Belief, Truth and Virtue

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RESUMEN

En este artículo, defiendo la idea de que la verdad es una norma constitutiva de la formación de creencias, argumento a favor de una explicación de la evaluación epistémica en términos de la teoría de las virtudes y respondo a las posibles objeciones. En § I, se argumenta que la creencia tiene necesariamente como objetivo la verdad. En § II, defiendo un enfoque basado en la teoría de las virtudes como respuesta a las preocupaciones sobre la suerte epistémica y el control doxástico. En § III, distingo entre normas evaluativas y deónticas con el fin de evitar la acusación de que estamos sujetos a demandas epistémicas imposibles. En § IV, se estudia la relación entre las normas epistémicas, intereses prácticos y adscripciones de conocimiento.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *objetivo de la creencia, virtud intelectual, evaluación epistémica, el voluntarismo doxástico, conocimiento.*

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I defend the view that truth is a constitutive norm of belief formation, argue in favour of a virtue-theoretic account of epistemic evaluation and respond to possible objections. In §I, I argue that belief necessarily aims at truth. In §II, I defend a virtue-theoretic approach to epistemic evaluation in response to concerns about epistemic luck and doxastic control. In §III, I distinguish between evaluative and deontic norms in order to avoid the charge that we are subject to impossible epistemic demands. In §IV, I study the relationship between epistemic norms, practical interests and ascriptions of knowledge.

KEYWORDS: *Aim of Belief, Intellectual Virtue, Epistemic Evaluation, Doxastic Voluntarism, Knowledge.*

In this paper, I defend the view that truth is a constitutive norm of belief formation, argue in favour of a virtue-theoretic account of epistemic evaluation and respond to two possible objections. In section I, I defend the view that belief necessarily aims at truth. In section II, I argue for a virtue-theoretic approach to epistemic evaluation in response to concerns about epistemic

luck and control over the processes of belief formation. In section III, I consider an argument adapted from Bykvist and Hattiangadi (2007), which may suggest that my account subjects us to impossible demands. I argue that this is not the case, drawing on a distinction between what we ought to believe and what it is good to believe. Finally, in section IV, I consider a case described by Stanley (2005), which suggests that norms of belief formation depend upon our practical interests as opposed to *sui generis* epistemic norms associated with the aim of truth. Whilst I accept that legitimate ascriptions of knowledge can depend on practical interests, I explain away the appearances by disentangling competing sources of normativity.

I. THE AIM OF BELIEF

Part of the view I would like to defend is that the activity of belief formation is necessarily governed by the norm of truth. For epistemic agents it is constitutive of having beliefs that they are governed by epistemic norms, and in particular the goal of truth.[1] Thus, according to Williams' suggestive metaphor, beliefs 'aim at truth' [Williams (1973), p. 148]. It is not that we form beliefs with the aim of believing true propositions, as we might have the aim of believing, say, interesting propositions. Rather, part of what it is to form a belief is to be normatively governed by and evaluable against the truth of the belief, just as part of what it is to play chess is to be governed by a set of rules. Of course, belief formation can be evaluated against other standards. Beliefs can be beautiful, useful and much else besides. However the constitutive relation holding between truth and belief privileges the aim of truth from an epistemic perspective.

There are a number of reasons for thinking that belief aims at truth in the way I have sketched. In this section, I shall mention three: the arguments from transparency, from Moore's paradox and from truth preservation. Consider, first, the following articulation of the phenomenon of transparency:

> In making a self-ascription of belief, one's eyes are, so to speak, or occasionally literally, directed outward – upon the world. If someone asks me 'Do you think there is going to be a third world war?', I must attend, in answering him, to precisely the same outward phenomena as I would attend to if I were answering the question 'Will there be a third world war?' [Evans (1982), p. 225].

