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EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISJUNCTIVISM AND FACTIVE BASES FOR BELIEF

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ABSTRACT. According to *epistemological disjunctivism*, in paradigm cases of perceptual knowledge one's belief can enjoy rational support that is both factive and reflectively accessible. In this paper we will explore how epistemological disjunctivism understands the distinctively factive notion of epistemic basing that is part of this proposal. In particular, we will see how understanding this basis correctly provides epistemological disjunctivism with the resources to evade some *prima facie* difficulties that might be posed for it.

1. EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISJUNCTIVISM

According to *epistemological disjunctivism*, in paradigmatic epistemic conditions one's rational basis for a perceptual belief that *p* can be the factive reason that one sees that *p*. *Seeing that p* is factive in the sense that one can only see that *p* if *p* is true. What makes epistemological disjunctivism so distinctive is the further claim that the rational support one's belief enjoys is reflectively accessible, such that there can be reflectively accessible factive rational support.¹ Note that epistemological disjunctivism is not a theory of knowledge in general, but rather a thesis about a particular kind of perceptual knowledge.²

Call any case where the epistemic conditions for perception are paradigmatic—both subjectively and objectively speaking (the reason for this qualification will become apparent below)—a *good case*. Now compare this with a corresponding *bad case* where the epistemic conditions are systematically bad but which is indistinguishable from the good case (at least from the subject's perspective).³ So consider, for example, a case where one is a brain-in-a-vat being

stimulated by supercomputers to have experiences which are indistinguishable to the subject from those had by one's non-envatted counterpart. In such a scenario, a large body of one's beliefs are false and yet one has no inkling at all of this fact.

According to epistemological disjunctivism, one's reflectively accessible rational support in the good case is the factive reason that one sees that p . In contrast, in the bad case, one's reflectively accessible rational support in the bad case cannot be that one sees that p since this is not the case (we will consider in a moment just what the rational support, if any, that is in play amounts to). Thus even though good and bad cases are *ex hypothesi* indistinguishable, one's reflectively accessible rational support in the good case can be significantly different from one's reflectively accessible rational support in the bad case. This is the sense in which this is an epistemological disjunctivism: *either* one is in the good case, with reflectively accessible rational support of one kind, *or* one is in the bad case, with reflectively accessible rational support of another (much lesser) kind.

Epistemological disjunctivism is a controversial view. I've discussed some of the key problems that face the position in a number of places, so I won't be making a comprehensive case for the position as a whole here. My concern is rather the more specific task of exploring how the notion of a factive rational base for belief plays out when it comes to epistemological disjunctivism. Along the way we will be seeing how epistemological disjunctivism responds to two particular challenges: the *basis problem* and the *access problem*.

2. GOOD/BAD CASES AND BASES FOR BELIEF

So what is one's rational basis for belief in the bad case if it isn't the factive rational basis of seeing that p ? In order to answer this question, we need to distinguish between three types of epistemic reasons: *normative*, *motivational*, and *explanatory*.

Normative epistemic reasons are objectively good reasons for regarding the target proposition as true, regardless of whether that proposition is believed by the subject, and regardless of whether the subject is aware of these reasons. That one sees that p is of course an excellent normative epistemic reason for regarding p as true, in that being factive it entails p . Call a factive normative epistemic reason a *decisive* normative epistemic reason. Not all normative epistemic reasons are decisive, however. Compare being presented with a pig in paradigmatic epistemic conditions with seeing a glimpse of the pig's curly tail as it disappears from view. The former would be naturally characterised as seeing that there is a pig; a decisive normative epistemic reason. But not the latter. This is, rather, what I will call a *suggestive* normative epistemic reason. It

offers objectively good reasons for regarding the target proposition as true, but not decisively (factively) so.

Next, consider motivational epistemic reasons, which are one's reason for believing that p .⁴ We've already noted that a normative epistemic reason for believing that p can co-exist with one not believing that p , so clearly there can be normative epistemic reasons without the corresponding motivational epistemic reasons. Indeed, even if one does believe that p , one's motivational epistemic reason for believing that p might be distinct from the normative epistemic reason for believing that p . For example, one's motivational reason for believing that p could be testimony that in fact provides no support for p at all, and which disregards a genuine non-testimonial normative epistemic reason to believe that p . Indeed, we can also formulate variants on this case where the normative epistemic reason is completely absent (i.e., there is no objectively good reason for regarding p as true), but where the subject believes that p regardless. In such scenarios the motivational epistemic reason obtains without there being any normative epistemic reason for the target belief.

