonial belief to be justified from a third-person point of view, it could be important that sources of a certain type in the actual world as a matter of fact are generally reliable, and the person's cognitive system is doing a good job of "glomming on" to that fact.
Thus the two approaches need not be disagreeing. Epistemologists can look at both perspectives and use each to learn more about testimonial justification and knowledge. They can also separate the two out and talk about each issue in abstraction from the other.
C  THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION IN THE AREA OF NORMATIVITY

The issue of normativity is by no means a settled one, in ethics or in epistemology. Everyone agrees that it is something like a matter of what one ought to do. But there are different ways to understand what this means. It could be what one ought to do full stop, or what one ought to do relative to some goal, or what one ought to do relative to some objective desideratum.  

It is my contention that the best way for epistemologists to approach the issue of normativity is to understand it as having two senses corresponding to the two senses of justification. If you like, there is the normativity of internal justification and the normativity of objective justification. Basically, I hold that epistemic normativity ought to amount to the following: epistemically speaking, one ought to believe what one is justified in believing, or to hold justified beliefs. If there are internal and objective senses of justification, then one ought objectively speaking to believe what one is objectively justified in believing, and one ought internally speaking to believe what one is internally justified in believing. In fact, I will argue that these two perspectives are intuitively appealing and are useful to agents, assessors, and theorists.

Internal normativity (or the normativity of internal epistemic justification) is what one ought to believe irrespective of the contingent external world, and including considerations of one's subjective states. It is the normativity of the inside of persons. Objective normativity (or the normativity of objective epistemic justification) is what one ought to believe regardless of what is or isn't subjectively accessible or subjectively believed.
by the agent, and including consideration of the external world. It is the normativity of a third-person perspective on persons.

In this section, I will follow the same strategy as in the last section. I will argue that in grappling with the issue of epistemic normativity, internal justification is a more useful and satisfactory sense of justification than subjective justification, and that objective justification is more useful and satisfactory than external justification. I will argue that an overlapping pair of senses works better than an inclusive pair for the issue of normativity. I will use some examples to illustrate along the way.

First of all, what does it mean for there to be internal and objective normativity when it comes to the justification of beliefs? I have given characterizations, but some examples might help.

Elspeth is sitting at her window idly watching cars go by and counting the red ones as a way of passing the time. As a Mini Cooper tools by, she notes that it is a red one. Now, ought she to believe this? Well, assuming everything is normal, sure. If Elspeth is a normal human being in decent lighting conditions, with a good amount of experience with colored objects and a good grasp of the spectrum, and if she sees the Mini Cooper clearly enough and is paying attention, we want to say her belief that it is red is what she ought to believe. In fact, it is what she ought to believe both internally and objectively.

To make these come apart, we can alter the situation. Imagine that Elspeth's mad scientist neighbor has played a trick on her. He has lowered a screen in front of Elspeth's window that changes the appearance of almost nothing except that it makes orange objects

---

16 For discussions of the nature of normativity, and different senses of it, see Kornblith (85, p. 269), Fumerton (95, 98), Riggs (02, p. 92ff), Kvanvig (84, p. 76), Pollock (80, p. 110; 86), Greco (90, p. 265), and Zagzebski (00,
appear red. Elspeth has no evidence to this effect, however. Now should she believe that the Mini Cooper is red? In a sense, sure; in an other sense, no. From the inside, Elspeth is blameless in her belief, and would in fact be believing something she shouldn’t if she formed a belief that the Mini Cooper may be orange. This is true whether or not she has conscious access to the factors that lead to her judgment that the Mini Cooper is red. She should believe just what she should have believed if the screen had not been there, when she is viewed as a self-contained cognitive system. Her sensory inputs, processing mechanisms, memory, and belief-forming mechanisms are unaltered, just as in a skeptical scenario. Internal epistemic normativity rules in favor of this belief. In other words, if there is an internal sense of justification, this belief is internally justified and so is what she ought to believe, internally epistemically speaking.

On the other hand, as a matter of fact she shouldn’t be believing of anything that she sees from that window that it is red. From a third-person perspective, Elspeth probably ought to stop making color judgments based on what she sees through her window altogether; certainly when it comes to orange and red things. If she were aware of her situation in regard to the external world, and if she had epistemic goals, Elspeth would think she should not believe the Mini Cooper is red. We who are aware of her situation and are cognizant of epistemic desiderata can think the same thing. Objective epistemic normativity rules against this belief. In other words, if there is an objective sense of justification, this belief is not justified and so is not what she ought to believe, in an objective epistemic sense.

How might internal and subjective normativity pull apart, and why is internal

p. 170).
normativity preferable? Imagine that Elspeth’s mad-scientist neighbor has been studying hypnotism. He has hypnotized Elspeth to have some odd color-naming traits. Every second time she sees something orange, she decides that it is red. Every second time she sees something red, she decides that it is orange. The mad scientist has then removed from her memory all traces of this hypnosis and has made her unable to recognize that anything unusual is occurring. Now, should Elspeth believe that the Mini Cooper is red? This strikes me as a difficult case to get a clear intuition on, but let me try to work out what I think we ought to say. From her own perspective, Elspeth is blameless; her belief is subjectively justified. Thus, subjectively speaking, she ought to believe it. But on the inside, all is not well. Internally speaking, there are bound to be inconsistencies in her cognition and even in her network of beliefs, although she may be unable in principle to consciously access this. She might have the thought “the baker across the street has a new red bicycle,” and five minutes later, “I like the orange bicycle the baker just bought.” The hypnosis makes her unable to recognize these inconsistencies, but they are there. The problem is not merely one of not hooking up properly with the external world (although of course that is there too); the problem is with not being “wired up” properly on the inside of her cognition.

In the case of objective normativity, I said that if Elspeth were aware of her situation in regard to the external world, and if she had epistemic goals, Elspeth would think she should not believe the Mini Cooper is red. In this case, I would say that if Elspeth were aware of her situation in regard to her own internal world, and if she had epistemic goals, she would not think she should believe the Mini Cooper is red. This would be true even if she had no information whatsoever about her situation in regard to the external world, and so this is still an internal matter, and not external at all. I have argued (in earlier chapters)
that the personal/matter-of-fact distinction is the most defensible and useful way to mark a
 distinction between two senses of justification, and that personal justification adheres to the
doctrine of cognitive essentialism. Since the normativity of internal justification captures all
of cognitive essentialism and the normativity of subjective justification doesn’t, the
normativity of internal justification is preferable.