Evans' idea is that from the first-person deliberative standpoint the question of how I believe the world to stand is transparent to, or collapses into, the question of how the world in fact stands.[2] Assuming the phenomenology is sound, the phenomenon might be explained in at least three ways. Either we are able to (i) make a direct inference from world to mind, (ii) make an indi-

rect inference from world to mind, perhaps via the intermediate step of considering our prior attitudes towards the truth of *p* or, (iii) read our beliefs off from the world non-inferentially. What is common to each of these explanations is that self-ascribing the belief that *p* depends on considering whether *p* is true. This may seem puzzling. For the inference '*p*, therefore I believe that *p*' is deductively invalid and inductively weak.[3] If we allow, however, that the norm of truth for belief formation is a norm of reason, then the inference can be explained by appeal to the plausible principle that we are rationally entitled to believe that *p* only if we are rationally entitled to take *p* to be true. So, if we assume that we are rational, we can self-ascribe the belief that *p* by considering the rationality of believing that *p*, which means considering the evidence that *p* is true. Of course, the assumption that we are rational (as opposed to irrational, not non-rational) may be unwarranted. We are, for instance, notorious confabulators. Nevertheless, when we come to self-ascribe a belief, we assume that it was formed on the basis of the evidence for its truth. For, otherwise we can make no rational sense of ourselves.

The second argument is from Moore's paradox. Something has gone amiss with someone who sincerely asserts '*p*, but I don't believe that *p*'. This is despite the fact that the assertion is logically consistent and could be true. At least part of the oddity can be explained conceptually. Once we grasp what is meant by sincerely asserting *p*, we cannot without conceptual confusion wonder whether a speaker who sincerely asserts that *p* also believes that *p* is true. For these purposes, at least, sincere assertion is the public equivalent of belief. Or, to employ another Moorean idea, the question '*S* sincerely asserts that *p*, but does *S* believe that *p* is true?' is closed. To understand what it is to believe that *p* is to understand that whoever sincerely asserts that *p* believes that *p*. It is also to understand that whoever believes that *p* believes that *p* is true. This contrasts with open questions such as '*S* sincerely asserts that *p* is good / beautiful / promotes her self-interest, but does *S* believe that *p*?' Our handle on the concept of belief depends on the relationship in which belief stands to the goal of truth. It does not depend on the contingent relations which beliefs bear to other valuable goals, although these can certainly provide us with reasons for belief.

A third consideration favouring the view that belief aims at truth is that the norms governing rational inferences between beliefs are the same as the rules of deductive validity, which guarantee truth preservation. So, if, for example, I believe that *p* and I believe that *q*, I am rationally committed to collecting my beliefs over conjunction and believing that (*p* and *q*). If I believe that (if *p* then *q*) and I believe that *p* then I am rationally committed to believing that *q*. Of course, the fact that I am rationally committed to the conclusion does not mean that I will in fact draw the conclusion. For, as Carroll (1895) illustrated with his example of Achilles and the Tortoise, I can always resist the normative force of *modus ponens* or any other rule of logical inference.

Normative force is not motivational force and, dispiritingly for Achilles, Logic does not take one by the neck and forces one to believe. If, however, belief were not governed by the norm of truth, it would be obscure why I should be rationally committed to ordering my beliefs to conform to truth-preserving rules of inference. Propositional attitudes that are not governed by the norm of truth do not behave in this way.[4] For instance, my desire that *p* and my desire that *q* do not rationally commit me to desire that (*p* and *q*). I might simultaneously desire tea and desire coffee, without thereby being rationally committed to desiring both tea and coffee.

II. EPISTEMIC VIRTUE AND DOXASTIC CONTROL

I have argued that belief aims at truth and that this is a normative matter. However, claiming that the truth-goal is always relevant to epistemic appraisal is neither to say that having a true belief is necessary, nor sufficient, for being the appropriate object of epistemic praise. After all, the world can be a deceptive place. Zebras can turn out to be cleverly painted mules. Barn facades can be erected without accompanying barns. Epistemic luck can mean that diligently formed beliefs turn out false, and we need not be praiseworthy or blameworthy on such occasions. Furthermore, it seems that we do not have immediate voluntary control over our beliefs. If I see a red truck coming towards me I cannot believe that it is a yellow tractor simply by an act of will. Or, if I am faced with misleading but compelling evidence, I cannot simply choose to disregard it and believe the truth.