Finally, consider explanatory epistemic reasons, which are considerations that explain why one believed that p . Such reasons need not line up with normative or motivational epistemic reasons. That they don't line up with normative epistemic reasons should be straightforward. If there are objectively good reasons for treating p as true, but these reasons are not the subject's motivational epistemic reasons, then one would hardly try to explain why the subject believed that p by appeal to the normative epistemic reasons. Putting the point this way, however, might lead one to suspect that one's motivational epistemic reasons and one's explanatory epistemic reasons are just the same thing, but this would be a mistake.⁵

In order to see this, it is useful to set out how one compares to one's envatted counterpart with this threefold distinction in place. All three strata of reasons line up quite straightforwardly in the good case. That one sees that p is a (decisive) normative epistemic reason for believing that p , and it is also one's motivational epistemic reason for believing that p and the explanatory epistemic reason for why one believes that p . But this alignment doesn't hold in the bad case. To begin with, since it isn't true that one sees that p , this can't be a normative epistemic reason for believing that p . When envatted it does *seem to one that* p , however, and one might plausibly regard this as a (suggestive) normative epistemic reason for believing that p . Accordingly, one might imagine that in the bad case one's motivational epistemic reason is that it seems to one that p rather than that one sees that p .

A moment's reflection reveals that this can't be quite right, however. For remember that one is completely unaware that one is deceived, and so one's reason for believing that p is not that it seems to one that p but rather that one takes oneself to see that p . This is where the distinction

between motivational and explanatory epistemic reasons becomes important, since what does seem right is that the explanation for why one believes that p in the bad case is that it seems to one that p , even though this is not the reason for which one believes that p . Aside from the difference in normative epistemic reasons available in the good and bad cases (i.e., seeing that p versus it seeming to one that p), there is thus also a disconnect between one's motivational and explanatory reasons in the bad case.⁶

We thus have three kinds of reason in play, reasons which subjects can stand in very different relations to depending on whether they are forming their beliefs in good or bad scenarios. With the foregoing discussion in hand, we are now in a position to explain what epistemological disjunctivism refers to when it describes the subject's rational basis for belief. Obviously it cannot be the normative epistemic reason, since this needn't be one's basis for belief at all, not least because it can co-exist with one failing to believe the target proposition. Moreover, it cannot be the motivational epistemic reason either, since it is obviously important to epistemological disjunctivism that the subject has different rational bases for belief in the good and the bad case, and yet we have just seen that this need not be the case when it comes to motivational epistemic reasons. The relevant rational basis is thus the subject's explanatory epistemic reasons, which as we have seen can come apart across good and bad cases. In particular, the epistemological disjunctivist claim is that in good cases one's rational basis for believing that p is the explanatory epistemic reason that one sees that p , while in corresponding bad cases it is the distinct explanatory epistemic reason that it merely seems to one that p . This is the sense in which, in the good case, one has a factive rational basis for belief, as opposed to a merely non-factive rational basis in the corresponding bad case, even though the good and bad cases are *ex hypothesi* indistinguishable from the subject's perspective.⁷

I take the epistemic basing relation in play here to be straightforwardly causal.⁸ It would take us too far afield to digress into the complex philosophical issues raised by this relation, but let me at least offer some general supporting remarks.⁹ First off, notice that the familiar non-causal accounts of the basing relation are not going to be a good fit with epistemological disjunctivism, given how we have described the view. Take doxastic accounts, for example, which characterise the basis relation in terms of certain meta-beliefs held by the subject regarding the basis for her belief—e.g., that such-and-such is a consideration in support of the truth of the believed proposition.¹⁰ But given the distinction we have drawn between one's motivational and explanatory epistemic reasons, and how they come apart in bad cases, it is hard to see why the subject would have the meta-beliefs in question in the bad case.¹¹ (Of course, proponents of the doxastic account of the epistemic relation might well take this as a reason to be suspicious of epistemological disjunctivism, but that's a separate issue).

