A Dispositional Internalist Evidentialist Virtue Epistemology

This paper articulates and defends a novel version of internalist evidentialism which employs dispositions to account for the relation of evidential support. In section one, I explain internalist evidentialist views generally, highlighting the way in which the relation of evidential support stands at the heart of these views. I then discuss two leading ways in which evidential support has been understood by evidentialists, and argue that an account of support which employs what I call epistemic dispositions remedies difficulties arguably faced by these two leading accounts. In sections two and three, I turn to advantages that my dispositionalist account of evidential support offers evidentialists beyond its remedying apparent difficulties with rival accounts of support. In section two, I show that the account is well-suited to help the evidentialist respond to the problem of forgotten evidence. And, in section three, I show that adopting my dispositional account makes possible an attractive and natural synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology which is superior to the leading contemporary synthesis of these views.

1. Internalist Evidentialism and Evidential Support

In this section, I articulate a dispositional account of evidential support and show that it remedies difficulties arguably faced by leading alternative accounts of evidential support available to internatlist evidentialists. In 1.1, I explain what internalist evidentialism is and how it relies upon the relation of evidential support. In 1.2, I articulate my account of evidential support in terms of epistemic dispositions. And, in 1.3, I argue that this account escapes difficulties arguably faced by probabilistic and explanationist accounts of evidential support.

1.1 Internalist Evidentialism

Evidentialist views are a family of epistemological views which analyze normative epistemic properties in terms of evidence and evidential relations. When the relevant evidence is related appropriately to a proposition or an attitude toward that proposition, then and only then does that proposition or attitude have the normative epistemic property in question.

One well-known version of evidentialism is Earl Conee's and Richard Feldman's evidentialist account of epistemic justification.[1] They propose that an attitude D is epistemically justified for a subject S at a time t just in case D is the attitude which fits S's evidence at t. Other evidentialist views are possible as well. One could be an evidentialist about warrant, or epistemic obligation, or epistemic permission, or rationality and so on, where these epistemic properties might be distinguished from the property of epistemic justification. What all such views will share in common is that they say that the normative epistemic property in question is instantiated for some subject just when that subject's evidence is related appropriately to whatever might have the property. Where we are concerned with whether a certain belief-type or its content has the relevant property, these views will say that the belief-type or content has the property if and only if the subject's evidence is related to that belief-type or content in a favorable way. Following Conee and Feldman,[2] this is what I am calling the relation of evidential support—it is the relation which obtains between a person's evidence and a belief-type or the content thereof just when, according to evidentialist theories, that belief-type or content has the property they are attempting to analyze.

[1] Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, "Evidentialism," Philosophical Studies 41, 8 (1985): 15-34 and Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, Evidentialism: Essays in Epistemology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[2] Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, "Evidence," in Epistemology: New Essays, ed. Quentin Smith, 83-104 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Given this characterization of the evidential support relation, it is clear that this relation stands at the heart of evidentialist views. Accordingly, to better understand these views, we might ask: just when does a person's evidence support a belief or its content? I intend to take up this question at length in this section, arguing that a view which uses dispositions to explain evidential support remedies difficulties arguably faced by two leading rival views. But before doing so, I want to highlight two further features of the evidentialist views on which I am focusing.

The first feature concerns what these views say about the relata of the evidential support relation—that which does the supporting and that which is supported. While evidentialists have proposed a variety of accounts of what constitutes evidence including propositions,[3] known propositions,[4] true propositions,[5] and mental states, a choice with respect to this matter will not affect the arguments I will offer in this paper. I shall for convenience follow Conee and Feldman in talking as if evidence consists in mental states.[6] On the other side of the evidential support relation is what the evidence supports. Most evidentialists will prefer to think of what is supported by one's evidence as a belief-type or the propositional content thereof. For, only if this is so will the evidentialist be able to account for both the normative properties of type-attitudes when no token attitudes of their type is present and the normative properties of token attitudes.[7]

[3] Trent Dougherty, "In Defense of a Propositional Theory of Evidence," in Evidentialism and its Discontents, ed. Trent Dougherty, 347-59 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[4] Timothy Williamson, Knowledge and its Limits (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[5] Clayton Littlejohn, "Evidence and Knowledge," Erkenntnis 74, 2 (2011): 241-62.

[6] Conee and Feldman, "Evidence."

[7] For a defense of this claim, see Jonathan Kvanvig and Christopher Menzel, "The Basic Notion of Justification," Philosophical Studies 59, 3 (1990): 235-61. For a veritable who's who of epistemologists who have endorsed this judgment, see John Turri, "On the Relation between Propositional and Doxastic Justification," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 80, 2 (2010): 312-26.

Choosing between whether what is supported is a belief-type or the propositional content thereof is less consequential. For, it is plausible that a belief-type has the relevant epistemic property just when its content does.[8] For convenience I will talk as if what is supported by a person's evidence is a proposition.

The second feature of the evidentialist views I am focusing on is that they are all members of the dominant[9] species of evidentialist views—internalist evidentialist views. According to internalist evidentialist views, whether a proposition is supported by a person S's evidence depends entirely on factors which are in a certain way internal to S. By contrast, externalist evidentialist views say that whether a proposition is supported by a person S's evidence depends at least in part on factors which are not internal to S in this way. There have been two broad approaches offered by internalists for explaining what it is for a factor to be internal to an agent—accessibilism and mentalism.[10] According to accessibilism, a factor is internal to a person S just in case it is accessible to S.[11] According to mentalism, a factor is internal to a person S just in case it is mental.[12] For convenience, I will talk in the sequel using the language of mentalism.

To summarize, the species of evidentialist views in which I am interested in this paper are views according to which whether some proposition p has a normative epistemic property P for a

[8] Kvanvig and Menzel, "The Basic Notion," advocates this view.

[9] See John Greco, Achieving Knowledge: A Virtue-theoretic Account of Epistemic Normativity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) for an explanation for why this species dominates.

[10] For an overview of these alternatives, see George Pappas, ""Internalist vs Externalist Conceptions of Epistemic Justification," in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Edward N. Zalta, last modified 2005, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justep-intext/.

[11] See, e.g., Roderick Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge, 2nd edition (Englewood: Prentice-Hall, 1977) and Carl Ginet, Knowledge, Perception, and Memory (Dordrecht: D. Riedel, 1975).

[12] See, e.g., Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, "Internalism Defended," in Epistemology: Internalism and Externalism, ed. Hilary Kornblith, 231-60 (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).

person S depends entirely upon S's evidence and its relation to p, where the relation between S's evidence and p is one which depends entirely upon mental facts about S. Applied to such views, the question in which I am interested in this section—the question of the evidential support relation—is a question about whether we can clarify just when a person's mental states support a proposition p.