Epistemic luck and concerns surrounding doxastic control suggest that it cannot be quite right to say that we always ought to believe what is true and ought not to believe what is false. Nevertheless, it appears that the norm of truth must always be operative. This is a consequence of the fact that being governed by the norm of truth is constitutive of belief formation. In this section I shall argue that we can resolve these worries by noting that we do not directly evaluate beliefs against the normative standard of truth, but rather as manifestations of epistemic virtue.

Let us start by considering the question of doxastic control. Alston puts the concern memorably:

> If I were to set out to bring myself into a state of belief that *p*, just by an act of will, I might assert that *p* with an expression of conviction, or dwell favorably on the idea that *p*, or imagine a sentence expressing *p* emblazoned in the heavens with an angelic chorus in the background intoning the Kyrie of Mozart's Coronation Mass. All this I can do at will, but none of this amounts to taking on the belief that *p* [Alston (1988), p. 263].

It is for this sort of reason that most philosophers reject so-called 'strong voluntarism'. But even if we cannot believe at will as strong voluntarism would require, we can aim to bring about the appropriate circumstances for the correct beliefs to arise. We can do this in at least two ways, by working on ourselves directly or indirectly.[5] On the one hand, we can affect our belief forming dispositions by cultivating epistemic virtues and improving our background knowledge. On the other hand, we can affect the evidence we are exposed to and the environment in which our belief forming dispositions are triggered. This might involve changing our location, focusing on different aspects of the world or seeking out different sources of testimony. It can also mean actively exploring and engaging with our environment. We do this when we shuffle tiles on a Scrabble rack, complete a jigsaw puzzle or set a philosophical argument down on paper.

Chisholm has suggested that our situation with respect to belief formation is like that of a debtor who has an obligation to repay borrowed money, but not at the moment at which he takes on the obligation [Chisholm (1991), p. 126]. Consequently, he argues that we ought to discharge our epistemic obligations in due course, by carefully reflecting upon our existing stock of beliefs. So whilst we are not responsible for the beliefs we form, we are at least responsible for the beliefs we persist in holding. However, to pursue the analogy further, it may seem more important that the debtor ensures that he is in a position of fiscal responsibility before taking on the loan. In particular, we would do well to cultivate epistemic virtues. These are stable dispositions of thought which are reliably and non-accidentally conducive to forming true beliefs for creatures like us in an environment like ours. Examples include intellectual integrity, precision, care and consistency; virtues because of the relationship in which they stand to truth.

By turning our attention to epistemic virtue, we can see that the fact that we cannot believe at will is not a threat to the idea that we are epistemically responsible for the beliefs we form at the time at which we form them. Consider again the example of a perceptual belief about an oncoming red truck. This looks like a paradigmatic example of the kind of belief over which we have no control and are not, therefore, responsible for forming. However, lack of responsibility does not follow from the fact that the belief is formed automatically. For the case can be better described as the manifestation of an epistemic virtue, namely the disposition to believe perceptual evidence in the absence of obvious defeaters. If we lived in a world in which apparently red trucks routinely turned out to be yellow tractors on closer inspection, then it is plausible that we would not be disposed to form the belief that there is an oncoming red truck. We do not, for example, form beliefs about tiny trucks in the distance, although this is arguably what we see. To repeat, epistemic virtues are stable dispositions to form true beliefs in a particular range of environments.[6] It is no concern that we often form beliefs automatically and unreflectively, any

more than it is a concern that a goalkeeper's reflex save is automatic and un-reflective. Both cases require the sort of skill that is the manifestation of virtue or excellence.