In any case, thinking of the epistemic basis for belief in terms of explanatory epistemic reasons not only naturally suggests a causal reading of the basing relation but also a particular way of thinking about the notion of causation in play. The key is to notice how one would go about picking out the explanatory reasons. I take it that this would most naturally be done in causal terms—i.e., by picking out the most salient part of the causal explanation for why the subject holds her belief. But since the explanatory reasons are the subject’s basis for belief, then that is just to say that one is thereby picking out the basis in causal-explanatory terms too.

Such a causal-explanatory account of the epistemic basis relation fits particularly well with epistemological disjunctivism. Proponents of such a view maintain that our natural way of thinking about perceptual knowledge in epistemically paradigmatic conditions is in terms of factive epistemic reasons. Put in causal-explanatory terms, this means that where conditions are epistemically optimal then the causal explanation naturally traces the basis for belief back to the factive explanatory epistemic reason of the subject’s seeing that p . In contrast, where conditions are not epistemically optimal, then the sub-optimality will prompt one to focus on more specific bases for belief. So, for example, rather than treating the subject’s explanatory epistemic reason as being that she sees that there is a pig in front of her, it might instead be that, say, she can see something resembling a pig’s tail. Where we are dealing with epistemically sub-optimal situations that are indistinguishable from the subject’s perspective from epistemically paradigmatic conditions then the sub-optimality of the conditions will again be salient. Unlike other situations involving sub-optimal epistemic conditions, however, the type of sub-optimality in question doesn’t prompt us to focus upon a specific concrete basis for belief, but rather picks out the generic basis that it merely seems to the subject that p .

Moreover, notice that while there are familiar problems with causal accounts of the epistemic basing relation, they don’t seem to be relevant here. In particular, insofar as they arise at all, they do so only in the bad case, and yet it is in the good case that epistemological disjunctivism is offering a distinctive account of rational support. Accordingly, these problems, such as they are, do not pose any specific challenge to epistemological disjunctivism.

Consider the familiar problem regarding basing and deviant causal chains, for example. Here, for instance, is Alvin Plantinga’s (1993, 69) presentation of such a case:

Suddenly seeing Sylvia, I form the belief that I see her; as a result, I become rattled and drop my cup of tea, scalding my leg. I then form the belief that my leg hurts; but though the former belief is a (part) cause of the latter, it is not the case that I accept the latter on the evidential basis of the former.

In general, such scenarios offer us a deviant causal chain such that the most natural causal basis for the belief (in this case, the prior belief that one sees Sylvia) does not seem to be the epistemic

basis for that belief. Crucially, however, it is in the very nature of the kind of scenario required for such a deviant causal chain that the subject is *not* in epistemically paradigm conditions for perceptual knowledge. Plantinga's case doesn't even concern perceptual knowledge, paradigmatic or otherwise, but we can straightforwardly adapt the case to make the target belief perceptual. As Keith Korcz (2015, §1) puts it, we can easily construct parallel cases involving deviant causal chains such as 'glitches in the brain, wandering thoughts, wishful thinking, strong emotions, etc.', and of course all of these could causally result in a perceptual belief. But insofar as the subject is in conditions where the perceptual belief is causally produced via deviant mechanisms of this kind, however, then it follows that she is not in the good case. This is no accident, since it is characteristic of the good case as epistemological disjunctivism understands it that the subject's normative, motivational and explanatory reasons line-up, as this is a consequence of such cases being epistemically paradigmatic. Where there are deviant causal chains present, however, then clearly the subject's normative epistemic reason will not align with her explanatory (and possibly also motivational) epistemic reason, as this will concern the deviant causal basis for the belief. Since the subject is not in the good case, she is not in possession of the factive epistemic support that is distinctive of epistemological disjunctivism. Accordingly, insofar as there is a problem posed by deviant causal chains for causal accounts of the epistemic basing relation, it is not a problem that is in any way specific to the combination of epistemological disjunctivism and the causal account.