1.2 A Dispositional Internalist Evidentialism

I aim to defend a view of the internalist evidentialist species defined in 1.1 which explains the relation of evidential support using epistemic dispositions. I shall call the normative epistemic property with which my view is concerned epistemic justification. Following Feldman, I conceive of this property as a property of epistemic obligation.[13] Thus, a proposition has the property of epistemic justification for a person just in case that person ought to believe it. The theory I offer explains epistemic justification partially in terms of the relation of evidential support. For any proposition p and any agent S, p has the property of epistemic justification for S (i.e., the belief-type believing p is justified for S) just in case S's evidence supports p. It follows from this that not-p has the property of epistemic justification for S (i.e., the belief-type believing not-p is justified for S) just in case S's evidence supports not-p. Accordingly, the evidential support relation plays a very important role on my theory.

I propose to define the evidential support relation using epistemic dispositions. Epistemic dispositions are dispositions to take doxastic attitudes. The evidential support relation, I propose, can be understood in terms of just one such epistemic disposition—the disposition to believe. In the case where p is supported by S's evidence, S has the disposition to believe p; whereas in the case where not-p is supported by S's evidence, S has the disposition to believe not-p.

[13] Richard Feldman, "The Ethics of Belief," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 60, 3 (2000): 667-95.

Following the standard line on dispositions, I shall say that dispositions have realization conditions and constitutive manifestations.[14] The realization conditions of the dispositions which figure into my theory are aggregates of evidence, while the constitutive manifestations are doxastic attitudes. Since, as I said above, I shall speak of items of evidence as mental states, it follows that the realization conditions of the dispositions on my theory are aggregates of mental states. I will typically say that when a person is disposed to believe p and when the realization conditions for this disposition are some mental states M_1-M_n, she is disposed to believe p in light of M_1-M_n.[15] With one qualification to be discussed at the end of section two below, I offer the following dispositional account of evidential support:

> (DispES) For all agents S and propositions p, S's evidence supports p if and only if S is disposed to believe p in light of S's total evidence.[16]

Straightforwardly, it follows from DispES that a person S's evidence will support not-p if and only if S is disposed to believe not-p in light of S's total evidence. Thus, given my claims above about the relationship between evidential support and epistemic justification and obligation, it follows from DispES that S ought to believe p just in case S is disposed to believe p in light of S's total evidence and that S ought to believe not-p just in case S is disposed to believe not-p in light of S's total evidence.

Now, whether or not a full theory of epistemic justification can be provided using my dispositionalist account of evidential support depends on whether there is a doxastic attitude of suspending judgment concerning p which is different from simply neither believing p nor

[14] Robert Audi, "Dispositional Beliefs and Dispositions to Believe," Nous 28 (1994): 419-34.

[15] Note, then, that my usage of believing "in light of" a reason differs from that of some other authors, such as that employed in E. Jonathan Lowe, "The Will as a Rational Free Power," in Powers and Capacities in Philosophy: The New Aristotelianism, eds. R. Groff and J. Greco (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[16] I do not include a temporal qualifier here for space-saving reasons, though I do wish to offer a synchronic account of evidential support with most evidentialists. See fn.42.

believing not-p. If there is no such attitude, then DispES can provide a full theory of epistemic justification. According to this theory, the only attitudes which are justified are beliefs, since disbeliefs and suspensions of judgment reduce to beliefs. A person S will be justified in believing a proposition p just when S is disposed to believe p in light of S's total evidence; a person S will be justified in believing not-p just when S is disposed to believe not-p in light of S's total evidence; and, a person S will be justified in suspending judgment with respect to p just when S is neither disposed to believe p nor disposed to believe not-p in light of S's total evidence.

Following Jane Friedman, I favor the view that there is a distinct doxastic attitude of suspending judgment concerning p which is different from simply neither believing p nor believing not-p.[17] And, given that there is such an attitude, I think it is false to claim that a person S is justified in suspending judgment with respect to p just when S is neither disposed to believe p nor disposed to believe not-p. Thus, given such a conception of suspension of judgment, I think that DispES can be used only to partially define an evidentialist view and cannot fully define one. My reason for thinking that DispES can be used only to partially define an evidentialist view given this conception of suspension of judgment is that, given this conception of suspension of judgment, I do not think a person ought to suspend judgment about claims she has never encountered and does not or would not understand. Rather, I think she ought to take no attitude toward such claims. But, if I used DispES to define when suspending judgment is justified in the way proposed above, then I would have to claim that in such cases a person ought to suspend judgment regarding the unencountered claims. Of course, this is not an approach to suspending judgment unique to my view. Other evidentialists may take this approach as well, using the relation of evidential support only to partially define their evidentialist views. They too

[17] Jane Friedman, "Suspending Judgment," Philosophical Studies 162 (2013): 165-81.

will do so because they are dubious that suspending judgment concerning every claim p has their favored normative epistemic property for a person S whenever S's evidence neither supports p nor supports not-p. Unencountered claims will be such that neither they nor their negations are supported by a person's evidence, but suspending judgment concerning those claims do not have the relevant normative epistemic property for the person.

If my theory of evidential support cannot be used to fully define my evidentialist view, what else is needed? Simply an explanation of when suspension of judgment is justified. And, as it turns out, there is a theory of when suspension of judgment is justified which fits naturally with my above proposals for when belief and disbelief are justified. The theory is that suspending judgment concerning p is justified for a person S just when S's evidence e is counterbalanced with respect to p, and that S's evidence e is counterbalanced with respect to p just when S is disposed in light of e to suspend judgment concerning p. With this theory of justified suspension of judgment in hand, I can provide the following, unified dispositional evidentialist account of the justificatory status of any doxastic attitude whatsoever:

> (DispEV) For all agents S and propositions p, doxastic attitude D toward p is justified for S if and only if S is disposed to take D toward p in light of S's total evidence.

From DispEV, it follows that the attitude of belief is justified when the subject is disposed in light of all of her evidence to believe, that the attitude of disbelief is justified when the subject is disposed in light of all of her evidence to disbelieve, and that the attitude of suspension of judgment is justified just when the subject is disposed in light of all of her evidence to suspend judgment. DispEV gives us a full evidentialist theory which employs epistemic dispositions right at its center.

Before moving on, I briefly mention a potentially valuable feature of an account of support which, like the present account, employs dispositions at its center—a feature which, in

my own case, attracted me to the view at the outset. The feature is that, arguably, such an account reaches rock bottom metaphysically in terms of accounting for evidential support. This is true, for example, if the so-called Neo-Aristotelian view that dispositions are not analyzable in terms of non-dispositions is correct. The growing popularity of such Neo-Aristotelianism is one further reason a reader may find the present account worthy of further investigation.[18]

1.3 DispES and Alternative Leading Accounts of Evidential Support

In 1.1, I explained what internalist evidentialist theories are and in 1.2 I articulated my own dispositional internalist evidentialist theory. But why should an internalist evidentialist prefer this theory to others? In the course of this paper I offer three reasons. The first reason comes in this section. I argue that the theory of evidential support espoused by my version of internalist evidentialism escapes unscathed from the kinds of objections which arguably face leading rival theories of evidential support that an internalist evidentialist might adopt. In the remainder of this section, I will explore two leading accounts of evidential support that internalist evidentialists have adopted, explain the kinds of problems such views arguably face, and show how my dispositional internalist evidentialism escapes these problems. There are other accounts of support that internalist evidentialists either have adopted or might adopt, but I will not engage them in the text because they are either less promising than the proposals discussed in the text or they are less clearly distinct from DispES.[19]

[18] See Greco and Gross, The New Aristotelianism.

