

7. For a detailed discussion of this move by the skeptic, see Alston 1993, chapt. 4.

8. I argue in chapter 6 that it depends on the plausibility of externalist metaepistemologies.

9. Plantinga (1993b, chap. 12) appears to argue that it is difficult to see how natural selection would favor even true beliefs. The right false belief coupled with the right odd desires will do wonders for increasing the probability of my survival.

10. Hume 1888, p. 187.

11. Putnam 1981, chap. 1.

12. Fumerton and Foley 1985.

13. See Hume 1888, p. 210.

14. In his famous opening remarks in Meditation I.

15. See Butchvarov 1992.

Chapter Three

Internalist and Externalist Foundationalism

The traditional debate over skepticism has largely presupposed the framework of foundationalism. With the rise of the internalism/externalism debate in epistemology, however, it is apparent that there are radically different ways to understand foundational justification. In this chapter we begin by examining the traditional epistemic regress argument for foundationalism. Before presenting what I take to be the most important traditional conception of foundational justification, I examine the internalism/externalism controversy, or more appropriately, *controversies*, so that we may better understand the sense in which traditional foundationalism is (and is not) committed to internalism. This paves the way for a detailed examination in the next chapter of paradigm externalist versions of foundationalism. Having distinguished importantly different senses in which views about justification may be internalist or externalist, I examine in some detail what I take to be the most plausible traditional account of foundationalism, an account that is standardly regarded as internalist. As we shall see, however, one must be very careful to distinguish the senses in which this view is and is not committed to internalism. I conclude by distinguishing a *conceptual* from an *epistemic* regress argument for foundationalism.

The Principle of Inferential Justification and the Epistemic Regress Argument for Foundationalism

We saw in the last chapter that the skeptic relies heavily on the principle of inferential justification to support strong local skepticism with respect to various sorts of propositions. Ironically, perhaps, that same

principle is assumed, together with a *rejection* of skepticism, to argue for classic foundationalism. The foundationalist holds that every justified belief owes its justification ultimately to some belief that is noninferentially justified. One wants to be able to present the argument for foundationalism without yet having a philosophically detailed analysis of what noninferential justification might consist in, and so it is helpful to begin with a neutral—and for that reason not very informative—characterization of the distinction between inferential and noninferential justification. Let us say that a belief that *P* is inferentially justified if its justification is constituted by the having of at least one belief other than *P*. A belief is noninferentially justified if its justification does not consist in the having of any other beliefs. This way of making the distinction leaves open the question of whether there are any noninferentially justified beliefs, and of course it leaves open the question of what might make a belief noninferentially justified.

Some paradigm internalists and almost all paradigm externalists embrace foundationalism. Both recognize a distinction, in principle, between inferentially and noninferentially justified beliefs, and both hold that all justified beliefs can trace their justificatory ancestry back to noninferentially justified beliefs. They hold radically different views as to what noninferential justification is. The classic epistemological alternative to foundationalism is the coherence theory of justification, a view that can be held in either an internalist or an externalist form, although, as we shall see, it is unlikely that the view will have much attraction in its externalist form. Part of what makes the contemporary metaepistemological scene so interesting is that such odd alliances are being formed. Classic foundationalists unite with coherence theorists in their opposition to externalism. Classic foundationalists and externalists unite against the coherence theorist in their support of foundationalism. Part of what we must do in the remainder of this chapter is to make clearer just exactly what makes someone an internalist or an externalist in epistemology.

As I indicated, the principle of inferential justification plays an integral role in the famous regress argument for foundationalism. If all justification were inferential, the argument goes, we would have no justification for believing anything whatsoever. If all justification were inferential, then to be justified in believing some proposition *P* I would need to infer it from some other proposition *E1*. According to the first clause of the principle of inferential justification, I would be justified in believing *P* on the basis of *E1* only if I were justified in believing *E1*. But if all justification were inferential I would be justified in believing

E1 only if I believed it on the basis of something else *E2*, which I justifiably believe on the basis of something else *E3*, which I justifiably believe on the basis of something else *E4*. . . , and so on ad infinitum. Finite minds cannot complete an infinitely long chain of reasoning, so if all justification were inferential we would have no justification for believing anything.