So why do we not have a clear intuition about whether hypnotized Elspeth is
personally justified (or ought to, in a generally internal/subjective way, to believe that the Mini
Cooper is red)? I think we are reacting to the fact that subjective justification is a
component of internal justification, at least as something like a necessary condition, and so
the fact that she seems pretty clearly subjectively justified (and so ought, subjectively
speaking, to believe that it’s red) makes it seem like she’s at least partly internally justified.
Another way to say this is to say that since the internal sense of justification is what captures
the deontological aspect of epistemology, even though it’s not limited to that aspect, a
deontological judgment reflects upon internal justification.

To see that the objective sense of normativity is better than an external sense, we
need only determine that the external sense is unsatisfactory. It is readily clear that we
should not understand what one ought to believe merely in terms of the external world.
This is the essence of Jaegwon Kim’s (and others’) criticism of Quinean naturalism: the
actual world alone cannot yield normativity. In addition, an external sense of normativity
could yield no judgments about wholly or partially internal belief-formation processes.

An overlapping pair of senses of normativity is preferable to an inclusive pair for the
same reasons that this is the case with senses of justification. Again, it is useful to be able to
consider each sense in isolation from the other, and to allow each sense to exist without the
other. A belief can be what one ought to believe objectively speaking but not what one
ought to believe internally. If Elspeth were blindsighted and a very accurate “guesser” of car
colors but had no access to this fact, her Mini Cooper belief might be something she should
believe objectively speaking, but not from within her own perspective. Elspeth’s belief could
also be internally but not objectively what she ought to believe, as when her window had
been altered without her knowledge.

I will now turn to the question of how the internal/objective distinction in senses of
justification would be useful to agents, assessors, and theorists in the area of normativity.
Many of these arguments will also parallel those for testimony, so I will present them in brief
form. The main point here is to show that the distinction is of use not just for one issue but
for multiple epistemological issues.

First, I will discuss how internal normativity (or the normativity of internal
justification) is useful to agents. The subjective component of internal normativity is of
obvious use in deciding what processes or methods to use, what to bestow or withhold
belief in, and in self-assessment (to the extent any of these are possible). I won’t belabor this
point. The internal sense of normativity extending beyond the subjective could be useful in
guiding one’s cognition in a less accessible way, and constituting the internal touchstone for
right and wrong cognition.

To elaborate: Pollock and Pollock & Cruz have argued that epistemic norms reflect
something like the competence/performance distinction in linguistics. This could be
conceived of as the difference between what one ought to believe, internally speaking, and
what one in fact tends to do. This is internal rather than subjective because one doesn’t
always have subjective access to the factors that make it the case that one ought to believe one thing rather than another. This is similar to the linguistics case: although we have a competence at following grammatical rules, that doesn’t mean we have subjective conscious access to how we are conforming to the rules, or even to what the rules are. Our cognition instantiates the rules, it doesn’t necessarily accessibly contain them. Likewise with the internal normativity of epistemic justification: our cognition could be such that given our background mental states and cognitive abilities there is something we ought to believe; but we may not be aware of what makes it the case that we ought to believe it. The epistemic norms of our cognition are useful to us by guiding our cognition to form the right beliefs.

Objective normativity will be useful to agents in the same way as for testimonial justification. Being objectively justified, and thus conforming to objective norms, is generally going to be pragmatically useful. In addition, the concept of objective normativity is useful to agents in self-assessment. It is largely in thinking that there is something an objective third-person observer would think one ought to believe that one can critically examine one's own judgments about what one ought to believe. The same is true for reasoning, and our attempts to improve it. This also shows how having the senses be distinct from each other is useful to assessors. They can separate out the two concepts and use each selectively for different purposes or to modify one with the other.

The senses of normativity are useful to assessors in the same way that the two senses of justification were useful to assessors in the area of testimony. An assessor can use each in different situations as called for, and can separate the two out for purposes of assessment.

17 Pollock & Cruz (99), esp. p. 128.
18 Pollock & Cruz (99), ch. 5.
The internal sense of normativity is useful to theorists in exploring epistemic issues at the individual agent level, e.g., what belief an agent ought to adopt given her set of beliefs, norms, perceptions, and so forth. The objective sense is useful in exploring what agents ought to do epistemically in general, e.g., the epistemic benefits of power as opposed to fecundity, or immediate epistemic gain as opposed to long-term. The relationship can be seen as analogous to that accepted by many ethical theorists: we can look at what some particular agent morally ought to do given her belief set and background, or we can talk about what agents in general ought to do or what moral rules are good ones in general.

The distinction between an objective and an internal sense of normativity could be useful in the issue of naturalizing epistemology, in the sense of finding a supervenience base or a noneliminativist reduction for the normativity of epistemology. With two senses, theorists could agree that objective normativity may be naturalized even if they continue to grapple with whether internal normativity may be. 19

In addition, this distinction might be helpful on the issue of virtue epistemology. 20 There is a strong type of virtue epistemology that says what we ought to do epistemically is what is in fact virtuous - this looks objectively oriented. But one could also have an internal kind of virtue theory, on which one ought to conform to one's own virtues. This is arguably more like Goldman's (92) view, in a two-stage architecture that says what makes a belief justified is whether it conforms to one's actual virtues (which could be reconstructed as internal norms), but those virtues are adopted because of reliabilist reasons (which could be reconstructed as higher-level objective norms).
D THE UTILITY OF THE INTERNAL/OBJECTIVE DISTINCTION FOR CAPTURING FUNDAMENTAL EPISTEMIC DESIDERATA

I would, finally, like briefly to discuss the ability of this two-sense account to capture satisfactorily two fundamental epistemic desiderata: a truth connection, and action-guidingness or deontology. I will first argue that each of these is in fact an important desideratum for epistemology and in particular for justification. I will then argue that the internal sense of justification is better at capturing action-guidingness or deontology than a theory of some univocal version of epistemic justification, or exclusive or inclusive two-sense views of justification. Finally, I will argue that the objective sense of justification is better at accommodating a truth connection than other versions of a sense distinction, or a univocal account.