[19] Four such approaches are (i) to define evidential support in terms of epistemic principles [cf. Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge], (ii) to define evidential support using subjunctive conditionals [cf. Fred Dretske, "Conclusive reasons," Australasian Journal of Philosophy 49, 1 (1971): 1-22], (iii) to define evidential support in terms of the supported claim's coherence with the subject's evidence [cf. C.I. Lewis, An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation (La Salle: Open Court, 1946)] and (iv) to define support using causal or explanatory relations running from the subject's evidence to non-doxastic mental states [cf. Jonathan Mattheson and Jason Rogers, "Bergmann's Dilemma: Exit Strategies for Internalists," Philosophical Studies 152 (2011): 55-80]. Approach (i) suffers from the problem that the principles themselves seem to cry out for a unified explanation [cf. John Pollock, Contemporary Theories of

First, DispES is unscathed by those objections which seem to face promising explanationist accounts of evidential support. Explanationist views propose that we define evidential support in terms of the explanatory relationship or lack thereof between the proposition p and the subject S's evidence e. One simple proposal along these lines is as follows: (ExpES) S's evidence e supports p iff p is part of the best good explanation for e available to S.[20] Recently, a view like ExpES have been defended by Conee and Feldman[21] and similar views have also been championed by Moser, Harman, Lycan, and McCain.[22]

There are arguably two significant problems with such proposals—one with the necessity condition and one with the sufficiency condition. The problem with the necessity condition is that it conflicts with many cases in which a person's evidence supports a proposition about the future.[23] For example, I have argued that a golfer can be justified in believing that the ball he has

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Knowledge (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1986)]; proponents of the accounts, including mine, discussed in the text typically hope to explain the true epistemic principles using their accounts. Approach (ii) is also less promising than the proposals in the text because the subjunctive conditionals employed in such theories are not necessarily true; but, given that they are not necessarily true, the accounts of support they would provide would conflict with internalism. Accounts of type (iii) tend to face a worry about circularity, as coherence is defined at least in part in terms of the support that components of a system give to other components [cf. Erik Olsson, "Coherentist Theories of Epistemic Justification." In Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Edward N. Zalta, last modified 2012, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justep-coherence/]. And, accounts of type (iv) are less clearly distinct from DispES than the accounts discussed in the text. For example, talk of a person S's evidence e explaining her seeming that p might be explained in terms of S being disposed in light of E to believe p [cf. T. Ryan Byerly, "It Seems like there aren't any Seemings," Philosophia 40, 4 (2012): 771-82].

[20] I add "good" here because of the problem of the bad lot. Cf. Valeriano Iranzo, "Bad Lots, Good Explanations," Crítica: Revista Hispanoamericana de Filosofía 33, 98 (2001): 71–96.

[21] Conee and Feldman, "Evidence."

[22] See Paul Moser, Knowledge and Evidence (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Gilbert Harman, Change in View (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), William Lycan, Judgment and Justification (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), and Kevin McCain, "Explanationist Evidentialism," Episteme 10, 3 (2013): 283-97.

[23] Alvin Goldman, "Toward a Synthesis of Reliabilism and Evidentialism? Or: Evidentialism's Problems, Reliabilism's Rescue Package," In Evidentialism and its Discontents, ed. Trent Dougherty, 393-426 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) urges a similar problem for introspectively justified beliefs, and Keith Lehrer, Knowledge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974) offers a similar problem about mathematical beliefs. I think explanationist views are less vulnerable to these objections than to the one discussed in the text, but nonetheless DispES can straightforwardly account for them as well. Kevin McCain, "Explanationist Evidentialism," contains a reply to the examples from Lehrer and Goldman.

just putted will soon go in, even though the claim that the ball will go in does not explain why the golfer has the evidence he presently does.[24]

The problem with the sufficiency condition of ExpES is that it conflicts with certain cases where, despite the fact that a person S's best available explanation of her evidence e is very good, she has good reason to believe that the correct explanation for e may well not be available. For example, a detective who is midway through her eight-step procedure for collecting evidence concerning a burglary may find that the best currently available explanation E of her evidence is a very good explanation of that evidence; but, it would be irresponsible of her to believe E, given that it has not been unusual in the past for relevant evidence to come up at later stages in her investigative procedure which was not explained by the best available explanations at this stage of inquiry. While E is the best available good explanation, believing E would be premature and so, arguably, E is not supported in the evidentialist's sense by e.

DispES does not conflict with these cases in the way that ExpES does. There is nothing strange in thinking that a golfer may be disposed in light of all of his evidence to believe a ball will roll in. Thus, DispES can account for a golfer's evidence supporting the proposition <this ball will roll in>. And, there is no reason to think that a good detective in the scenario described above would not be disposed to suspend judgment concerning the best available hypothesis, E. If so, then DispES will not imply that such a detective's evidence supports E.

Of course, one might worry that, despite the fact that DispES does not entail as ExpES does that one's best available good explanation is always supported, it will nonetheless have untoward consequences in cases very much like the detective case as described above. For, while a detective need not be disposed to believe the best available explanation E of his evidence when

[24] T. Ryan Byerly, "Explanationism and Justified Beliefs about the Future," Erkenntnis 78, 1 (2013): 229-43.

he is mid-way through his inquiry, he might be so disposed. In that case, DispES will imply that the detective's evidence supports E and so the detective ought to believe E. And one might think that this is not much better than the implication highlighted above for ExpES. I will address this kind of concern with DispES more fully in section three below. For now, let it suffice for me to foreshadow my response as follows. My view is not that a detective who is in fact so disposed ought not believe E, but rather that a detective who is so disposed has no business being a detective. This approach, as I will explain further below, is not unlike approaches leading evidentialists such as Feldman have offered in the face of similar objections to their views.[25]

Move away then from explanationist accounts and instead consider probabilistic accounts of evidential support. Where c is the propositional content of a subject S's evidence e, such accounts explain support as follows:

(PrES) S's evidence e supports p iff $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$.

PrES explains evidential support in terms of two probabilistic claims, each of which deserves comment. The second claim, $Pr(p/c) \geq n$, claims that in order for S's evidence e to support p the probability of p given the content of S's evidence must meet or exceed a certain threshold. This condition allows PrES to imply that a proposition either is supported or is not supported by a subject's evidence. Such an implication is likely to be attractive for evidentialist theories which seek to partially explain the presence of normative epistemic properties partially in terms of support, since such theories are likely to claim that these properties (e.g., epistemic obligation) are either possessed or not possessed. The first claim, $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ is important for handling cases where a proposition p's probability is not raised by the content of a subject's evidence. In such cases, it isn't clear that a subject's evidence would support the proposition in question.

[25] See Richard Feldman, "Respecting the Evidence," Philosophical Perspectives 19, 1 (2005): 95-119.

Much of the complication in understanding PrES derives from the question of how to understand the sort of probability represented by "Pr". There are two broad approaches to understanding "Pr". We can understand "Pr" in such a way that the probabilistic relations it represents are necessary or in such a way that these relations are not necessary.