This argument relies on the first clause of the principle of inferential justification and is perhaps the most familiar version of the regress argument for foundationalism. It is important to realize, however, that we can invoke the second clause of the principle together with the first clause to generate not one but an infinite number of infinite regresses that face the antifoundationalist anxious to avoid global strong skepticism. To be justified in believing *P* on the basis of *E1*, we must be justified in believing *E1*. But we must also be justified in believing that *E1* makes probable *P*. And if all justification is inferential, then we must justifiably infer that *E1* makes probable *P* from some proposition *F1*, which we justifiably infer from some proposition *F2*, and so on. We must also justifiably believe that *F1* makes probable that *E1* makes probable *P*, so we would have to infer that from some proposition *G1*, which we justifiably infer from some proposition *G2*, and so on. And we would have to infer that *G1* makes probable that *F1* makes probable that *E1* makes probable *P*. . . . The infinite regresses are mushrooming out in an infinite number of different directions. If finite minds should worry about the possibility of completing one infinitely long chain of reasoning, they should be downright depressed about the possibility of completing an infinite number of infinitely long chains of reasoning. I call this the *epistemic* regress argument for foundationalism in order to distinguish it from what I take to be an even more fundamental *conceptual* regress argument for foundationalism, an argument I discuss later.

It should be noted that the epistemic regress argument for foundationalism requires the additional premise that strong global skepticism is false. In principle it is possible for a skeptic to argue that there is no such thing as a noninferentially justified belief and to use the regress argument as an argument for strong global skepticism. As we noted, strong global skepticism is the paradigm of a conclusion that will make any argument for it epistemically self-defeating, and the vast majority of skeptics are unwilling to embrace a conclusion this radical. Almost all skeptics are local skeptics who either explicitly or implicitly embrace the existence of noninferentially justified beliefs.

It is an understatement to suggest that the epistemic regress argument for foundationalism is not without its critics. As you might expect, the

main criticism comes from the coherentists, who reject the crucial presupposition of the argument that justification is *linear* in structure. According to the coherentists, all justification always involves reference to other beliefs. The coherentist may also accept a version of the principle of inferential justification. The coherentist may well allow both that the other beliefs that justify me in believing *P* will themselves be justified and that for them to justify me in accepting *P* I must be aware of the way in which they bear upon the truth of *P*. The first clause of the principle of inferential justification does not generate a regress, however, because although my belief that *P* will depend on my having another justified belief, for example *E*, the justification for *E* will in turn rest in part on my having the belief that *P*. To be fair, one must stress the "in part." Coherentists are sometimes accused of endorsing the legitimacy of circular reasoning, but one does not really move in a circle at all. To caricature the view this way is to try to describe once again the coherentist's view of justification from within the confines of a linear conception of justification. One does not *first* justify one's belief that *P* by appeal to *E* and *then* justify one's belief that *E* by appeal to *F*, which one ultimately justifies by appealing once again to *P*. It is the entire structure of our belief system that justifies the individual beliefs that make it up. Each belief is justified by the relation it bears to the rest. Whether one can avoid the regress generated by the second clause of the principle is a subject to which we return in chapter 5 when we discuss the coherence theory of justification in detail.

The coherence theorist tries to avoid both the regress and foundations by rejecting the linear conception of justification and by rejecting the idea that the justification of justifiers must exclude reference to the belief being justified. A more heroic, albeit somewhat desperate, attempt to avoid foundations would be to acknowledge the existence of the regresses but deny that they are vicious. Philosophers, after all, tend to be somewhat paranoid about regresses. Not all regresses are problematic, and the fact that we are finite minds does not mean that we have a finite number of beliefs. Indeed, if one makes the standard distinction between occurrent and dispositional belief, it seems entirely plausible to suppose that we *do* have an infinite number of beliefs. Without analyzing the distinction yet, it seems a virtual truism that we think of ourselves (and others) as having beliefs in propositions which we are not currently considering. When I describe Goldman as believing that reliably produced beliefs are justified beliefs, I am not suggesting that right this very moment he is mulling over the hypothesis while nodding his head in agreement. In whatever sense it is that people can be said to

believe propositions they are not currently considering, it seems entirely plausible to say of you that you believe that $2 > 1$, that $3 > 1$, that $4 > 1$, and so on ad infinitum. When you believe *P*, you also believe $P \vee Q$, $P \vee Q \vee R$, $P \vee Q \vee R \vee S$, and so on ad infinitum. Furthermore, it seems intuitively clear that all of these beliefs will be equally justified and thus that there is no obstacle to having an infinite number of justified beliefs. But if it is in principle possible to have an infinite number of justified beliefs, why should we assume that we would ever run out of beliefs to be the links in these infinitely long chains of reasoning?