It is uncontroversial to claim that truth is of interest to us epistemically and epistemologically. As Feldman (00) illustrates it, “if at the end of my life, I learned that my friends actually didn’t much like me but instead were on a lifelong mission to act as if they did, I’d be disappointed” [49]. But why and how should truth fit into justification rather than just the truth condition for knowledge? Let me give some of the reasons that have been offered.

For one thing, truth seems to be in some sense a goal of justification. BonJour (85) says, “the basic role of justification is that of a means to truth, a more directly attainable mediating link between our subjective starting point and our objective goal” [457]. Lehrer (90; 00, esp. p. 202) points out that coherence alone is not enough to yield justification; we

---

19 For some discussions of naturalizing epistemology and naturalizing different senses of justification, see Stroud (89, pp. 127, 140-1), Kvanvig (00, pp. 36, 41), Brandom (98, p. 382), Pollock & Cruz (99, pp. 157, 162-5, 171-3), Riggs (02, p. 80), J. Kim (88), and Lehrer (00, pp 178-184).

20 For more on virtue epistemology, see, e.g., Sosa and Zagzebski.
also want some trustworthiness or correctness to apply to the coherence. Goldman (80) points out that scientists and scholars think it worthwhile to gather new evidence and perform new tests, which would be irrelevant if mere consistency were our aim [57]. Alston (88) puts it, “it seems clear to me that epistemic justification is essentially truth-conducive” [278].

Similarly, a truth connection can be seen as what makes our arrival at truth a good thing. Riggs (02) argues that the importance of a truth-connection is in its rendering our beliefs non-accidental.

No matter how hard you try, or how epistemically virtuous you are, if you arrive at a true belief in some way that is not (sufficiently) due to your epistemic abilities, you have achieved nothing. Something nice has happened to you, but it is not something that you have brought about or deserve credit for. [95]

Truth can also be seen as some sort of component or entailment of justification. McDowell (02) holds that what he calls “entitlement” and truth do not come apart [99] – the “connivance of the world enter[s] into” entitlements [102]. Zagzebski says, “the normative component of knowledge (other than truth) must entail truth” since the goodness of knowledge exceeds the goodness of getting the truth [176]. John Greco (90) concurs: “the very idea of an epistemic norm requires that such a norm have as its purpose the pursuit of truth and the avoidance of error” [467]. Cohen points out that “one might contend that the connection to truth is what distinguishes epistemic justification from... other senses of justification” such as pragmatic or moral justification [279]. Similarly, Alston (85) says the “epistemic point of view” is defined by the aim at maximizing truth and minimizing falsity in a large body of beliefs [59].
The claim that action-guidingness and deontology are important to epistemic justification needs less support. Much of the support for this comes from the idea that a belief cannot be justified unless the agent holding it has behaved in a responsible manner. As Hookway (98) puts it,

If I am to be properly responsible or scrupulous in carrying out investigations and deliberations, I need to assess my own cognitive position, making decisions about whether to investigate matters further, about the risks I am taking of error, about the reliability of my evidence and the trustworthiness of my inferences. [907]

Others take the deontological aspect much more seriously, and argue that individual beliefs or acceptances must be consciously held for the right reasons. Greco (90) holds that for our beliefs to be justified our reasoning must be undertaken because we hold the norms we do [265].

Many epistemologists have argued that justification is fundamentally about guiding our actions or belief-formation. Often this point is made deontologically: how can we call a belief justified if the agent did not adopt the belief for the right reasons? The connection of justification to norms and action-guidingness can be made out in a less deontological way, as in Pollock and Pollock & Cruz. Pollock & Cruz (99) argue that epistemic justification is about how we should reason, and right reasoning is guided by epistemic norms [esp. p. 127]. However, this reason- and action-guiding is not the “intellectualist” kind many have advocated. Epistemic norms give us “automatic” procedural knowledge enabling us to do something without thinking about it. They say this is a particular way of being guided: “perhaps it would be less misleading to say that our behavior is being guided by our

21 See, e.g., BonJour (80), Goldman (80), Alston (86), Lehrer (00), and Cohen (84).
procedural knowledge and the way in which it is being guided is described by the norm.”

The short argument for the internal/objective distinction’s ability to handle these two desiderata best is that subjective and external factors are necessary to account for these desiderata, and the arguments in the rest of this dissertation have shown that the most tenable senses of justification that accommodate subjective and external factors are the internal and objective senses. However, I think there are also independent reasons to think these senses are preferable for capturing the desiderata.

In the case of a truth-connection, it is not just any truth connection we want for our beliefs. We want it to be one that is dependable, or at least one that something about us gets the credit for. Imagine a brain in a vat constructed by an evil genius, but in a world in which there is also a demon constructing a world corresponding to the victim’s beliefs about the world. When the randomizer in the genius’s computer comes up with Mt. Everest as the tallest mountain on the planet, the demon constructs the planet to make it so. Although I suppose this would be better than nothing, it certainly wouldn’t be as good as the kind of truth connection we think we have. Think how disappointing for an envatted geologist to find out that his imaginings and a randomizer made all that lovely stratification so!

In addition, we want the truth connection to work its way through our own internal mental processes in the right way. It is not enough merely to be reliable, such that whatever you come to believe, by whatever method or process, is magically true (as in the above case). We want our cognitive processes to play a role in the chain from fact of the matter to belief. So, for instance, we want facts about our memory, perceptual apparatus, and inductive reasoning to be part of what explains our beliefs being true. We want to be good thinkers in
ways not just contingent on how fortunate we are in our beliefs' connection to the world, but in ways that contribute to our connection to the world.

In addition, we want the same kinds of mental processes that are good at connecting to the world to be good at connecting to our own inner world as well. We want our memory to be good not merely in cases of perception but in cases of introspection as well. We want to be able to accurately remember our emotions, for instance.

This is all to argue that the concept of external justification I outlined in Chapter Three is not sufficient for capturing a truth connection in justification. Internal objective factors are important as well, as both external and internal truth-transmitters and -preservers.