First, consider views according to which the probabilistic relations are not necessary. According to such views, it is not the case that if Pr(p/c) = n, then necessarily Pr(p/c) = n. There are numerous, attractive interpretations of probability locutions according to which probabilistic relations are not necessary in precisely this way.[26] But, such an approach to understanding "Pr" in PrES will not be attractive to internalists. For, recall that internalists claim that evidential support supervenes entirely on factors internal to an agent. But, if "Pr" in PrES is not a necessary relation, then PrES permits there to be agents who are exactly alike internally but not exactly alike with respect to what their evidence supports.

Views according to which the probabilistic relations in PrES are necessary divide into two primary approaches which can be distinguished by the way they respond to a tempting objection to PrES. The objection is that PrES, when conjoined with evidentialist theses about normative epistemic properties, will imply that far more propositions have the normative epistemic properties in question than is in fact the case. In particular, they will imply that propositions have the relevant normative epistemic properties for a subject when the necessary probabilistic relation obtains whether or not the subject appreciates this probabilistic fact. But, as Conee and Feldman object, "Where this probabilistic relation is beyond the person's

[26] This is so, e.g., of frequentist interpretations of probability [cf. John Venn, The Logic of Chance. 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1876)], propensity interpretations [e.g., R. N. Giere, "Objective Single-Case Probabilities and the Foundations of Statistics," in Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science, ed. P. Suppes et al, 467-83 (New York: North-Holland, 1973) and Karl Popper, "The Propensity Interpretation of the Calculus of Probability and the Quantum Theory," in The Colston Papers, ed. S. Körner, 9 (1957): 65–70], and nomological interpretations [cf. John Pollock, Nomic Probability and the Foundations of Induction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)].

understanding, the person may not be justified to any degree in believing a proposition made probable by the evidence."[27] And the same may be said about other normative properties.

The first approach to responding to this objection to PrES appeals to epistemic bridge principles.[28] According to such an approach, the right-hand side of PrES does not provide an account of evidential support as it figures into evidentialist theories in epistemology. Rather, it provides an account of the confirmation relation—a necessary relation which is the object of study in inductive logic. What is needed to achieve an account of support is a bridge principle to complete the following formula: S's evidence e with content c supports p iff $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$ & _____ . The common approach to filling in this blank is to do so with some kind of epistemic relation between S and Pr(p/c), such as S's believing $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$ or *it's* seeming to S that $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$[29] or S's being disposed to believe $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$[30] or S's being directly aware of $Pr(p/c) > Pr(p)$ & $Pr(p/c) \geq n$.[31] It is the addition of some such epistemic relation which helps to overcome the objection from Conee and Feldman.

Unfortunately, all such proposals arguably threaten to imply either that nobody's evidence ever supports a proposition or they threaten to imply that only the more sophisticated among us are such as to have evidence that supports a proposition. For example, the belief

[27] Conee and Feldman, "Evidence," 94-5. Cf. also Richard Swinburne, Epistemic Justification (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) and Jason Baehr, The Inquiring Mind: On Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[28] For a very helpful overview of such approaches, see Branden Fitelson, "Logical Foundations of Evidential Support." Philosophy of Science 73 (2007): 500-12.

[29] Cf. Chris Tucker, "Movin' on Up: Higher-Level Requirements and Inferential Justification," Philosophical Studies 157, 3 (2012): 323-40.

[30] Cf. Swinburne, Epistemic Justification.

[31] Cf. Richard Fumerton, Metaepistemology and Skepticism (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1995).

proposal and the seeming proposal each require that the subject conceptualize the probabilistic claims in PrES in order for her evidence to support a proposition. The dispositional proposal requires that in order for a person's evidence to support a proposition there must be a fact of the matter about how she is disposed to evaluate Pr(p/c). Arguably, though, these requirements are met only by the more sophisticated among us.[32] The fourth proposal requires that for S's evidence with content c to support p, S is aware of a relation between c and p. But, in order to be aware of such a relation, there must be such a relation; and this is dubious, given that the relational facts are necessary.[33] This sparseness of instances of support is unlikely to be attractive to evidentialists.

A second approach one might employ in order to defend PrES from the objection raised by Conee and Feldman is to explain "Pr" in PrES in terms of mental entities, such as the Bayesian's degrees of belief. On this Bayesian-inspired proposal, Pr(p) for S is S's degree of belief in p, and Pr(p/c) for S is S's conditional degree of belief in p given c. The Bayesian-inspired approach to understanding "Pr" in PrES escapes the difficulty for PrES highlighted by Conee and Feldman, because, given that the probabilistic locutions in PrES are explicable as S's degree of belief, and given that agents are aware of their own mental lives, PrES will not imply that there will be propositions which have a positive normative status for agents where those agents have no appreciation of the probabilistic relation between their evidence and those propositions.

[32] Note, for example, the common rejection of conditional excluded middle. See Jonathan Bennett, A Philosophical Guide to Conditionals (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[33] See John Heil, The Universe as We Find It (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

The concern I wish to raise for the foregoing Bayesian-inspired approach centers on the notion of degrees of belief.[34] One might think that talk of degrees of belief is just a way of talking about epistemic dispositions. To say that S has a high degree of belief in p conditional on c is just to say that S is strongly disposed to believe p given that S has evidence with content c. If this is how we understand degrees of belief, then the Bayesian approach will hardly differ from DispES.

The likely thing to be said to distinguish the Bayesian-inspired approach from DispES is that the Bayesian-inspired approach requires that the rational agent's degrees of belief obey the axioms of probability calculus.[35] This has been a minimum requirement on Bayesian views historically.[36] But, if the Bayesian-inspired approach is to make this requirement, then it will arguably reserve normative epistemic properties for too few of us. For, it is well-documented that ordinary epistemic agents' degrees of belief appear to regularly violate the axioms of probability theory in remarkable ways.[37] Thus, to the extent that the Bayesian-inspired approach differs from DispES, it appears to offer a kind of support too sparse to be of interest to evidentialists.

DispES does not face the difficulties arguably faced by the probabilistic accounts of support surveyed above. As I will argue in further detail in section two, DispES does not conflict with internalism as do approaches to explaining PrES which interpret the probabilistic claims

[34] The traditional approach has been to analyze such using betting behavior, as in Bruno de Fineti, "La Prevision: ses lois logiques, se sources subjectives," translated and reprinted in Studies in Subjective Probability, ed. Kuyberg and Smokler (Huntington, NY: Krieger 1980), though there remains controversy about this. For an overview, see Franz Huber and Christoph Schmidt-Petri, Degrees of Belief (Springer, 2010).

[35] This is the approach sometimes called probabilism. See Alan Hájek, "Arguments for—or Against—Probabilism?" British Journal of the Philosophy of Science 59 (2008): 793-819.

[36] See discussion in Alan Hájek, "Interpretations of Probability," in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Edward N. Zalta, last modified 2009, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ probability-interpret/.