It seems to me true that we not only can but do have an infinite number of justified beliefs. Nevertheless, one can plausibly argue that this will not avoid the need for foundations if we are going to reject strong global skepticism from within a framework presupposing that justification has a linear structure. The first problem is that the most obvious examples of someone's having infinitely many justified beliefs are examples where we can, in fact, trace the justification for these infinitely many beliefs back to a single proposition believed. I believe (perhaps justifiably) that it is a law of nature that all metal expands when heated. There is a sense in which I would also automatically believe that if *a* were metal and heated it would expand, if *b* were metal and heated it would expand, and so on, but only because I realize that these propositions follow from the hypothesis that it is a law that all metal expands when heated. If we must employ this sort of model to understand the way in which we can come to have an infinite number of dispositional beliefs, then it is plausible to argue that when we have an infinite number of justified beliefs their justification is always ultimately owed to a finite set of beliefs. And when we get back to the finite set of beliefs, we will no longer have an infinite number of justified beliefs upon which to draw in our search for justification. The infinite number of beliefs I have are always farther along the chain of linear justification and cannot be used as justifiers *prior* to the justification of the beliefs upon which their own justification is parasitic.

Although it is hardly an argument, another reason for doubting the possibility of avoiding foundations by embracing linear infinite regresses as harmless is the sheer inability to imagine how the regress would be continued. To be sure, foundationalists do not agree either on what noninferential justification consists in or on which beliefs are noninferentially justified, but it is terribly difficult to even imagine how one might continue to appeal to still more and more beliefs in justifying one's belief that one is in pain now. That is not to deny that philosophers have tried to find all sorts of things to which one not only can but

must appeal in order to have an epistemically rational belief that one is in pain, but, these arguments typically confuse metabeliefs about the correct linguistic descriptions of pain with beliefs about pain.

Yet another way in which one can avoid commitment to foundations is to reject the principle of inferential justification upon which the regress argument relied. Rejection of the principle is not, however, a sufficient condition to avoid the regress argument. Externalists, we noted in the last chapter, typically reject the second clause of the principle but embrace the first, and for this reason are still likely to embrace foundationalism.

If we decide that there are noninferentially justified beliefs and that inferentially justified beliefs owe their justification ultimately to noninferentially justified beliefs, then we obviously need an account of both noninferential and inferential justification. I suggested earlier that classic foundationalists and most paradigm externalists accept a version of foundationalism, but before we distinguish internalist from externalist versions of foundationalism we need a clearer understanding of how to understand the internalism/externalism controversy.

Internalism/Externalism Controversies

I have made a number of references to the internalism/externalism metaepistemological controversy without having yet defined it. Despite the fact that much of contemporary epistemology takes place in the shadow of the internalism/externalism debate, and despite the fact that the controversy seems to strike deep at the heart of fundamental epistemological issues, I am not sure that it has been clearly defined. I fear that philosophers are choosing sides without a thorough understanding of what the respective views entail. In subsequent discussion I distinguish at least four different controversies that can be associated with what is labelled the internalist/externalist debate in epistemology.

“Internal State” Internalism

Perhaps the most natural way of understanding the controversy, given its name, is to define the internalist as one who is committed to the view that epistemic properties are *internal* characteristics of a subject. The internalist, on this view, maintains that *S*'s knowing that *P*, or having a justified belief that *P*, consists in *S*'s being in some internal state. The externalist, by contrast, is one who is committed to the view that

knowledge and justified belief at least *involve* external states. Thus, on this way of defining the controversy, one can easily understand a common theme among internalists about *epistemic justification*, namely, that two people cannot be in identical internal states while one is justified in believing *P* and the other is not justified in believing *P*. The externalist, on the other hand, embraces the view that you and I can be in the same present internal states while one of us has a justified belief and the other does not. On many popular versions of externalism, for example, the epistemic status of one's belief depends crucially on its causal ancestry. Even though your present state is identical to mine, you might be justified in believing *P* because your present state came about in the “right” way, while I am unjustified in believing *P* because mine did not.