Or consider so-called 'Gypsy-Lawyer' cases, as famously proposed by Keith Lehrer (1971). The details of the case aren't important for our purposes. What is salient is just that we have a subject who believes the target proposition in an epistemically inferior way, but who as a result subsequently comes to further reflect on the evidence and in doing so formulates a sound epistemic rationale for that belief. Nonetheless, the psychology of the subject is such that the motivation for the belief remains the original one with the inferior epistemic pedigree. Lehrer argues that the subject's belief amounts to knowledge, and hence that this is a problem for the causal account of the basing relation, since it would be required to treat the subject's basis for belief as being the original epistemically inferior ground.

I am somewhat sceptical about Gypsy-Lawyer cases, as they do not strike me as psychologically plausible.¹² But we can in any case set them to one side as, like deviant causal chains, they do not pose a difficulty that is specific to epistemological disjunctivism—i.e., which would specifically impact upon the kind of factive epistemic bases that epistemological disjunctivism claims are reflectively available in the good case. This is because it is crucial to Gypsy-Lawyer scenarios that there is a disconnect between the causal basis for belief and the available epistemic basis. In terms of our tripartite division of reasons above, these scenarios

would thus require the subject's explanatory and motivational reasons (presumably aligned in these cases) to come apart from the normative epistemic reason (which would be the *bona fide* epistemic support available for the target belief). But that just reminds us that the subject is not in the good case, since such cases essentially involve, as we saw above, an alignment between these three kinds of reason. Indeed, this is just a consequence of what epistemological disjunctivism has in mind when it talks of the epistemically paradigmatic conditions of the good case. Hence the distinctive kind of epistemic support proposed by epistemological disjunctivism is not even in play in Gypsy-Lawyer scenarios. Accordingly, as with deviant causal chains, even if Gypsy-Lawyer cases do pose a problem for causal accounts of the epistemic basis relation, they don't create any difficulties that are specifically relevant to the combination of epistemological disjunctivism and causal accounts of the epistemic basing relation.

3. A DILEMMA FOR EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISJUNCTIVISM

On the face of it, we can pose a dilemma for epistemological disjunctivism, at least as described. As we will see, however, being clear about the epistemic basing relation in play helps us to resolve this dilemma. It is common to hold that seeing that p is just a specific way of knowing that p . If that's right, then seeing that p entails knowing that p . Call this the *entailment thesis*.¹³ If one accepts the entailment thesis, then it seems that according to epistemological disjunctivism one's epistemic basis for knowing that p can entail that one knows that p . But that sounds very odd. Shouldn't one's epistemic basis for knowledge be distinct from the knowledge in question? Elsewhere, I have called this the *basis problem* for epistemological disjunctivism.¹⁴ This is the first horn of the dilemma.

It seems that avoiding the basis problem requires denying the entailment thesis, but the problem with this strategy, however, is that it seems to exacerbate another problem that epistemological disjunctivism faces. We thus encounter the second horn of the dilemma. This is because combining epistemological disjunctivism with the entailment thesis seems to offer us a straightforward way out of another difficulty that one can pose for the view. This worry arises out of the very idea that one can have a rational basis for belief that is both reflectively accessible and factive. The concern is that this seems to suggest that one ought to be able to reflect on the nature of one's rational support and thereby come to recognise, since it is factive, that the target proposition must be true. But doesn't that mean that one can come to know, via an entirely non-empirical route, that a specific empirical proposition is true? That sounds somewhat miraculous. Elsewhere I have called this the *access problem* for epistemological disjunctivism.¹⁵

The entailment thesis appears to offer a painless way of dealing with this problem. This is because if seeing that p is just a way of knowing that p , then this factive reason is only reflectively accessible to one if one already knows that p . Moreover, since seeing that p is an empirical way of knowing that p , this means that one only has reflective access to the factive reason when one already has empirical knowledge that p . It follows that reflecting on one's factive reasons is not going to provide one with a non-empirical route to knowledge that p . The access problem thus disappears. If one does not ally epistemological disjunctivism to the entailment thesis, however, then this way out of the access problem is no longer available.