Thus an objective sense is better at capturing the desideratum of a truth-connection than is an external sense. Next I will argue that an internal sense is better at capturing the desideratum of action-guidingness and deontology than a subjective sense.

As with the external component and a truth-connection, the subjective component's importance for deontology is obvious. The question is, why the internal objective component?

One reason comes from the problems for doxastic voluntarism. Deontological concerns are about praiseworthiness, blame worthiness, and obligation; but none of those make much sense epistemically if we have little control over what we believe or the methods and processes by which we come to have beliefs. And as cognitive science progresses, the prospects for much doxastic voluntarism look more and more grim.

What we might have in addition to immediate doxastic voluntarism, however, is a mediate version. We can perhaps influence our cognition through reinforcement, habit-forming, and other psychological “tricks” to do automatically what we cannot force it to do
by a decision alone. For this, we need a non-accessible component to get ourselves to believe what we ought to believe. So insofar as believing what we ought to believe, and playing a conscious role in doing so, contributes to the justificatory status of a belief, an objective component will help.

In addition, there is the issue of a less voluntaristic, conscious account of action-guidingness than the traditional one, as described above in the theory of Pollock & Cruz. On such an account of norm-following and reason-guiding, there must be room for aspects of cognition that are not consciously accessible. In this way, non-subjectively-accessible factors could contribute to the action-guiding component of justification as well.

This explains why subjective and external senses of justification are not as good at capturing these desiderata as internal and objective senses. But why is a two-sense view better at it than a univocal approach?

As I've argued before, it strikes me as implausible that an account good at explaining one of these desiderata could also be good at explaining the other. To focus on one, we must take the other as irrelevant; and then it is hard to see how we can inject relevance back into it while using the same machinery good at ignoring it. The fundamental truthmakers for a good theory of the deontological aspects of justification will be about accounting for praise and blame, good intentions, effort no matter how successful from the outside, and the agent's perceptions of the situation. They will be explicitly ignoring the external world, since the external world is not relevant for things like praise, blame, intentions, effort, and perceptions of this kind. Similarly, the fundamental truthmakers for a good theory of the justificatory truth connection will be about things like reliability, non-accidentality, matters of fact beyond agents' subjective ken, and the nature of the connections between knower and
known. They will be explicitly ignoring the deontological factors, since those kinds of things are not relevant for this kind of success, reliability, and actual connection and fact.
CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have argued that the internal/objective distinction has the benefit of greater theoretical utility than alternatives. I have illustrated that utility through two sample epistemological issues, testimony and normativity. I showed that in both areas the distinction captures intuitions about the issues themselves and the theories that will best help us understand them. In addition, I showed that in each area the internal/objective distinction would be of use to individuals, assessors, and theorists. In the final section, I presented some reasons to think that a truth connection and a deontological or action-guiding component of justification are both fundamentally important epistemic desiderata. I then argued that the internal/objective distinction does a better job of capturing those desiderata than other distinctions.
Chapter Five

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE PROJECTS

A INTRODUCTION

This final chapter is the one in which I discuss the implications of this two-sense view for epistemology, and the projects it raises. I have deliberately remained neutral about many issues in this dissertation, such as whether one sense of justification is sufficient for the other; what their relationship is to knowledge; and which theory of justification is the correct theory for each sense of justification. These and other issues now can be raised.
B  IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INTERNALISM/EXTERNALISM DEBATE

First, I discuss the implications of my project for the internalism/externalism debate. The first chapter showed that there are in the literature several broad ways of understanding internalism and externalism. I have argued that as much as internalists disagree with each other, they are all aiming at essentially the same target: personal justification. They are all interested in what makes beliefs reasonable regardless of the external world; what makes a belief justified considering only the internal world of the agent. They use different approaches, from guidance/deontological perspectives to procedural approaches, and focus on more or less restricted subsets of cognition as legitimate sources of justification. However, the issues in deciding between these approaches and restrictions are theoretical issues. These theorists are not "talking past each other" in the way internalists and externalists have been. Similarly for externalists: they are all aiming at matter-of-fact justification, but differ in theoretical ways about how best to reach their target. A two-sense view puts epistemologists back in the business of disagreeing on theoretical points rather than semantic ones.

If there are internal and objective senses of justification in particular, then the whole idea of being either an internalist or an externalist about justification becomes misconceived. If we interpret internalism and externalism as maintaining that there is only one concept of justification and theories of it must be internalist or externalist, that position has been show to be wrong by the arguments in this dissertation. If we interpret internalism and externalism as positions regarding the conjunction of internal and objective justification – the overarching concept of epistemic justification in general – then they are false. Since objective justification contains external factors, no theory of it could be internalist. Similarly,
no theory of internal justification could be externalist, since internal justification by
definition does not extend into the external. There is no room for saying that one of these
positions is right about all of epistemic justification.

Another thing we could interpret in internalism and externalism as claiming is that only
one of the senses of justification is legitimate or interesting. However, arguments in this
dissertation have shown that each sense captures epistemological intuitions and is
theoretically and personally useful. Furthermore, I have argued that having the two senses
be distinct is useful, as well.

So where does this leave the internalism/externalism debate? If there is no room left
for the debate, is there nevertheless some epistemological significance to the positions and
arguments from that debate? And is there something left for internalists and externalists to
do?

Even if there is no point in arguing about whether internalism or externalism is the
right way to approach justification, that doesn’t mean there is nothing left to discuss. First,
we can reexamine the arguments for and against internalism and externalism, and glean
insight into the senses of justification that way. Second, we can interpret internalists as
turning their focus on internal justification and externalists on objective justification. Then
what internalists have said about justification can be seen as constraints on or observations
about internal justification, and what externalists have said can do the same for objective
justification. Third, we can examine particular internalist and externalist theories of
justification and try to reconstruct versions of them to be theories of either internal or
objective justification, or both.
The first project has been conducted to some extent in earlier chapters of the dissertation. The arguments for internalism and against externalism provide some evidence for an existing concept of internal justification. In addition, they give reason to think that concept can stand alone, since there are arguments that urge the irrelevance of external conditions for (this conception of) justification. The same goes for externalism and objective justification.