A virtue-theoretic account of epistemic evaluation is attractive because it enables us to account for doxastic responsibility. It also issues in intuitively correct judgments in cases of epistemic luck. We do not do badly, epistemically speaking, if we exercise a virtue of thought that unluckily produces a false belief and the same is true, *mutatis mutandis,* for epistemic vice. Moreover, a virtue-theoretic account helps to resolve a third issue. If truth were the end of belief formation, it is sometimes objected, one way to satisfy this end would be to form a great many beliefs. For instance, van Fraassen argues, we would do well to believe everything we can believe to 'be sure to catch the truths in our net' [van Fraassen (2002), p. 86]. However, this is a poor epistemic strategy. By casting our cognitive nets as wide as possible we would also catch a great many falsehoods. So, the argument proceeds, we must have at least two cognitive aims, namely the acquisition of true beliefs *and* the avoidance of false beliefs. However, as van Fraassen argues, the aims of holding true beliefs and avoiding false beliefs are distinct and involve trade-offs; 'they cannot be jointly maximised; to some extent, each is gotten at the expense of the other' [van Fraassen (2002), p. 87]. So, we find a compromise between the acquisition of true beliefs and the avoidance of false beliefs, rather than truth as the sole aim of belief.

A virtue-theoretic account has a simple response to this line of argument, namely that believing as many propositions as possible is not the manifestation of an epistemic virtue. One straightforward reason is that believing as many propositions as possible is not *reliably* conducive to truth. Given the disposition to form as many beliefs as possible, particular tokens of belief formation are likely to produce false beliefs. But this is not quite the heart of the matter as an example will make clear. Let us say that a disposition of character counts as the virtue of justice if it is reliably conducive to giving people what they deserve. Imagine, then, that someone claimed that justice was a matter of wandering around beating everyone they encounter with a stick (or perhaps dispensing carrots). This might be defended on the grounds that people are generally wicked and deserve to be beaten. But, even if this is so, and people were generally getting what they deserved, the stick-wielding vigilante would hardly be administering justice. The reason for this is that actions are virtuous when they are non-accidentally, i.e. skillfully, directed towards their targets. Similarly, if one formed as many beliefs as possible one would likely catch many true propositions in one's cognitive net. But one would not believe them *because* they were true and so would not be forming beliefs on the basis of epistemic virtue.

III. Impossible Standards, Obligation and Evaluation

I have argued, then, that truth is the aim of belief and that virtue is the appropriate focus of epistemic evaluation. However, we have seen that virtuously formed beliefs can be false. In such cases all is not as it should be with our beliefs, despite the fact that we are non-culpable. In this section, I would like to explain what has gone wrong by drawing on a distinction between deontic and evaluative norms. In order to develop this idea, it will be instructive to consider an alternative epistemic norm, why it fails and how it leads to a related concern for the account I have been defending.

In an influential paper Bykvist and Hattiangadi criticise the following putative principle:

> For any *S*, *p*: *S* ought to (believe that *p*) if and only if *p* is true [Bykvist and Hattiangadi (2007), p. 278].

So, according to this principle, one ought to believe a proposition if and only if the proposition is true. If a proposition is false, one ought not to believe it regardless of other considerations in its favour. Unfortunately, as Bykvist and Hattiangadi observe, this principle quickly runs into serious trouble. For, there are true propositions which *cannot* be believed. For example, nobody can believe a proposition containing infinitely many true conjuncts. As 'ought' implies 'can', no epistemic agent with a finite cognitive capacity ought to believe such a proposition.

Now, the view I am advocating does not face quite the same difficulty because, on my view, it is not true that we always ought to believe what is true. Imagine that I see what appears to be a red surface in ordinary lighting conditions, and so form the belief 'there is a red surface over there'. But, in fact, what I see is due to a hidden jokester projecting red light on to a white surface.[7] Given this scenario, my view would entail that it is epistemically virtuous to believe what is false. This is because trusting perceptual evidence in the absence of obvious defeaters is reliably and non-accidentally conducive to forming true beliefs for creatures like us in an environment like ours. Although there would be a reason to believe the truth, i.e. the actual state of affairs, that reason would be cognitively unavailable for non-culpable reasons and, so, would not figure into the evaluation of the epistemic agent. This seems the correct response insofar as the jokester's victim is not intuitively blameworthy when he forms the false belief that he sees a red surface.