[37] See D. Kahneman, P. Slovic, and A. Tversky, eds., Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

therein as contingent, because DispES does not permit subjects who are exactly alike mentally to differ with respect to what their evidence supports. Nor does DispES imply that at best only the more sophisticated among us can have evidence that supports a proposition, as the accounts above which appealed to epistemic bridge principles threatened to do. For, even the less sophisticated among us are disposed to believe claims in light of our total evidence. Finally, as we saw when discussing problems for explanationism, DispES is far from implying that only ideal agents can have normative epistemic properties; and so it will not face the difficulty arguably faced by Bayesian-inspired views.

A brief comparison of DispES to promising explanationist and probabilistic accounts of support suggests that DispES may well have significant advantages over these accounts. This is one reason for an internalist evidentialist to be attracted to DispES. In the next two sections, I discuss two additional reasons.

2. Dispositional Evidentialism and the Problem of Forgotten Evidence

In this section, I aim to show that the dispositionalist account of evidential support I articulated in the previous section, DispES, has a second valuable feature to offer internalist evidentialists. It can help evidentialists respond to what is one of the most persistent and difficult objections to evidentialist views—the problem of forgotten evidence. I begin with an explanation of this problem, then discuss difficulties facing leading approaches to responding to the problem on behalf of evidentialists, then show that DispES can help the evidentialist respond to the problem without facing these difficulties.

While the problem of forgotten evidence can be presented as a challenge for an evidentialist theory of any normative epistemic property, I shall present it here as a problem for an evidentialist theory of epistemic justification. Briefly stated, the problem of forgotten

evidence is the following. There appear to be cases where a person has a belief which we have both intuitive pull and theoretical reason to count as fully justified, but where the person who hosts this belief has lost all of her evidence concerning this belief. Such beliefs, if they exist, make trouble for internalist evidentialist theories. For, these theories say that whether a belief is justified is determined by the evidence the subject has. But if there are such beliefs then they represent cases where a belief is justified but this justification is not determined by the evidence the subject has, since the subject has no evidence for this belief.

A concrete example will help. All of us have stored dispositional beliefs about our social security numbers. These are beliefs we have to which we attend every so often when necessary.[38] For most of us, we formed these beliefs long ago on the basis of some evidence which we have long since forgotten. Imagine that Joe formed a belief long ago that his social security number is 890-23-5762 and that he doesn't remember how he learned this anymore. Moreover, imagine that he hasn't looked at his social security card anytime recently and so has no memories of having seen this number on his card. It would be tempting to say that Joe doesn't currently have any evidence for his belief that his social security number is 890-23-5762. Of course, if Joe doesn't have any evidence for this belief, then according to evidentialism he will not be justified in holding this belief.

But, unfortunately for the evidentialist, there is both intuitive and theoretical pressure to accept that Joe's social security belief is justified. The intuitive pressure will be especially powerful for someone who is strongly inclined to deny skepticism about justification. People who are inclined to think we do have quite many justified beliefs are likely to think that Joe's social security belief is among them. Theoretical pressure to accept that Joe's social security

[38] I mean to follow Audi, "Dispositional Beliefs," and others in distinguishing between dispositional beliefs and dispositions to believe. Dispositional beliefs are beliefs, while dispositions to believe are dispositions, not beliefs.

belief is justified can be applied by appealing to the principle of inferential justification. This principle says that only justified beliefs can contribute to the justificatory status of other beliefs.[39] Given this principle, if Joe's social security belief is not justified, then it cannot contribute to the justificatory status of other justified beliefs of his. But, it seems clear that Joe's social security belief can contribute to the justificatory status of others of his beliefs. For instance, if someone (say his banker) asked Joe, "What are the middle two digits of your social security number?" Joe might form a belief about this by inference from his belief about his total security number. He might think to himself in response to the question: "Well, my social security number is 890-23 … Oh, it's 23!" It is quite plausible to think that Joe's belief about the middle two digits of his social security number is a justified belief the justification of which is partly explained by his belief about his full social security number. But, given the principle of inferential justification, it follows that his belief about his full social security number must be justified as well.

So there is intuitive and theoretical pressure to accept the conclusion that Joe's social security belief is justified. But it is difficult to see how an evidentialist could maintain that it is. Below, I will discuss three common approaches evidentialists have used to respond to the problem of forgotten evidence. I argue that each approach faces a significant difficulty, but that the evidentialist who adopts DispES can respond to the problem of forgotten evidence without her view facing these difficulties.

The first response is to advocate a strategy discussed by Matthew McGrath according to which significant occurrent phenomenology has been overlooked in the presentation of cases of forgotten evidence, and that this phenomenology is the evidence the subjects in those cases have

[39] See Fumerton, Metaepistemology.

for their beliefs.[40] For instance, in our example with Joe, the evidentialist may suggest that the belief is justified only if it comes to him as something he knows or remembers. Or, the evidentialist might ask whether it seems to Joe that his social security number is 890-23-5762, or whether he seems to remember this. Such seemings, the evidentialist may argue, are distinct from Joe's social security belief itself,[41] and they are the sort of evidence which could support this belief.

As McGrath points out, the central difficulty facing this defense of evidentialism is that it simply is not plausible that in all cases where there is intuitive and theoretical reason to consider a belief for which a subject has forgotten her evidence justified she has the kind of occurrent phenomenology discussed here. It is of course true that sometimes when someone continues holding a memorial belief about her social security number it also seems to her that this belief is true, or one of the other kinds of phenomena above accompanies this belief. This may be especially so where the memorial belief is occurrently held or attended to. But it is extremely implausible that in every such case there is such accompanying phenomenology. Especially in cases where the belief does not plan a role in an instance of reasoning, where it remains in the background unattended to by the subject, such phenomenology is unlikely to be present.

A second approach is for the evidentialist to appeal to epistemic conservatism. According to epistemic conservatism, a subject's believing a proposition p confers some positive epistemic status on the proposition p for her.[42] One version of epistemic conservatism would say the

[40] Matthew McGrath, "Memory and Epistemic Conservatism," Synthese 151, 1 (2007): 1-24.

[41] For arguments that seemings are not just beliefs, see Michael Huemer, Skepticism and the Veil of Perception (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001) and Matheson and Rogers, "Bergmann's Dilemma."

[42] Jonathan Kvanvig, "Conservatism and its Virtues," Synthese 71, 1 (1989): 143-63, Hamid Vahid, "Varieties of Epistemic Conservatism," Synthese 141,1 (2004): 97-122, and Kevin McCain, "The Virtues of Epistemic Conservatism," Synthese 164, 2 (2008): 185-200 each defend such a version of conservatism. McGrath, "Memory,"

following: if believing p coheres with a subject S's other evidence, and S in fact does believe p, then p is justified. An evidentialist might make use of epistemic conservatism by arguing that the reason believing p contributes to the epistemic status of the proposition p is that believing p is evidence for p. This evidentialist could then use this fact to respond to the problem of forgotten evidence. It isn't some other evidence that subjects in such cases have which justifies the beliefs for which they have forgotten their evidence; rather, it is these beliefs themselves. The evidence Joe has which justifies his believing that his social security number is 890-23-5762 is Joe's belief that this is his number.