So it seems that epistemological disjunctivism is presented with two unpalatable options. On the one hand, it can accept the entailment thesis, and thereby evade the access problem, but then it faces the basis problem. On the other hand, it can reject the entailment thesis, and thereby evade the basis problem, but then it loses its straightforward response to the access problem. As I will explain in the next section, the way out of this dilemma is to recognise that epistemological disjunctivism can consistently embrace the second horn of the dilemma.¹⁶

4. RESOLVING THE DILEMMA

The key to resolving this dilemma is to recognise that the entailment thesis is false: seeing that p doesn't entail knowing that p . What is undoubtedly true—and it is this that drives the entailment thesis—is that seeing that p is closely related to knowing that p in that it puts one in a robust epistemic relationship to p . One doesn't count as seeing that there is a pig before one merely by being visually presented with a pig in poor epistemic conditions (e.g., where the pig is not clearly in view).¹⁷ But while there is a close relationship between knowing that p and seeing that p (we will specify what this relationship is in a moment), I contend that it is not a relationship of entailment.

I think this point is apt to be lost because we tend to work with a Manichaeian conception of good *versus* bad cases which is far too crude. Instead, we need to recognise that between these two extremes are a spectrum of intermediate cases of epistemic import. In particular, while I would grant that in the good case as described above, where conditions are epistemically paradigmatic, one both sees that p and knows that p , there are intermediate scenarios in the vicinity of the good case where the latter comes apart from the former.

Let us distinguish two ways in which a scenario can be epistemically paradigmatic, *objectively* and *subjectively*. As the name suggests, the former concerns how the epistemic conditions in fact are. So, for example, the subject's perception is veridical, her cognitive faculties are working appropriately, she is presented with the target objects in clear view and in good cognitive

conditions for perception, and so on. There are also no defeaters present, where this includes normative defeaters of which the subject might be unaware. In contrast, a scenario is subjectively epistemically paradigmatic where from the subject's point of view all indications suggest that it is epistemically paradigmatic, regardless of whether it in fact is epistemically paradigmatic. So it seems to the subject as if her perception is veridical, that her cognitive faculties are working appropriately, that cognitive conditions are good, that there are no defeaters present, and so on.

Clearly a scenario can be subjectively epistemically paradigmatic without being objectively epistemically paradigmatic. Indeed, the bad case as it is usually presented would fit the bill on this score. While the subject is in epistemic conditions that are about as bad as they can be from an objective point of view, since there is nothing to indicate to the subject that she is the victim of such a scenario, the prevailing epistemic conditions are also nonetheless subjectively epistemically paradigmatic.

The good case, at least as it is understood by epistemological disjunctivism, treats the scenario in play as being both objectively and subjectively epistemically paradigmatic. This is important because there is a noteworthy kind of *quasi-good* case which is objectively epistemically paradigmatic while not being subjectively epistemically paradigmatic. In particular, imagine that a subject is in fact in paradigmatic epistemic conditions for perception, but is nonetheless aware of a misleading epistemic defeater. Let's say, for example, that someone has convinced her that the perceptual scene before her is not as it appears (even though there is in fact nothing amiss at all). This would suffice to make the scenario subjectively epistemically sub-optimal, even though it is in fact objectively epistemically paradigmatic.

This kind of case is interesting precisely because it demonstrates how seeing that p and knowing that p can come apart. I take the claim that the agent lacks knowledge that p in this case to be uncontroversial. Given the presence of the misleading defeater, the subject is not in a position to form the belief that p in an epistemically responsible fashion, and that will prevent her from having knowledge.

That the agent nonetheless sees that p is less straightforward, but no less defensible. This follows from the fact that the subject is in objectively paradigmatic epistemic conditions. We can see this by imagining that the subject subsequently becomes aware that the misleading defeater is just that: misleading. While there is no temptation to regard her former self as knowing that p —she wouldn't have even believed that p , for one thing, at least not in an epistemically responsible manner—she *would* regard her former self as seeing that p . (Though she wouldn't, of course, regard her former self as believing that p on this basis, even if her former self happened to believe that p , albeit in an epistemically irresponsible fashion). After all, she was objectively in paradigmatically good epistemic conditions for seeing that p , and the subjective factors that

prevented her from responsibly believing that p were objectively inaccurate. This is the sense in which seeing that p is robustly epistemic, in that one needs to be in objectively good epistemic conditions in order to satisfy this relation. In particular, when one sees that p then one is objectively in good epistemic conditions for knowing that p . This is why seeing that p and knowing that p tend to go together. Where they come apart, however, is in those specific scenarios where the epistemic conditions, while objectively epistemically paradigm, are subjectively sub-optimal.