As well, particular conceptions of internalism and externalism have brought out interesting and useful considerations. Higher-order and strong understandings of internalism highlight the importance of deontological considerations and higher-order doxastic conditions. A special-access conception of internalism shows that there can be subjective conditions that are neither doxastic nor higher-order that are nevertheless in the domain of personal justification. And mentalist versions of internalism show that internal conditions going beyond conscious access are nevertheless significant for a complete understanding of personal justification. We can use these insights about personal justification to inform our work on the concept of internal justification.

From externalism we gained insights that helped formulate the conception of objective justification. Externalism highlights the valuable aspects of the external and the objective, and constitutes a foil against which to contrast an overlapping pair of senses. The general conception of externalism was one that merely denied the sufficiency of internal conditions for justification. Therefore it provided the basis for the idea of inclusive senses of justification. Just as externalism was the view that justification is personal conditions

---

1 See, e.g., Pollock, Pollock & Cruz, and Bergman (00) for discussions of this.
augmented by external conditions, inclusive senses of justification involve concepts that include some of each kind of conditions.

As we have seen, inclusive concepts of justification are unsatisfactory. For similar reasons, traditional externalist accounts of justification can now be seen to be unsatisfactory, as well. Those accounts attempted to provide conditions that would account for all of justification, and most wanted to be able to retain as many internalist conditions as desired. But I have shown that an overlapping internal/objective sense distinction is best, and on such a distinction different conditions will be needed to account for the different senses of justification. No one set of conditions could account for both, since internal justification cannot include external conditions but needs subjective conditions, and objective justification cannot include subjective conditions but needs external conditions.

The second implication for internalism and externalism is that we can attempt to reconceive internalism and externalism as focusing on internal and objective justification, respectively. I have argued above that what internalists have in common is a focus on the personal: the insides of persons' cognition. This turns out to be refinable to the internal sense of justification. I have also argued that externalists share a focus on matters of fact and the external world, and that they do not restrict their focus exclusively to the external world. This focus corresponds to the concept of objective justification. It is true that externalists have often taken their views to be inclusive of internalist conditions, but as I have just argued, that aspect of externalism should now be dropped. It was arguably adopted because externalists were aware that an adequate account of epistemic justification must include conditions that deal with traditionally internalist concerns such as deontology and the subjective.
The third implication for internalism and externalism is the impact of this sense distinction on particular theories of justification. If a two-sense view such as mine were adopted, it would entail a good bit of rethinking of current approaches and theories on the part of internalists and externalists. Many current views either presuppose one perspective, are ambiguous between two, or attempt a awkwardly to accommodate both. This can be seen by reflecting on the arguments regarding the questions theorists take epistemology to be asking, in Chapter One, and definitions of justification, in Chapter Two.

The views that would need the least revision under a two-sense view would be those that presuppose one or the other perspective: they could merely lay claim to giving a theory of that sense of justification, and drop any claim they might have made to be giving a theory of the whole of epistemic justification. Other theories could be modified to provide a theory of each of the two senses.

A truly liberating aspect of a two-sense view, however, is that theorists need not have the same type of theory for each sense of justification. A reliabilist about objective justification could believe in a coherence theory of internal justification, for instance. Theorists could go back to their theories and move factors they included that are more appropriate to the other sense of justification into a separate theory of that other sense. For instance, an externalist who included subjective factors to deal with a subjective issue — say, subjective defeaters — could remove those subjective factors from her theory of objective justification and think about how she would incorporate them into a theory of internal justification.

In all, a two-sense view provides a new focus and an escape for internalists and externalists. Rather than engaging in endless debate between internalism and externalism,
constructing internalist or externalist theories vulnerable to criticisms of internalism or externalism, they can work on combining the two basic perspectives into one theory, and integrating the two into one epistemology.
C  IMPLICATIONS FOR PARTICULAR THEORIES OF JUSTIFICATION

I will now sketch out the way some types of epistemological theories might be constructed in light of a two-sense view. These theories would be based upon similar theories of a univocal sense of justification, but with important differences. I hold that the differences would yield better and more tenable theories of justification. They would avoid criticisms the versions regarding a univocal sense faced, they would be less ad hoc than theories trying to explain all of justification, and would be more focused on their strengths and advantages. I will present versions of several theories reconstrued under a two-sense framework, and in some cases will discuss the advantages such a framework would give to the theories. In other cases, I leave this as a future project.

1. Coherence theories

These theories are a good candidate for being recast as theories of what I have called the broad “personal” sense of justification. The coherence that provides justification has historically been understood as coherence among some combination of things like beliefs, other mental states, “acceptances” of which the agent is potentially aware, and higher-order beliefs about the trustworthiness of the agent’s mental methods or processes. These are all either subjective or internal states.

I have argued above that theories that restrict themselves to subjective states and conditions alone may be doing something of epistemological interest, but are inadequate for capturing the personal sense of justification. For these reasons, a coherence theory of

---

2 See also the exercise of this sort performed on evidentialism in Chapter Three.
3 I am not here arguing that any of these theories were originally conceived with such a distinction operating (either explicitly or implicitly), although I think in some cases this is true. However, such an argument would lead us into unnecessary exegesis.
personal justification should be, in particular, a theory of internal justification. This means it should include both subjective and internal objective conditions.

Thus a holistic coherence theory that made matter-of-fact coherence of mental states (whether accessible or not) sufficient for justification would not be an adequate theory of internal justification as I have argued it should be understood. At least some subjective condition would need to be added, in order to account for the deontological and action-guiding aspects of internal justification, as well as for subjective defeaters. Thus if the belief most coherent with an agent's total set of mental states were one whose justification the agent nevertheless believed (blamelessly) to be defeated resoundingly, that should affect (and probably defeat) the internal justification of the belief.

At the other extreme, a coherence theory with no internal objective conditions would be inadequate as a theory of personal or internal justification as well. Such a theory might take justification to be a matter of coherence between accessible mental states such that the agent has subject access to the mental states and the coherence. In this case what would need to be added would be conditions that went beyond the subjective, to account for personally justified beliefs lacking subjectively accessible justification. Thus if an agent's belief is maximally coherent with her perceptual and subconscious mental states, where she lacks the ability to be subjectively aware of either the states or the way in which those states cohere with other elements of her cognition, the belief should at least count as more justified than it would be without those subjectively inaccessible factors present.