Anyone who wants to define the internalism/externalism controversy this way owes us an account of precisely what the contrast is supposed to be between internal and external states. Can my present internal states include relational properties? If they cannot, how many epistemologists are really prepared to identify the conditions that constitute having a justified belief with purely nonrelational properties? Paradigm internalists include sense-datum theorists who hold that it is direct acquaintance (a relation) with sense data that constitutes some kinds of noninferential justification. If internal states do include relational properties, it will be very difficult to draw the line between internal and external relational properties. Suppose, for example, that I am a classic foundationalist who embraces some version of direct realism. I hold that one can be directly acquainted with surfaces or other logical constituents of *external* objects and that such acquaintance is what justifies me in believing various propositions describing the external object. Such a view would be for many a paradigm of the kind of internalism under attack by contemporary externalism. But can we say that being acquainted with something external is itself an *internal* state of the subject who bears that relation of acquaintance to the *external* object? If one allows that internal states include relations whose relata include external objects, on the other hand, why should we deny that being presently caused by such and such a stimulus is an internal state? If we do not, of course, there is nothing to prevent certain paradigm forms of externalism (versions of a causal theory of justification) from moving into the internalist camp.

I should perhaps stress again that I do not think it makes any sense to suppose that there is some *one* way of defining the internalism/externalism controversy. We are dealing with a technical philosophical

distinction, and our only concern should be with finding a way of characterizing the distinction that makes it illuminating and valuable by way of contrasting importantly different views. One certainly can define the controversy in terms of whether or not internal states of a person are sufficient to justify that person in believing various propositions. And one can formulate precise definitions of internal states. If one appreciates the difficulties one will encounter by allowing as internal states relational properties involving *relata* that are external to the subject, one could simply define internal states as nonrelational properties of the mind and those relational properties of the mind whose *relata* are themselves nonrelational properties of the mind. And if we define internalism this way, we can still find philosophers who will satisfy this definition of the internalist. If, for example, one embraces an adverbial theory of consciousness and holds that being appeared to in a certain way (perhaps coupled with thinking in a certain way) is sufficient for being justified in believing certain propositions about the physical world, one will be an internalist in the sense we just defined, at least an internalist with respect to this sort of justification. Or if one holds that it is acquaintance with nonrelational properties of the mind that yields justified belief, one will again satisfy the above characterization of an internalist with respect to this sort of justification. I personally do not think that the above definition gets at the heart of the controversy that divides contemporary epistemologists. I suspect that most people who think of themselves as externalists, for example, want to keep Moore, who contemplated the possibility that sense data have an existence external to and independent of the mind, in the internalist camp.

It is worth noting in passing that if one defines the controversy in terms of whether or not same internal states yield same epistemic status for beliefs (on virtually any plausible interpretation of "internal"), there will be very few epistemologists who are internalists about *knowledge*. All those who hold a justified true belief account of knowledge, where the truth condition is nonredundant, are introducing into the analysis an external element. A belief's being true will constitute an external element unless one embraces a very radical coherentist account of truth that relativizes truth to the "internal" belief system of the individual believer.¹

"Access" Internalisms

Perhaps as common, or even more common, an approach to understanding the internalism/externalism controversy involves focusing on

the question of whether "access" to the conditions that constitute epistemically justified or rational belief is a necessary condition for the belief's being epistemically rational. Thus, many paradigm internalists seem to hold that a set of conditions *X* can constitute your justification for believing *P* only if you have access to the fact that *X* obtains *and* access to the fact that when *X* obtains the belief is likely to be true.² (This approach to defining internalism may not in the final analysis be so very different from the attempt to define the internalist as one who locates justification "in" the mind. When the Modern philosophers distinguished what was "in" the mind from what lay "outside" the mind, it is not implausible to suppose that at least sometimes the distinction was *epistemic* in nature. On one interpretation, for example, sense data were "in" the mind for a philosopher like Berkeley primarily in the sense that they were "before" the mind. That which is before the mind is that to which one has a certain direct or privileged access.)

I cannot stress too strongly here the importance of distinguishing a general access requirement for justified belief from the principle of inferential justification. The principle of inferential justification was just that—a principle concerning *inferential* justification. It maintained that when you use one *belief* to support another belief you must be justified in accepting the supporting belief and justified in believing that the truth of the supporting belief would make probable the truth of the supported belief. The principle of inferential justification does *not* assert that when one is inferentially justified in believing *P* one must have access to the fact that one is justified in believing *P*. Given what the principle of inferential justification explicitly states, it is entirely possible for me to satisfy the conditions it sets forth for being inferentially justified in believing *P* without satisfying the conditions required for being justified in believing that I am justified in believing that *P*.