Nevertheless, it is easy to envisage a similar type of worry. Given that epistemic virtue is understood in terms of reliability with respect to true beliefs, oughtn't we cultivate the disposition of epistemic omniscience? But, we have already noted that we *cannot* believe every true proposition, because we cannot entertain every true proposition. Aren't we then saddled with epis-

temic obligations that we cannot discharge? I think not, for the following reason. Thus far, I have referred more or less interchangeably to epistemic evaluation and to what an epistemic agent ought to do. However, deontic and evaluative norms belong to different categories and possess different logical grammars. I should like to argue, then, that the norm of truth governing belief formation is evaluative rather than deontic.

The worry concerning the idea that we ought to believe propositions if and only if they are true is that it leads to violations of the principle that 'ought' implies 'can'. There is, however, no equivalent principle that 'good' implies 'can'. It would be good if I brought about world peace or painted like Caravaggio, but I can do neither, and I am not thereby blameworthy. So, in the present case, we should emphasise that it is epistemic *evaluation* which focuses on virtue. Insofar as our cognitive dispositions are virtuous, we do well epistemically. Whilst it would be good, indeed ideal, to cultivate the disposition of epistemic omniscience, it is not the case that we ought to do so. This does mean that insofar as we are unable to believe every true proposition we are, to that extent, epistemically bad or imperfect. Yet this much is commonplace. We are cognitively limited, non-omniscient beings and, consequently, less than epistemically ideal.

If we are inclined to deny that a person should be evaluated negatively due to cognitive limitations for which they bear no responsibility, then it is perhaps because of the connection between evaluation and blame. To evaluate someone as bad in some respect is frequently not only to label them imperfect, but also to censure or to reprimand. But censure is inappropriate when someone fails to do what is best because he cannot do so. Although blame can properly accompany failures to be good as well as failures to discharge obligations, in both cases it is fitting only for someone who could have done otherwise. For someone who could not have done otherwise, it is normally appropriate merely to withhold admiration or to express regret. Notice, though, that none of this rules out the possibility that there are also deontic norms governing belief. That depends, in part, on the relationship between the right and the good; a large topic beyond the scope of this paper. It is merely to argue that the norm of truth which is constitutive of belief is evaluative, not deontic.

IV. Epistemic Normativity and Practical Interests

Thus far I have argued that the norm of truth necessarily governs belief, that it is an evaluative norm and that virtue is the appropriate focus of epistemic evaluation. However, there may be some reason to suppose that epistemic evaluation depends not only on a belief's (indirect) relationship to truth, but also on practical interests. At least, whether or not we are inclined

to ascribe *knowledge* seems to depend upon relevant practical interests. Considering whether this is so will help us clarify the relationship between blame and evaluation, and also provide an opportunity to relate epistemic normativity to other types of value that bear on belief.

It has traditionally been thought that knowledge is true belief plus a third element such as warrant or justification. The third element appears normative in the following sense: the fact that a belief has the property of being, say, warranted or justified is a *pro tanto* reason to hold that belief. This, in turn, appears related to the common view that warranted or justified true belief is valuable, and subject to epistemic evaluation, in a way that mere true belief is not.[8] Given my earlier arguments it is natural to suppose that the third, normative element of knowledge depends upon epistemic virtue and its relationship to truth. So, roughly, on my account, I know some proposition *p* only if *p* is true, I believe that *p* is true and I have acquired the belief that *p* virtuously.[9] This is not a full analysis, but a list of three necessary conditions. Nevertheless, it seems to account for much of what we want to say about knowledge. Whilst all of this is certainly contentious, it is sufficient to motivate a particular sort of worry. The key point for present purposes is that I take the difference between knowledge and mere true belief to be something normative associated with truth as the end of epistemic activity.

Let's consider a reason to suppose that I am mistaken about this. Jason Stanley describes the following two scenarios:

> *Low Stakes*: Hannah and her wife Sarah are driving home on a Friday afternoon. They plan to stop at the bank on the way home to deposit their pay checks. It is not important to do so, as they have no impending bills. But as they drive past their bank, they notice that the lines inside are very long, as they often are on Friday afternoons. Hannah says, 'I know the bank will open tomorrow, since I was there just two weeks ago on Saturday morning. So we can deposit our pay checks tomorrow morning.'