Such a theory would be able to avoid one of the most persistent types of criticism of coherence theories, which is that coherence is insufficient for justification. One version of such a criticism is that if the coherence is thought of too subjectively, it becomes
psychologically dubious. This criticism would be avoided by adding internal objective conditions to subjective ones. Another version of such a criticism is that coherence is insufficient or unnecessary for the justification of some kinds of beliefs, for example perceptual or simple introspective beliefs. Coherence theorists may well dispute such claims, but if they are inclined to concede them, this would not be such a problem under a two-sense framework. It could be that some kinds of beliefs are not susceptible to positive internal justification, but rather to objective justification.

Another criticism of coherence theories has been that without a truth connection, coherence should not yield justification, since, for example, someone could have a coherent set of beliefs that are a tissue of fallacies, or the imaginings of a madman. The coherence theory of internal justification can avoid these criticisms by saying that those truth connection issues are within the domain of objective justification. The theory no longer has to claim that it gives conditions sufficient for epistemic justification, merely that it gives conditions sufficient for the internal sense of epistemic justification. In order to be epistemically justified full stop, a belief must arguably be both internally and objectively justified; so an internally justified belief can perfectly well not be fully epistemically justified.

A coherence theory of objective justification would be one that included both internal objective factors and external factors, but not subjective ones per se. The coherence among an agent’s beliefs, attitudes, and other mental states would be part of beliefs’ justification, but whether those mental states or their coherence relations were consciously accessible would be irrelevant. In addition, it would need to include some factors extending outside of the agent’s cognition altogether, in order to account for the truth-connectedness important to matter-of-fact justification.
A theory of justification with resources to construct a theory of objective justification would be Lehrer's theory of what he has called complete or undefeated justification (90, 00). Although Lehrer conceives of this kind of justification in an inclusive way, it is possible to reformulate undefeated justification as independent of what he calls "personal justification". To do so, we would need to understand coherence in a way independent of conscious awareness (thus departing from Lehrer's overall conception) and think of it merely as an objective relationship between mental states, consciously accessible or not. In addition, we would – as Lehrer does – insert an external truth-connection condition. As Lehrer formulates it, such justification excludes the use of false acceptances as contributing toward the coherence of a belief with other states [00, esp. pp. 191-203].

2. **Virtue theories**

A virtue theory of internal justification would be, naturally enough, internally focused. For a belief to be justified would be for it to be in accord with an agent's list of epistemic virtues and vices. What would not matter was whether those virtues and vices correspond to anything external, e.g., reliability. Such a theory would also need to include a subjective component. Good candidates for this would be considerations of the person's motivation, or awareness of virtues and vices.

A virtue theory of objective justification would be objectively focused. For a belief to be epistemically justified would be for it to be in accord with actual epistemic virtues and vices, including some consideration of external factors. These could be determined by reference to some community to which the agent belongs, or by a measure of reliability, or by reference to some kind of balanced epistemic ideal. What would not matter for such a theory would be what the agent thinks are virtues and vices or which virtues or vices she
has access to. A person who thinks it is a good idea to rely upon what seem to be precognitive dreams, or to reason on the basis of mere wishful thinking (even if these convictions are internally blameless), would not be thereby more justified in beliefs formed using those methods, in the objective sense.

1. Foundationalist theories

Foundationalist theories of internal justification would include subjective conditions as well as objective internal conditions. Which states the agent had “special” or conscious access to would be relevant, and objective facts about internal states, as well as states to which the agent had no subjective access, would play a justificatory role as well. Justifiers would not extend outside of the agent’s cognition, however. Whatever made a belief internally justified on such a view would not change if the person were envatted.

The basic states could not be external matters of fact. They could be states to which the agent had no subjective access, however. The same is true for the proper relationships between a belief and the cognitive states on which it was founded. That relationship could be spelled out in objective terms, such that the agent had no awareness of the relationship. For instance, it could be specified in part in logical terms. However, there would also need to be some special significance given to subjective states. This could be in the form of recognizing defeasibility of foundational support by subjective defeaters, or requiring some states on which a justified belief is founded to be consciously accessible.

In the case of subjective defeaters, if someone takes something to justify her belief, and has subjectively accessible evaluations of that thing as a source of justification, this has an effect on internal justification whether the thing justifies her belief or not, and whether her evaluations of its justificatory force are right or not. Let me give an example. Ann
learned in her American History class that Benjamin Franklin invented the public library. Subsequently she forms the belief that she actually **dreamed** that Benjamin Franklin invented the public library, and she thinks dreams are a poor reason to hold beliefs. Is this belief justified or not? Whatever a particular foundationalist theory of internal justification says about the justification of her belief, it should take into account both the actual foundation of her belief and her subjective beliefs about its foundation. Her subjective belief could constitute a defeater for the internal objective well-foundedness of the belief.

Foundationalist theories are often criticized for their inability to connect justification to matters of fact or truth. This criticism is avoided if the foundationalist theory is merely one of internal justification, because the issue of a truth connection is in the province of objective justification. As with coherence theories, it has also been objected that foundationalist theories cannot give adequate accounts of particular types of beliefs, for instance perceptual beliefs. Again, though, on a two-sense framework it could be that those kinds of beliefs are best approached from a standpoint of objective rather than internal justification, so the criticism is defused.

4. **Reliabilist theories**

A foundationalist theory of objective justification would understand the proper foundational relationships in entirely objective terms, encompassing both relationships between internal states and relationships between internal states and the external world. Which states or relations are subjectively accessible or accessed by the agent would be irrelevant, although the states or relations that happen to be subjectively accessible would not themselves thereby be irrelevant.
It has been remarked that reliabilism can be seen as a foundationalist theory that defines basic states as those that are the products of a reliable cognitive process, and justified beliefs as those that are either basic or are reliably founded upon basic states. This could be formulated into a foundationalist theory of objective justification.