The crudely worded access requirement, as I presented it above, is a *general* principle about justification. It applies both to inferential and to noninferential justification, and it is a very dangerous principle to accept because it clearly invites the specter of a vicious regress. Before elaborating, however, it will be useful to distinguish a *strong* from a *weak* access requirement. Let us say that strong access internalism with respect to epistemic justification maintains that in order for *S* to be justified in believing *P*, *S* must actually have access to the conditions that constitute that justification. The weak access internalist argues only that in order for *S* to be justified in believing *P*, *S* must be *able* to access the conditions that constitute his justification.³ Alston (1989) embraces a weaker access requirement still, arguing that one should require only

that a *ground* of justified belief be the *kind* of thing to which one has potential access. Alston's access requirement is doubly weak in that he explicitly rejects any requirement that one be able to access the *connection* between the ground of one's justification and the truth of the belief for which it is a ground. Since the adequacy of the ground is part of what makes it a justificatory ground, Alston in effect requires no access, real or potential, to the fact that one has justified belief.⁴

Now if one were cynical one might suspect that the common use of the term "access" by internalists who support conditions of access for justification is a way of trying to disguise the fact that one is really talking about knowledge or rational belief about rational belief. "Access" is itself an epistemic term. One has access to the fact that *P* only if one knows that *P* or perhaps has an epistemically rational belief that *P*. Thus, the strong access internalist with respect to epistemic justification is really advancing the view that in order to have an epistemically justified belief one must know or at least have an epistemically justified belief that one has an epistemically justified belief. For the purposes of the discussion let us suppose that it is the latter view, that "access" is to be spelled out in terms of "epistemically justified belief." There is no way of shutting down the requirement once it is introduced, and consequently *S*'s having an epistemically justified belief that *P* will entail that *S* has an epistemically justified belief that he has an epistemically justified belief that *P*, and will entail that *S* has an epistemically justified belief that he has an epistemically justified belief that he has an epistemically justified belief, and so on ad infinitum. In one respect, the infinite regress encountered appears to be worse than the epistemic regress that foundationalism was designed to avoid (see the introduction to this chapter). To be justified in believing *P*, not only would one need an infinite number of beliefs, but one would need an infinite number of beliefs of ever-increasing complexity. I myself have a terrible time even keeping straight the proposition I am supposed to be believing when I move past the second or third metalevel. I shall return to a more careful analysis of whether and how regresses generated by access requirements are vicious in the section on the acquaintance theory later in this chapter.

Weak access internalism might seem to fare better when it comes to avoiding a vicious regress because it does not require that anyone actually have these increasingly complex metabeliefs. Weak access internalism, however, is also vague precisely because of the ambiguities of the modal operator. The *potentiality* presupposed in talk of potential access could be logical, lawful, or one of the many common but imprecise

notions of possibility that float around in ordinary discourse. Let us say that *P* is logically possible if it involves no logical inconsistency. *P* is lawfully possible if the supposition that *P* occurs does not violate any laws of nature. As I indicated, there are, of course, other looser senses of possibility. To my great sorrow, I cannot dunk a basketball. It is not logically impossible for me to dunk a basketball, and my dunking a basketball would not violate any laws of nature. I cannot do it only in the sense that the present state of my body, the earth, the atmosphere, and the like, together with the laws of nature, preclude my dunking a basketball *in relatively normal conditions*. The normal conditions clause is needed to take care of freak updrafts, for example, that might enable me just this once to reach over the hoop.

Now the weak access requirement, it seems to me, is unlikely to get at the core of the internalism/externalism controversy. As we shall see in examining specific externalist views, it would be all too easy for an externalist to incorporate weak access requirements into an account of justified belief while retaining its essential externalist character. I argue that all of the paradigm externalists will (or at least should) think that it is logically possible to access the conditions that constitute justification, and most often they will think that it is lawfully possible to access the conditions for justification. They will not typically think that it is possible in the looser sense described above to access the conditions that constitute justification, but there is nothing in their externalism that would prevent them from adding such access conditions if they get tired of hearing internalists whining about the lack of access requirements.⁵ I am not arguing that externalists would be sympathetic to the claim that *S*'s being justified in believing *P* entails *S*'s having the potential to access the conditions that constitute his being justified in believing *P*. I am only pointing out that an externalist who accepted such a view would stay an externalist *provided that the access referred to was still given a paradigmatic externalist understanding*.