So seeing that p comes apart from knowing that p , and hence the entailment thesis is false. The second horn of the dilemma, however, was the charge that if one denies the entailment thesis then one is faced with the access problem. Put in terms of our new terminology, if one can see that p without knowing that p in the quasi-good case, and if one's rational support for believing that p in this case can be that one sees that p , then what is to prevent someone's belief that p in the quasi-good case from enjoying this factive rational support? Moreover, since the factive rational support in play is meant to be reflectively accessible, then what is to prevent the subject from becoming aware that she enjoys this factive epistemic support for her belief and hence coming to have knowledge that p as a result purely by reflecting on the rational support she has for her beliefs? The worry, of course, is that one is thereby acquiring new knowledge of a specific empirical proposition in the quasi-good case via a reflective route, and that looks very much like a *reductio* of epistemological disjunctivism.

If that were a consequence of the denial of the entailment thesis, then it would clearly be bad news for epistemological disjunctivism. But this result is not in the offing. Remember that the distinctive claim made by epistemological disjunctivism is that one's rational basis for believing that p in the good case is that one sees that p , and that one then knows that p on this basis. Accordingly, that one satisfies the relation of seeing that p in the quasi-good case does not entail that seeing that p can be one's rational support for believing that p .

Even so, one might insist that this is by-the-by, since so long as the subject believes that p in the quasi-good case, regardless of the epistemic impropriety of doing so, then why doesn't she count as knowing that p in virtue of enjoying factive rational support? It is undeniable, of course, that agents can form beliefs in epistemically irresponsible ways, so that is not the issue here. Given the foregoing, it is also true in this case that there is a decisive normative epistemic reason for believing that p in play, in form of the subject's seeing that p . Crucially, however, notice that the subject's motivational and explanatory epistemic reasons do not line up with the normative epistemic reason in this scenario. The subject may believe that p , but her awareness of the misleading defeater entails that her motivational epistemic reason won't be that she sees that p , since she is aware that she doesn't see that p . One's motivational epistemic reasons cannot be decided by fiat.¹⁸

In any case, even if one wishes to insist on an account of motivational epistemic reasons such that one can in principle elect any motivational epistemic reason that one wishes, it remains that the basing relation here concerns the explanatory epistemic reason anyway, and that clearly cannot be that the subject sees that p in this case. We would explain the subject's belief, rather, in very different terms. Indeed, I don't think we would naturally describe the subject's mental state as one of belief in the first place, given that it is contrary to the manifest counterevidence, but rather as something rather different, such as wishful thinking.¹⁹ But even if we granted that it was a belief, what would explain the formation of the belief would be whatever story accounted for why the subject formed this belief despite the presence of the misleading defeater, such as that she was strongly motivated to regard p as true.²⁰ However the explanatory epistemic reason is individuated, it will not be that the subject sees that p . It thus cannot be the subject's basis for belief in the quasi-good case, and hence even though the subject genuinely does see that p in this case, there is nonetheless no route to knowledge that p via the (epistemically irresponsible) formation of a belief that p .

We can also see this point in action by reconsidering the case as involving a misleading *normative* defeater. A normative defeater is a defeater that the subject is unaware of but which she epistemically ought to be aware of. Imagine, for example, that there is a sign in clear view above the pig pen that states that the creatures therein are not real pigs. It could be that our subject is so inattentive that she fails to clock this sign. Moreover, we can stipulate that the sign is intended as a joke, and hence that the normative defeater is misleading. Nonetheless, our subject's inattention hardly suffices to enable her to have knowledge that there are pigs in the pen regardless.²¹

Misleading normative defeaters are interesting in that they are not easily captured by the objectively/subjectively epistemically paradigmatic distinction that we drew earlier. As misleading defeaters, they certainly don't fall on the objective side of the contrast. But as normative defeaters of which the subject is unaware, they don't obviously fall on the subjective side of the contrast either. What is important is that they are clearly inimical to being in generally paradigmatic epistemic conditions, and so they are excluded by the conception of the good case that the epistemological disjunctivist has in mind.