The primary difficulty I will highlight for this response to the problem of forgotten evidence is that the kind of epistemic conservatism required here is simply too strong. This is especially clear if we conceive of epistemic justification in the way I proposed above as equivalent to epistemic obligation. For, it isn't the case that when one believes a proposition which coheres with her other evidence she ought to have done this. Think for instance about whether believing a theory, where others cohere equally well with one's data, is obligatory.[43] This may help to explain why those who have defended epistemic conservatism have typically defended it for some property falling short of epistemic justification.[44] Retreating to the position that the Joe's social security belief has only some lesser epistemic status falling short of epistemic justification is an option for the evidentialist, but it is not an attractive one. For, it would seem that the typical agent is about as well-positioned epistemically with respect to her social security number as she is with respect to any claim. Adopting the epistemic conservatism

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defends a diachronic version of conservatism. But, I will not consider it in the text because the evidentialists with whom I hope to dialogue are interested in offering synchronic analyses of normative epistemic properties.

[43] Vahid, "Varieties" develops this example.

[44] Of those cited in footnote 42, only McGrath would appear to prefer a stronger version.

approach to responding to the problem forgotten evidence, then, threatens to saddle the evidentialist with a strong skepticism about justification.

Consider one final proposal, recently advocated by Conee and Feldman.[45] The proposal is similar to the first proposal in that it appeals to phenomenology which is typically overlooked in cases such as that of Joe's social security belief. However, instead of proposing that Joe has an occurrent seeming that his social security number is 890-23-5762 or that this belief occurrently comes to Joe as something he knows, the proposal is instead that Joe is disposed to have this phenomenology. Joe is disposed to have a seeming that his social security number is 890-23-5762 or Joe is disposed for his belief that his social security number is 890-23-5762 to come to him as something he knows. And these dispositional states constitute Joe's evidence which supports the claim that his social security number is 890-23-5762.

One concern with such a proposal is whether it is consistent with internalism. After all, dispositions to take doxastic attitudes have typically figured into externalist theories in epistemology, rather than internalist ones.[46] But, I agree with Conee and Feldman that an internalist can help herself to these states. For, such states do seem to make a contribution to what a subject is like mentally. If Alice has an experience as of seeing smoke rising over a mountain but no disposition in the presence of such experiences to believe that there is a fire, and John has both an experience as of seeing smoke rising over a mountain as well as a disposition in the presence of such experiences to believe that there is a fire, then it is plausible that Alice and John are not exactly alike mentally.

[45] Earl Conee and Richard Feldman, "Ad Goldman," in Evidentialism and its Discontents, ed. Trent Dougherty, 463-9 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[46] For example, Greco, Achieving Knowledge and Ernest Sosa, A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) each have dispositions play a key role in their theories, and they are paradigmatic externalists.

But I do wish to urge a dilemma against the present proposal nonetheless. Suppose that the proposed disposition which justifies Joe's belief is a disposition to have a seeming that Joe's social security number is 890-23-5762. Either the realization conditions of this disposition include Joe's total evidence or they don't. But, if they do include his total evidence, then one wonders why he wouldn't have an occurrent seeming that his social security number is 890-23-5762, something we supposed previously that he might not have. To be clear, I am not claiming that, necessarily, if S has a disposition to take some doxastic attitude D and the realization conditions of this disposition are satisfied, then S takes D. For, following E. Jonathan Lowe, I think it is possible for a person to exercise an executive will to refrain from believing when she is consciously attending to her evidence and dispositions.[47] But, of course, here we are imagining a case where Joe is not consciously attending to his disposition to seem that his social security number is 890-23-5762. Thus, if the advocate of the present solution is to maintain that Joe's disposition does include among its realization conditions Joe's total evidence, she owes us an explanation for why Joe does not occurrenty have a seeming that his social security number is 890-23-5762. And it is quite difficult to see what sort of explanation she can offer.

Things are no better on the other horn of the dilemma. For, suppose that Joe's total evidence is not among the realization conditions of his disposition to have a seeming that his social security number is 890-23-5762. In that case, one wonders how his having this disposition could show that his total evidence supports the claim that his social security number is 890-23-5762. After all, when one is disposed to believe a claim in light of only part of one's evidence but not all of one's evidence, it seems implausible to claim that one's total evidence supports the claim in question. Similarly, it is implausible to claim that when one is disposed to have a

[47] Lowe, "The Will as a Rational Free Power."

seeming that p in light of merely part of one's evidence one's total evidence thereby supports this claim.

If the foregoing responses were the only responses available to evidentialists in the face of the problem of forgotten evidence, then their view would be precarious indeed. Fortunately, DispES provides evidentialists with an alternative response to the problem which faces none of the difficulties faced by the foregoing proposals. For, the advocate of DispES can propose that in those cases used to present the problem of forgotten evidence, the subjects are disposed to believe the claims in question in light of their total evidence. For example, she can propose that Joe is disposed to believe that his social security number is 890-23-5762 in light of all his evidence. This claim is indeed quite plausible, since it helps to explain why Joe maintains his belief that his social security number is 890-23-5762 under a wide variety of circumstances. But, so long as Joe is disposed to believe that his social security number is 890-23-5762 in light of all of his evidence, DispES implies that Joe's evidence supports this belief. And, so, DispES can be used by an advocate of an evidentialist theory of epistemic justification to argue that Joe's belief that his social security number is 890-23-5762 is justified.

Let me briefly explain why this response does not face the difficulties of the three foregoing responses. First, it does not face the difficulty of the response invoking neglected occurrent phenomenology because it does not invoke such phenomenology. Second, the response based on DispES does not face the difficulty faced by the last response above invoking dispositions to have phenomenology like that proposed by the first strategy. It is true that the strategy invoking DispES appeals to a disposition whose realization conditions include all of Joe's evidence, as would be true on the third strategy above if it took the first horn of the dilemma I proposed. But, the advocate of the strategy invoking DispES needn't explain why the

manifestation of the disposition she cites is absent. For, the manifestation of that disposition is present!

The comparison between DispES and epistemic conservatism is the most delicate. At first glance, it may seem that DispES will imply, just as much as epistemic conservatism does, that when a proposition p coheres with a person S's evidence and S believes p, S is justified in believing p. For, plausibly, S will not believe p without being at least somewhat disposed to believe p in light of S's total evidence. Thus, insofar as it is a worry for epistemic conservatism to imply that subjects in such cases are justified in believing as they do, the same worry will threaten DispES. But it is worth noting that the advocate of DispES has an option of responding to this worry that the advocate of epistemic conservatism does not appear to have. For, she can propose a slight modification to DispES which requires that the believer not simply be disposed to some extent to believe p for her evidence to support p, but that she be disposed with a degree of strength meeting at least a certain threshold to believe p for her evidence to support p. Accordingly, we can propose the following strong dispositional account of evidential support:

> (Strong DispES) For all agents S and propositions p, S's evidence supports p if and only if S is sufficiently strongly disposed to believe p in light of S's total evidence.

Strong DispES will have the consequence that where a person is faced with multiple theories which cohere with her evidence and she believes one, she will not thereby be justified in believing the one she believes. For, a person can be in such a position without it being the case that she is strongly disposed to believe the proposition in question. Thus, epistemic conservatism implies, while Strong DipsES does not, that if a proposition p coheres with a person S's evidence and S believes p, then S is justified in believing p.