> *High Stakes*: Hannah and her wife Sarah are driving home on a Friday afternoon. They plan to stop at the bank on the way home to deposit their paychecks. Since they have an impending bill coming due, and very little in their account, it is very important that they deposit their pay checks by Saturday. Hannah notes that she was at the bank two weeks before on a Saturday morning, and it was open. But, as Sarah points out, banks do change their hours. Hannah says, 'I guess you're right, I don't know that the bank will be open tomorrow' [Stanley (2005), pp. 3-4].

Stanley suggests that Hannah is right in both cases. In the first scenario she knows that the bank will be open on Saturday morning. In the second scenario she doesn't know this. However, the only difference between the two cases is that in *High Stakes* it is important to deposit the paycheque, whereas

in *Low Stakes* it is not. Therefore, ascriptions of knowledge depend upon practical interests.

My intuitions concerning this aren't especially strong. I doubt one would feel much inclined to challenge Hannah in either case, but it seems to me that one could do so without manifesting any linguistic incompetence or conceptual confusion. Consider a variant combining the two cases:

> *Low Stakes**: Hannah and her wife Sarah are driving home on a Friday afternoon. They plan to stop at the bank on the way home to deposit their pay checks. It is not important to do so, as they have no impending bills. But as they drive past their bank, they notice that the lines inside are very long, as they often are on Friday afternoons. Hannah says, 'I know the bank will open tomorrow, since I was there just two weeks ago on Saturday morning. So we can deposit our pay checks tomorrow morning.' But, as Sarah points out, banks do change their hours. Hannah says, 'I guess you're right, I don't know that the bank will be open tomorrow.'

Quite likely the emphasis in Hannah's last sentence would be on 'know' – 'I guess you're right, I don't *know* that the bank will be open tomorrow'. She might also accompany her assertion with a roll of the eyes and cast her mind back to philosophy classes in which she had to admit that, no, she didn't *know* that she wasn't the victim of a Cartesian demon. I don't wish to deny that we are *more* inclined to say Hannah has knowledge in *Low Stakes* than in the *High Stakes*. Rather, the point is that we don't have a particularly firm intuitive grasp of the level or type of justification required for knowledge ascriptions. As indicated by *Low Stakes**, the criteria for accepting knowledge ascriptions are not a straightforward function of the practical interests relevant to the situation. It would be a mistake, therefore, to rest substantive conclusions upon our rather vague intuitions concerning such cases. Still, I do accept that our inclination to ascribe knowledge or withhold ascriptions of knowledge on the basis of the practical interests presents a *prima facie* objection to the position I advocate.

My view, then, is that Hannah knows that the bank is open in both cases regardless of her practical interests. Knowledge does not depend upon financial solvency. Our overall evaluation of epistemic agents can depend on practical interests, but not our epistemic evaluation of epistemic agents. We need to note here that belief formation is subject to evaluation on a number of grounds that we can easily fail to distinguish. We are never solely engaged in epistemic pursuits. As well as being epistemic agents, we are also, for example, moral agents with certain roles in our societies. Importantly epistemic activity provides the basis for action. Beliefs are the premises for practical syllogisms, and true beliefs often enable us to satisfy our desires and success-

fully engage in valuable activities.[10] When these activities are of significant value, we can have a non-epistemic duty to form beliefs with especial diligence. So, a lighthouse keeper, for example, has a duty to form true beliefs with respect to the weather. She has a duty to know when a storm is brewing. Yet, this duty is a moral duty with respect to her epistemic behaviour, not an epistemic duty. The source of her duty is the moral obligation she has to protect the lives of seafarers.