In any case, if our subject is in conditions where a normative misleading defeater is present, then she will fail to know that p . Since the misleading defeater is normative, however, there are no issues here about what the subject believes, epistemically responsibly or otherwise. Given that she is unaware of the misleading defeater, she will naturally believe that p regardless. Moreover, unlike the case involving the non-normative misleading defeater offered above, the subject's motivational epistemic reason will be that she sees that p . Since the subject is in objectively paradigmatic epistemic conditions, she will also genuinely see that p , and hence the

motivational and the normative epistemic reasons will be in alignment. And yet the subject's belief is not rationally supported by her seeing that p since this is not her explanatory epistemic reason. After all, prompted by her failure to attend to the clearly displayed sign, we would explain why the subject believes what she does not by appealing to the factive epistemic reason but rather by opting for something much weaker, such as that it seems to her as if there are pigs before her. The sub-optimality of the epistemic conditions, which is what prevents it from being a good case as the epistemological disjunctivist understands that notion (however this sub-optimality is to be analysed), is also what ensures that the causal explanatory story about the subject's epistemic basis naturally flows not towards the factive epistemic reason but rather to a different epistemic basis entirely.

The upshot of the foregoing is that one can deny the entailment thesis without succumbing to the access problem. In all of the cases where the subject continues to see that p while failing to have knowledge that p , her epistemic basis for belief is not the factive epistemic reason. Accordingly, she will not be in a position to reflect on the factive rational basis for her belief and thereby acquire new empirical knowledge that she previously lacked. So long as we are clear about the nature of what epistemological disjunctivism is claiming about the subject's rational support in the good case, and so long as we are in addition clear about what the nature of her epistemic basis is, then the dilemma we have posed for epistemological disjunctivism disappears.²²

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NOTES

¹ I have defended such a proposal in a number of works. See, for example, Pritchard (2007; 2008; 2009; 2011*a*; 2011*b*; 2012*b*; 2015). See also Neta & Pritchard (2007). The view is rooted in work by McDowell (e.g., 1995; 2002).

² That said, one might be tempted to apply such an epistemological model to other kinds of knowledge, in paradigmatic epistemic conditions, beside the perceptual. McDowell (1994; 1995) certainly seems tempted along these lines. For my own preferred account of knowledge—*anti-luck* (/ *anti-risk*) *virtue epistemology*—see Pritchard, Millar & Haddock (2010, chs. 1-4) and Pritchard (2012*a*; 2016*a*; *forthcominga*). I explain how epistemological disjunctivism relates to this broader theory of knowledge in Pritchard (*forthcomingb*).

³ There will be a spectrum of cases between these two extremes of good and bad cases, as detailed in Pritchard (2011*a*; 2012*b*, part 1). Since most of these intermediate cases won't be relevant for our purposes, we won't discuss them all, but some of them will become salient below.

⁴ Note that in what follows I will take it as given that one is aware of one's motivating epistemic reasons. There are no doubt cases where one's motivational epistemic reason is not what one thinks it is, but such cases raise complications that are not our concern here, so we can set them to one side without loss.

⁵ I'm grateful to Clayton Littlejohn for convincing me, in discussion, that this would be a mistake. This issue crops up briefly in a recent exchange we had on Pritchard (2012*b*)—see Littlejohn (2016) and Pritchard (2016*b*).

⁶ I introduce and develop this threefold account of epistemic reasons in Pritchard (*forthcomingc*). Note that one doesn't need to embrace epistemological disjunctivism in order to grant that one's motivational epistemic reason in the bad case is that one sees that *p*. Given how the good case is described, everyone should grant that one's motivational epistemic reason is naturally understood along these factive lines. What marks the difference between epistemological disjunctivism and competing proposals rather concerns the explanatory epistemic reason, since according to such proposals these reasons can never be understood along factive lines (i.e., on these views our normal practices involving factive epistemic reasons should not be taken at face-value).