In such a case, some of the traditional criticisms of reliabilism are deflated. One is that the theory is not sufficient for justification – e.g., it makes the beliefs of a brain in a vat unjustified. The reliabilist can say that those beliefs are not objectively justified, but they may well be internally justified. Another criticism is that the theory is not necessary for justification – it makes beliefs justified that intuitively are not, for example, the clairvoyant. The reliabilist can say that those beliefs are merely objectively justified, but may not be epistemically justified full stop, since they lack internal justification.

Another kind of objection is that a reliabilist theory cannot handle certain epistemological projects, for example problems of first-person justification, the deontological aspects of justification, or first-person skeptical questions. On a two-sense framework, this is not an objection, since some problems may be handled by one sense but not the other. Also common is the objection that reliabilism cannot handle subjective defeaters, but again, the reliabilist about objective justification can say subjective defeaters affect internal justification in a way that they do not affect objective justification.

Of course there are other criticisms of all of these basic approaches to justification and to particular theories. The promise of a two-sense framework, however, is that it makes it look at least more plausible that theories on either side of the intuitive divide could give adequate accounts of justification that avoid many bedeviling criticisms.
D OTHER PROJECTS AND IMPLICATIONS

The implications for epistemology of a two-sense view go well beyond the implications for internalists and externalists. If we accept that internal justification and objective justification are separate legitimate senses of justification, we need to decide how to apply that insight to epistemological problems and issues. I have argued that a two-sense view can solve more problems in more ways, and have given sketches of how an internal/objective view is good at doing that for some problems, but detailed solutions are yet to be discovered. Internal and objective justification may provide different approaches to classical problems like skepticism. They may divide and conquer a plethora of other epistemological problems, each being appropriate to tackle separate issues.

Perhaps most importantly, the two senses of justification may combine in some way to provide an explanation of knowledge. One question here is how the issue of knowledge provides a motivation for a two-sense framework, or for each of the two senses. Another question is what the relationship of each sense of justification to knowledge is. A third question is whether there might be two senses of knowledge corresponding to these two senses of justification. I will briefly discuss possible projects and approaches in relation to each of these questions.

The first issue is to what degree and in what ways knowledge might provide motivation for the internal/objective account. Knowledge is, by many accounts, both central to the epistemological project and closely connected to justification. One common way to gauge the success of a theory of justification is to ask whether beliefs justified according to it would suffice for knowledge when true (and ungettiered). So a satisfactory
account of knowledge will call for a satisfactory account of whatever it is that in addition to true belief and lack of Gettier circumstances is a component of knowledge.

I have argued that "whatever it is" has certain key characteristics: for instance, it has to do with epistemic normativity, and it can be described as what makes beliefs reasonable and so on (see Chapter One). These characteristics can be understood in ways that include either subjective deontological components or external, subjectively inaccessible components. I have argued that it is unlikely that a theory good at capturing one of these kinds of components will be suitable for capturing the other. This provided part of the motivation for attempting to find two senses of justification. In terms of knowledge, this can be seen as a motivation to find two separately understood components of knowledge in addition to true belief (and most likely a Gettier condition).

Once the motivation for a two-sense account is in place, the formulation of the two senses can be guided by the concept of knowledge. We saw that in the cases of our two extreme examples, the brain in a vat and the clairvoyant, something necessary for knowledge seemed to be present, and something necessary for knowledge seemed to be absent. Each sense of justification can be understood as fully explaining the presence of that which one of the examples illustrated as a component of knowledge.

One way to put this is that we can test our account of justification by asking, "does it put us a lot closer to knowledge than true belief alone?" One way to do that is to make one's theory of a univocal sense of justification try to do it all; but as discussed, this is arguably an impossible task, and at the least makes for a theory that can be accused of being ad hoc and piecemeal rather than explanatory. I have argued, though, that capturing the epistemic values of a truth connection and of action-guidingness or deontology is important
for epistemology and justification. So having separate senses capturing each of these values puts us a lot closer to knowledge than having either true belief alone or true belief and only one of the two desiderata.

I am not going to defend a stance on the relationship of these senses of justification to knowledge, but I will lay out some possibilities and indicate what my inclinations are.

Naturally, I think that neither sense is always sufficient for knowledge when combined with true belief. But is having a belief that is justified in both senses, as well as being true, sufficient for knowledge? In contemporary epistemological terms, one might ask, does the conjunction of these senses account for a Gettier condition?

This could use exploration, but my guess is that it does not. As Zagzebski (99) has argued, as long as a justification condition does not guarantee the truth of the proposition believed, a Gettier situation can be manufactured [101]. All one need do is make the belief justified and true, and find a way to insert a story that makes the truth of the proposition independent of the justification [ibid].

I do think that the combination will nearly always be sufficient for knowledge when the belief is true, however. In fact, I think the combination will allow the elimination of many situations previously considered to be Gettier cases. The way many people have understood Gettier situations is as cases where a belief is true and justified, yet does not amount to knowledge – but they have defined ‘justification’ in an internal way. Thus when we add the concept of objective justification, it is harder to find cases where a true belief is justified in both senses and yet does not amount to knowledge.
Another question that arises from a two-sense account is whether either of the senses could ever be sufficient for knowledge when a belief is true. In other words, are both senses always necessary for knowledge?

One possibility is that there are cases of knowledge for which only one sense of justification is applicable, and so one sense is sufficient. For instance, one might argue that introspective beliefs are not amenable to being objectively justified, since objective justification includes external conditions, which are not applicable in such an entirely internal situation. Similarly, one might argue that certain kinds of perceptual beliefs — those whose presence is merely “functional” (in Lehrer’s terms — apparent through behavior, for instance) and governed by automatic cognitive processing — are not amenable to internal justification. Internal justification includes subjective conditions, which are not applicable (or at least not necessary) in such a non-subjective situation.

One way to proceed would be to say that in these types of cases one sense of justification is sufficient. Another would be to construct theories of each sense of justification such that negative satisfaction conditions are included (e.g., a belief is objectively justified if it is appropriately related to the external world and other states, and if there is no possible relation to the external world, then that suffices for being as appropriately related to the external world as possible). This would be a way to maintain a stance that both senses of justification are necessary for knowledge. A more concise way to put this might be that one could hold that it is necessary for knowledge that the belief not be unjustified in either sense (or not violate positive justification conditions in either sense).