In addition to allowing the dispositional evidentialist to maintain this advantage over epistemic conservatism, there are at least two further motivations favoring a move from DispES

to Strong DispES. The move, in other words, is not ad hoc. First, moving to Strong DispES will provide the dispositional evidentialist with resources with which she can mimic what probabilistic accounts of support are able to do in terms of offering a graded account of support. For, like such accounts, she can provide an account of degrees of support, including an account of that degree of support required for justification. Whereas probabilistic accounts do this with a numeric measure, the advocate of Strong DispES does it with a measure of dispositional strength. The second motivation for moving from DispES to Strong DispES is that doing so offers the dispositional evidentialist resources for accounting for certain apparent counterexamples to her view, such as cases of persistent cognitive illusions and persistent cognitive biases. These will be cases where a subject's disposition to believe some claim p persists even after she has become convinced that not-p. For example, it is arguably the case that in the Muller-Lyer example the subject retains a disposition to believe the lines unequal even after becoming firmly convinced they are equal. One way to account for such examples is to claim that while the subject may have some disposition to believe that the lines are unequal, she is more strongly disposed to believe them equal.[48] Indeed, treating these cases in this way significantly parallels what others have said about varying strengths of dispositions in other contexts. Consider, for example, Stephen Mumford's discussion of why soap bubbles don't roll:

> "If we take the shape of being spherical, we can see that any object bearing the property will . . . be disposed to roll in a straight line down an inclined plane. . . . Some have offered counterexamples . . . Lowe, for instance, has said (in discussion) that a soap bubble is spherical but will not roll down an inclined plane. . . . Lowe's case fails for another reason. The spherical soap bubble is indeed disposed to roll but it doesn't do so

[48] Another approach to cases of persistent cognitive illusions would be to claim that in such cases the subject is only disposed to believe the unsupported claim in light of some proper subpart of her evidence and not in light of all of it.

> because it also possesses a countervailing power of stickiness. The stickiness is stronger than the power to roll."[49]

Just as the soap bubble can have a disposition to roll but an even stronger disposition to not roll, a person can have a disposition to believe a claim p but an even stronger disposition to believe not-p; and, an advocate of Strong DispES can appeal to this fact in order to account for cases of persistent cognitive illusions and biases.

As Strong DispES retains the advantages of DispES over both rival accounts of support discussed in 1.1 and as it holds advantages over rival solutions to the problem of forgotten evidence discussed here, I conclude that there are now two significant reasons for an internalist evidentialist to be attracted to Strong DispES.

3. Dispositional Evidentialism and Evidentialist Virtue Epistemology

In the previous two sections, I have argued that Strong DispES has two attractive features from the perspective of internalist evidentialism. It provides an account of evidential support which escapes problems faced by leading competing accounts of support, and it makes available a response to the problem of forgotten evidence which escapes difficulties faced by alternative responses available to evidentialists. Nonetheless, I must address the question of whether DispES escapes the difficulties of these other views only at far too high a cost. Specifically, I must address the concern briefly alluded to in section one about whether DispES escapes these difficulties only by making evidential support far too easy to come by. That concern, again, was that Strong DispES implies that just any sufficiently strong disposition in light of total evidence to believe a proposition, no matter how funky, can account for the presence of epistemic justification. For example, if a detective who had completed half of his regular steps through an

[49] Stephen Mumford, "The Power of Power," in Powers and Capacities in Philosophy: The New Aristotelianism, ed. John Grego and Ruth Groff, 9-24 (London: Routledge, 2013): 14.

investigation was sufficiently strongly disposed in light of his total evidence to believe that the best current suspect committed the crime, then Strong DispES implies that this detective's evidence supports the proposition that this suspect did it. Similarly, in a case where multiple theories cohere equally well with a subject's evidence, if this subject is strongly disposed to believe one of these theories Strong DispES will imply that her evidence supports believing that theory.

In this section, I aim to propose a synthesis of Strong DispES and Virtue Epistemology which is at once a response to the foregoing concern and a third positive reason to favor Strong DispES over its rivals. The synthesis constitutes a response to the foregoing concern because it explains away the appearance of a worrisome consequence for Strong DispES. The synthesis constitutes a positive reason to prefer Strong DispES to its rivals because as Baehr has argued, a synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology is desirable in itself;[50] and, Strong DispES makes possible a synthesis which improves upon the leading synthesis of these views proposed to date.

I'll start with my own proposal. The synthesis I propose is embedded within what I will call an Aristotelian theory of epistemic value. According to this theory, what is epistemically valuable can be explained by a believer's performing her proper function and doing so with excellence. Following Feldman, I propose that the epistemic "ought" of epistemic justification is a role-ought.[51] In other words, it specifies what it is for a believer to perform her proper function as a believer. It is precisely such a sense of "ought" that I believe Strong DispES helps the evidentialist to clarify. For the role of a believer is to form beliefs in response to her

[50] Baehr, The Inquiring Mind.

[51] Feldman, "The Ethics of Belief."

environment. And, she does this by believing what she is strongly disposed to believe in light of her total evidence. This is what believers do that non-believers don't do.

But fulfilling one's proper function is not all there is to living well as an epistemic agent. For it is one thing to fulfill one's proper function, and another thing to fulfill that function with excellence. It matters not to whether one fulfills one's function as a believer precisely what one's epistemic dispositions are; but, it matters much to whether one fulfills one's function as a believer with excellence what those epistemic dispositions are. A believer who believes in accordance with funky epistemic dispositions may believe precisely what she ought to believe, given that she has those dispositions; but, she is still missing out on something valuable epistemically precisely because she has those dispositions rather than others.

I propose that we synthesize the proposed evidentialist account of epistemic justification from part one with a virtue theory of flourishing as an epistemic agent. We can do so in the following way. Using the resources of the proposal in part one above, we can provide a full theory of what it is to fulfill one's function as a believer—to take all and only those attitudes one ought to take. That theory is Strong DispPF:

> (Strong DispPF) A person S fulfills her proper function as a believer to the extent that she takes all and only those doxastic attitudes which she is sufficiently strongly disposed to take in light of all of her evidence.

This theory can be complemented by a virtue-based account of what it is for a believer to fulfill her proper function as a believer with excellence. That account is VirtPFE:

> (VirtPFE) A person S fulfills her proper function as a believer with excellence to the extent that she takes all and only those doxastic attitudes which she is sufficiently strongly disposed to take by virtuous dispositions in light of all of her evidence.

Both the person who merely fulfills her proper function as a believer and the person who fulfills that function with excellence take all and only those attitudes they ought to take given the way

that they are; but, the person who fulfills his proper function with excellence is a better way than the person who merely fulfills his proper function. The difference lies in the value of the dispositions in accordance with which each forms his attitudes.