⁷ Notice that one consequence of this way of thinking about epistemic basing in the context of epistemological disjunctivism is that the subject's rational basis for belief in the bad case is not reflectively accessible. After all, she is mistaken about what her explanatory basis for belief is. This point is significant, since on traditional epistemically internalist ways of thinking about reflectively accessible rational support, the reflectively accessible rational support one's belief enjoys in the good case cannot be any better than the reflectively accessible rational support one's corresponding belief enjoys in the bad case, the presumption being that there is a non-factive rational basis for belief that is reflectively accessible in the latter case. Epistemological disjunctivism not only rejects this general way of thinking about reflectively accessible rational support—what is known as the *new evil demon intuition*—but also, at least as I develop the view at any rate, the more specific idea that in the bad case one's (non-factive) rational basis for belief is reflectively accessible. For the *locus classicus* with regard to the new evil demon intuition, see Lehrer & Cohen (1983) and Cohen (1984). For a very useful contemporary survey of work on this topic, see Littlejohn (2009). For further discussion of how epistemological disjunctivism rejects this intuition, see Neta & Pritchard (2007) and Pritchard (2012*a*; 2015; *forthcomingc*).

⁸ For two key defences of the causal account of the epistemic basing relation, see Moser (1989) and McCain (2012). Note that counterfactual or dispositional accounts of the epistemic basis relation can count as causal in the sense that I am using the term, to the extent that they are offering particular ways of understanding the causal relation in play. For examples of the former, see Swain (1981) and Bondy (2015). For examples of the latter, see Turri (2011) and Evans (2013).

⁹ For some useful general discussions of the epistemic basing relation, see Neta (2010) and Korcz (2015).

¹⁰ For some key defences of doxastic accounts of the epistemic basing relation, see Tolliver (1982) and Leite (2008).

¹¹ Note that this issue will arise for versions of the doxastic account that only demand that the meta-belief is necessary for the epistemic basing relation. As such, it will likely also affect 'mixed' accounts of the epistemic basing relation too, such as causal-doxastic views like that offered by Korcz (2000).

¹² For scepticism about the Gypsy-Lawyer case, see Audi (1983) and Wallbridge (2018). For a (fairly) recent defence of the case, see Kvanvig (2003).

¹³ The entailment thesis is defended by, amongst others, Dretske (1969), Williamson (2000), and Cassam (2007).

¹⁴ See especially Pritchard (2011*a*; 2012*b*).

¹⁵ See especially Pritchard (2012*b*).

¹⁶ In fact, I also think that one can consistently embrace the first horn of the dilemma too, in that I'm not altogether convinced by the challenge posed by the basis problem. (Is it really so obvious that one's knowledge cannot be epistemically based on a way of knowing?) In any case, since one only needs to embrace one horn of a dilemma in order to evade it, we can set this point to one side here. Moreover, as we will see, it is only the denial of the second horn of the dilemma that is of interest to our current concerns.

¹⁷ One would count as seeing a pig, of course. Seeing an object is an object-dependent relation, in that one cannot see a pig that isn't there, but it isn't an otherwise robustly epistemic relation like seeing that *p* (i.e., it is not the kind of epistemic relation that bears a close relationship to knowledge that *p*).

¹⁸ Indeed, this is in part of the reason why I am so sceptical about Gypsy-Lawyer cases, since they do seem to presuppose that one's motivational epistemic reasons can be settled in this way.

¹⁹ At least in the specific sense of ‘belief’ that is relevant to epistemologists anyway (roughly: that propositional attitude which is a constituent part of knowledge). I discuss this notion of belief and some of its implications in Pritchard (2015, part 2; 2018*b*).

²⁰ Note, by the way, that it wouldn’t be relevant here that the subject thought that they might have a defeater for the defeater, as that would remove the misleading defeater, and thereby change the structure of the case. (Whether a defeated misleading defeater can return one to a scenario that is subjectively epistemically paradigmatic is a further issue, which it would take us too far afield to engage with here). I discuss defeaters in more detail in Pritchard (2018*a*).

²¹ I offer a virtue-theoretic explanation of why such defeaters are knowledge-precluding in Pritchard (2018*a*).

²² I am grateful to Pat Bondy and Adam Carter for detailed comments on an earlier version of this paper.