The varieties of justification can easily become obscured when we come to ascribe knowledge. So, given that a person has a true belief, we ask ourselves whether she is justified in holding that true belief before ascribing her knowledge. But the sources of justification are diverse. One can be justified in one respect, but not another. For example, epistemic justification, moral justification, prudential justification and aesthetic justification can cut across each other in all directions. One's belief can be epistemically justified, the product of a virtuous cognitive disposition, but still the evidence for the belief might be insufficient for one to be pragmatically justified. Thus, we might be inclined to say that a glance is sufficient to know that I have tied a knot securely if I am tying a parcel, but not if I am a surgeon tying an artery. In fact, from an epistemic perspective – the appropriate perspective from which to judge knowledge claims – one has an equal claim to knowledge in both cases (assuming that a glance is an equally reliable method). Yet, it *would* be reasonable to call into question the surgeon's belief, and we might do that by asking, "do you really *know* that the patient's artery is tied properly?" The surgeon is not pragmatically justified and he is not justified in holding his belief in an all-things-considered sense.

These examples depend on the fact that ascriptions of knowledge serve a useful social function. We frequently use 'knowledge' as an honorific term to indicate that a belief is justified all-things-considered. This is a perfectly legitimate use outside of the context of philosophical epistemology. Moreover, we use the term 'knowledge' as an honorific for epistemic agents. To say that someone has knowledge, that she is knowledgeable, is to praise her in a certain way. It suggests that when she acts on the basis of her beliefs we can reasonably expect her to succeed in her various pursuits. Moreover, when others act on the basis of her testimony they too can reasonably expect to succeed in their pursuits. As it is sometimes put, knowledge is a collective good. So, to ascribe knowledge to someone is to evaluate that person positively *qua* member of a community.

The degree of justification necessary for knowledge can sometimes fall below the degree of justification we require a responsible and trustworthy member of the community to possess for their beliefs. This being the case, we are inclined to withhold the honorific 'knowledge' in cases where someone is sufficiently justified to know a proposition, but is insufficiently justified to act as a reliable informant for the pursuit of our practical interests. I

suggest that this ambiguous, though legitimate, usage explains our linguistic intuitions concerning knowledge ascription in the cases of *Low Stakes* and *High Stakes*. Nevertheless, if Hannah's assertion is true in *Low Stakes*, it is literally false in *High Stakes*. The claim that truth is the epistemic norm governing belief is, therefore, unaffected by the fact that non-epistemic norms, i.e. those associated with practical interests, can determine whether or not we ascribe the normative, epistemic property of 'being an instance of knowledge' to a particular true belief.[11]

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NOTES

[1] Defenders of this view include Wedgwood (2002); Wedgwood (2009), Boghossian (2003), Shah (2003), Gibbard (2005), O'Hagan (2005), Shah and Velleman (2005) and Engel (2007). Opponents include Papineau (1999); Papineau (forthcoming), Owens (2003), Bykvist and Hattiangadi (2007) and Steglich-Petersen (2009). Williamson (2000) and Bird (2007) have argued that knowledge rather than truth is the norm of belief. For a defence of the truth norm over the knowledge norm see Littlejohn (2010). On the assumption that knowledge implies truth, I am content to argue for the weaker claim here.

[2] See, for example, Shah (2003) and Moran (2001). Although the transparency thesis is widely accepted, Cassam (2011) raises a number of important concerns.

[3] See further the debate between Byrne (2011) and Boyle (2011) for respective defence and criticism of this principle.

[4] It is not part of my argument that belief is the *only* propositional attitude which aims at truth. Guessing is another example. See further Owens (2003).

[5] See further Nottelmann (2008), pp. 84-93, Audi (2008) and Huss (2009), pp. 257-61, for detailed discussions of indirect doxastic control. Arguing from a virtue-theoretic perspective, Montmarquet (2008) argues that indirect doxastic control depends upon, and can be reduced to, direct doxastic control.

[6] Specifying *which* circumstances is an admittedly difficult task. For one detailed recent attempt see Greco (2010), Ch. 7.

[7] The example is from Sosa (2009), pp. 31-4.

[8] Explaining why this is so is no easy matter. For more on the value of knowledge problem see especially Kvanvig (2003).

[9] This is of course similar to Zagzebski's virtue-theoretic account of knowledge. For details, including a proposal for how to deal with Gettier cases, see Zagzebski (1996), pp. 293-9.

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