Certainly more deserves to be said about the proposed synthesis. For example, the notion of virtuous dispositions needs to be spelled out carefully. While I will not defend any particular theory of virtuous dispositions here, I do briefly note that there is an important constraint that must be met by such a theory if it is to be attractive from the perspective of an advocate of the Aristotelian synthesis above. Namely, the theory must explain what it is that makes the virtuous dispositions virtuous without simply claiming that they are virtuous because they guide the believer toward believing what her evidence supports. This is an important constraint because, given Strong DispPF and VirtPFE, an explanation of the virtuousness of virtuous dispositions that violates it will yield the result that there is no difference between fulfilling one's proper function as a believer and fulfilling that function with excellence—something an advocate of the Aristotelian synthesis will not want to accept. Thankfully, there are available explanations of the virtuousness of virtuous dispositions which do not appeal to evidential support in this way, including explanations that are available to internalists.[52] Such theories, or theories inspired by them, might be profitably pursued by an advocate of the proposed synthesis.

While there is undoubtedly more to say about the details of the Aristotelian synthesis above, including the notion of virtuous dispositions, I propose that enough has been said to accomplish my two central aims in this section. Those aims were to show that, given the proposed synthesis, Strong DispES can escape from the problem of funky dispositions and to

[52] See, e.g., Baehr, The Inquiring Mind and James Montmarquet, "Epistemic Virtue," Mind 96 (1987): 482-97.

show that the proposed synthesis is superior to the leading proposed synthesis of its kind currently on offer.

First, let me explain how the proposed synthesis enables the advocate of Strong DispES to account for cases involving funky dispositions. These are cases where a person with funky dispositions believes in accordance with them. DispES predicts that what she believes is what she ought to believe. But, we are inclined to believe that this prediction is mistaken, because there is obviously something amiss about her believing as she does. Given the proposed synthesis, there is something amiss about her believing as she does. But what is amiss is not that she has believed what she ought not believe. Rather, what is amiss is that she has believed in accordance with non-virtuous, perhaps even vicious, dispositions. In the detective example, for instance, I claim that the detective who is in fact strongly disposed to believe that the best current suspect committed the crime ought to believe this. This is what Strong DispES implies. But I claim that such a person is a no-good detective. He fails to fulfill his proper function as a believer, and as a detective, with excellence.

This response is actually rather similar to a response commonly offered by evidentialists against a similar problem raised against their views. Baehr argues against Conee's and Feldman's evidentialist view of epistemic justification, for example, that it implies that persons who inquire irresponsibly can have justified beliefs, since they may very well believe in accordance with what the evidence which they have irresponsibly gathered supports.[53] In response to such examples, evidentialists such as Feldman have typically dug in their heels, insisting that, given that a person has inquired in this way, he very well ought to believe what his

[53] Baehr, The Inquiring Mind.

evidence supports.[54] It may be that there is something negative we should say about such a person's character, but not about his beliefs. My proposed synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology responds in like manner to the problem of funky dispositions. I propose that, given that a person has such dispositions, there is a sense—a sense captured by Strong DispPF—in which what she ought to do is believe in accordance with them. But, at the same time, I propose that there is some kind of epistemic value that she lacks. This value is accounted for by VirtPF.

I'm not claiming here that the response I offer to the case of funky dispositions is on its own just as plausible as the response of Feldman to cases of irresponsible evidence gathering or even that it is clearly satisfactory. Rather, I am noting that there is a significant parallel between the responses and that, given the attractiveness of Strong DispES displayed already in this paper, retaining it and responding in this way to the problem of funky dispositions may be the best available option for the evidentialist. Moreover, since, as we saw in section two, evidentialists such as Conee and Feldman are already prepared to grant that epistemic dispositions may serve as unjustified justifiers, if they wish to resist my proposal and claim that funky dispositions cannot serve as such, they need an explanation for why they cannot which coheres well with their general epistemology. I propose, though, that such an explanation will be difficult to come by, as these evidentialists certainly do not treat other unjustified justifiers, such as experiences, in this way—dividing them between the funky and non-funky and claiming only the non-funky contribute to epistemic justification. Accordingly, even if the present response to the problem of funky dispositions is not on its own as plausible as Feldman's response to the objection from irresponsible evidence gathering, and even if is not clearly satisfactory, I conclude that

[54] Feldman, "Respecting the Evidence."

evidentialists should nonetheless take it very seriously because it is arguably the best option they have.

Let me turn, then, to my second contention: that the availability of the present synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology is in fact one last positive reason to favor Strong DispES. To see this, begin with the observation that it is the presence of examples just like those I have been discussing which has led Baehr, and apparently Conee and Feldman,[55] to prefer some sort of synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology. Such a synthesis is attractive precisely because it helps to address these kinds of examples. But, what I want to argue here is that the Aristotelian synthesis I have proposed is superior to the leading current proposal for such a synthesis—a proposal offered by Baehr. Thus, not only does this Aristotelian synthesis provide the resources for the advocate of Strong DispES to respond to the problem of funky dispositions; but, it offers a third positive reason to favor Strong DispES to its rivals. For, Strong DispES is easily incorporated into a synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology which is preferable to the leading current synthesis of these views; and some sort of synthesis of these views is amply motivated.

Consider the proposed synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology offered by Baehr:

> (Baehr Justification) S is justified in believing p at t if and only if S's evidence at t appears to S to support p, provided that if S's agency makes a salient contribution to S's evidential situation with respect to p, S functions, qua agent and relative to that contribution, in a manner consistent with intellectual virtue.

Clearly, Baehr Justification is a mouthful. This may be one reason to be suspicious of it. At bottom, it provides a disjunctive account of justification. A proposition is justified just in case either certain constraints are met and the believer's agency doesn't make a salient contribution of

[55] Conee and Feldman, Evidentialism, 99-101.

a certain kind C or certain different constraints are met and the believer's agency does make a salient contribution of kind C. Disjunctive accounts should be viewed with suspicion because of their complexity.

And there is a more powerful reason to be suspicious of Baehr Justification. It is that Baehr Justification fails to account for what is valuable in the cases of those who manifest intellectual vice while believing what their evidence supports. It fails to account for the fact that there is some sense in which the subjects in such examples ought to believe what they do. That there is some sort of value achieved by these subjects is a point Baehr himself appears to appreciate in a footnote from his chapter on these issues where he claims that the subjects from examples involving defective inquiry do have justification of "the standard deontological variety." But, if they do, Baehr Justification certainly does not tell us so. Thus, at the very best, Baehr justification offers us a disjointed thesis about only one dimension of epistemic evaluation.

But the Aristotelian synthesis above promises more. It accounts for what is valuable in the cases of defective inquiry or funky dispositions, as well as what is disvaluable in these cases. Because it does, and because Strong DispES is used to construct this synthesis, we have a third reason for an internalist evidentialist to prefer Strong DispES to its rivals.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have articulated a novel account of when a person's evidence supports a proposition and argued that this account is attractive from the perspective of internalist evidentialist views in epistemology. I defended three reasons in favor of the account. First, the account avoids problems arguably faced by rival accounts of evidential support. Second, it provides the evidentialist with an approach to responding to the problem of forgotten evidence

which avoids problems of alternative approaches. And, third, it is easily employable in an attractive synthesis of evidentialism and virtue epistemology.