Another approach would be to argue that one sense of justification is necessary for knowledge, but not the other. This could be in either a positive or a negative construal of
satisfying justification conditions. I do not have a strong inclination either way on this project, but it is one that is prompted by recognition of a two-sense framework.

Another kind of project in this area would be to explore possible interdependency of the two senses of justification regarding knowledge. If the satisfaction of both senses of justification is necessary for knowledge, perhaps the amount of each necessary can vary by situation or other factors. How much of one type of justification is necessary in a given instance might depend on how much of the other type is present, so that they are not independent properties when it comes to contributing to knowledge, for instance. A belief with an overwhelming amount of internal justification may not need much objective justification in order to amount to knowledge, where the same belief with paltry internal justification might yet achieve the status of knowledge with enough objective justification. These possibilities are intriguing as future projects brought up by this two-sense conception of justification.

The third issue was that of the possibility of different senses of knowledge corresponding to the different senses of justification. This is possible, and has been proposed in the literature. My inclination is to say that this is not the most desirable way to go. This may be because, unlike with justification, I do not see theoretical advantages to doing so. I also do not see the same intuitive push to do so. When faced with the kinds of examples that motivate a two-sense approach to justification, like the brain in a vat and the clairvoyant, I do not think we have an impulse to say, "Sure, she knows in one sense, she just doesn’t know in another sense.” Rather, we think each person does not know, although

---

4 See, e.g., Sosa (89, p. 161; 97, p. 427), McDowell (02, p. 104), Lehrer (00, pp. 5-7, 10, 41, 185), Zagzebski (99, p. 97ff), Pollock & Cruz (99, p. 127), and BonJour (78, p. 267; 01, ms p. 2).
her belief may be true and reasonable in one sense or the other. Our intuitions about knowledge are relatively stable and uniform, which is why, for instance, Gettier examples immediately make sense to everyone. This is why we can use the concept of knowledge as a touchstone by which to judge the sufficiency of accounts or senses of justification, as described earlier in this section.

That said, there may be types or senses of knowledge of epistemic interest that fall outside of the umbrella of the kind of epistemic knowledge in which we are interested. For instance, there may be “animal knowledge” or “knowledge with absolute certainty”. Since these are not the locus of most epistemological inquiries, they are not particularly of interest to me here, nor are they impacted by the sense-distinction I am pointing out.

Besides the issue of knowledge, I have argued that this framework could be of theoretical use in exploring various other epistemological issues and problems. Under a two-sense view, we could examine which sense of justification can be appealed to in capturing various intuitions, solving various epistemological problems, and moving forward in various theoretical areas.

As a sampling, internal justification could capture intuitions about reasonability and subjective rationality while objective justification captures intuitions about proper or effective methods and processes. Internal justification could help with classical problems such as defeaters and demon worlds, while objective justification helps with problems having to do with poor norms, perceptual beliefs, and perhaps even Gettier cases. Internal justification could have more theoretical utility in areas such as deontology, internal normativity, self-knowledge, one’s questioning of her reasons for her beliefs (a la Descartes), and verification of objective justification’s results; while objective justification could be used
in areas like proper functioning, teleology, avoidance of level confusions and doxastic voluntarism, studying the connections between the knower and the known, and the meliorative epistemic project in general.

Another project that recognition of a two-sense framework could lead to is the examination of other epistemological terms, to see if a similar distinction might be at work in them. I have discussed the distinction in the concept of epistemic normativity. As well, I argued that many of the epistemic terms used in giving definitions of internalism and externalism or justification could be interpreted in each of the two broad ways. Some other epistemological concepts spring to mind as candidates for such a sense division. Certainty could have senses corresponding to objectively versus internally warranted certainty, perhaps. Evidence, as discussed above, could be in terms of possessed or perceived evidence versus readily available and objectively applicable evidence. A basis or foundation can be understood as internal as opposed to external and objective. Rationality could have a sense based on some kind of ideal or relativized to species, environment, or other external conditions; and it could have a sense confined entirely to cognition. These are merely speculations about the way such sense distinctions could be explored, but again, this is a new project inspired by a two-sense distinction.

Finally, if these two senses are adopted, the relationships between them could be studied in contexts other than their relationship to knowledge. I have speculated above that there may be an aiming relation between them, such that internal justification aims to approximate what objective justification actually is. Others might argue that they should be kept separate.
E CONCLUSION

I have argued that both of these senses capture important epistemological intuitions; are useful to agents, assessors, and theorists; and have explanatory power. It is still possible for epistemologists to focus on one or the other sense, and simply not take an interest in the other. This is true for restricted areas of justification as well, such as perceptual, testimonial, or inductive justification. One thing that should not be done when a term is legitimately disambiguated is for one of the senses to be ignored completely. Just as a respectable physics cannot incorporate average velocity and ignore instantaneous velocity, a respectable epistemology cannot brush one of the senses of justification under the table and focus exclusively on the other. Even those who deliberately choose to restrict their focus to one or the other sense must maintain an awareness of the other sense, in case there are crucial relationships between the two or issues where the other sense would be more appropriate.

In other words, if such a sense distinction is recognized, it should make a difference to epistemological thinking and research. This is no more a "merely semantic" point than a comparable division of senses in the sciences. A tenable sense distinction has widespread implications not just on the internalism/externalism debate and theory of justification, but on epistemology as a whole.

In this dissertation, I have perhaps done something that raises more questions than it answers. Many projects flow from recognizing two distinct senses of justification. On the other hand, the questions that this thesis answers are big and important ones. How do we make sense of what seem to be conflicting intuitions when it comes to epistemic

\[5\] Cf. Pollock & Cruz (99, p. 95).
justification? How could one theory adequately incorporate such different factors? Why does the internalism/externalism debate seem so intractable? With an internal/objective distinction in senses of epistemic justification, we can leave those questions behind and move on.
REFERENCES


Bernecker, Sven & Dretske, Fred (eds), *Knowledge: Readings in contemporary epistemology* (2000), OUP.