One can try to use access requirements in order to distinguish in principle between internalist and externalist views by adding further restrictions to the way in which it must be possible to access the conditions that constitute justification. Thus Chisholm (1989) appears to argue that when one's belief has a certain epistemic status, it must be possible to discover that it has such a status by looking inward. If one holds that all and only internal states can be introspected, one might think of such a view as combining "internal state" internalism with "weak access" internalism. Of course, externalists have their externalist analyses of introspective knowledge, and it is still not clear that we

are going to count as an internalist the philosopher who pays lip service to access requirements from within an externalist framework.

Whether one adopts strong or weak access requirements for justified belief (even access requirements as weak as Alston's), one must be very careful to avoid vicious *conceptual* regress. If access is understood in terms of justified belief (or knowledge which in turn is analyzed as justified belief), one is clearly asking for trouble if one analyzes *all* justified belief in such a way that access requirements are introduced *into the analysis*. Such analyses will be transparently circular. The access requirements in one's analysis of justification will presuppose an understanding of the very epistemic concepts one is attempting to analyze. The solution for "access" internalists is to deny that their access requirements are *constitutive* of all justified belief even if actual or potential access to constituents of justification is in some strong sense *implied* by the nature of those constituents. I return to this point in the section on acquaintance.

Internalism and the Rejection of Naturalistic Epistemology

My own view is that the heart of the internalism/externalism controversy has very little to do with justification being an internal state or with the question of whether *S*'s being justified in believing *P* implies that *S* is or has the potential to be justified in believing that *S* is justified in believing *P*. In fact, I think it has to do more with the older issue of whether or not to "naturalize" epistemology. I argue that the best way to think of the common thread that runs through paradigm externalist accounts of knowledge and justification is their reliance on the *reducibility* of epistemic concepts to nomological concepts. Thus the concept of reliability that is the building block of Goldman's account of justified belief seems clearly to be a concept that relies heavily on our understanding of nomic connections (whether we understand reliability in terms of causal propensities, probabilistic laws, or close causally possible worlds).⁶ Armstrong (1973), of course, explicitly invokes causal concepts in explicating basic (foundational) beliefs that operate as that thermometer registering the temperature. Nozick's (1981) tracking relations, too, can only be explicated using causal concepts. To be sure, he employs the metaphor of close possible worlds in explaining the truth conditions of the counterfactuals that define tracking, but, to his credit, he realizes that the metaphor is just that—a metaphor. The contingent counterfactuals that define tracking assert nonlogical, nomic connections between the states of affairs referred to in the antecedents and

consequents. The concept of information processing on which Dretske (1981) so heavily relies as the cornerstone of his approach to understanding justification seems just as clearly a concept that relies on an understanding of certain sorts of causal chains as the way to make clear the concept of a justified belief.

The paradigm internalist, by contrast, thinks that there are certain *sui generis* epistemic concepts that cannot be reduced to any more familiar, scientifically "respectable" concepts. These epistemic concepts may involve internal states but, as we shall see, this is a complicated issue. The clarity and distinctness of ideas that ground justification in self-evident truths for Descartes, the indefinable epistemic concept that Chisholm (1989) uses to define other epistemic concepts, the acquaintance that Russell (1926, 1959), Price (1950), and Hume (1888) all explicitly or implicitly appeal to in explicating noninferential justification, are clearly concepts that cannot be analyzed employing the concepts of causal or lawful (universal or probabilistic) contingent connections.

It should be obvious that if we define internalists and externalists in terms of their willingness to "naturalize" epistemic concepts by reducing them to scientifically "respectable" nomic concepts, we must recognize that there are important differences within the respective camps. The specific account of noninferential justification that I defend (and that I think is historically very important) relies heavily on an unanalyzable concept of acquaintance. Other "nonnaturalists" in epistemology invoke different primitives. In other words, given this way of understanding the internalism/externalism distinction, there will be different *versions* or *species* of both internalism and externalism (just as there are importantly different versions, for example, of both physicalism and dualism with respect to the analysis of mental states).

"Inferential" Internalism

Earlier I suggested that there is an obvious disagreement between paradigm internalists and externalists over the plausibility of the principle of inferential justification. I have emphasized the importance of distinguishing acceptance of the principle of inferential justification from strong access internalism. But we might focus on the externalist's rejection of the second clause of the principle to characterize a distinction between what I call *inferential internalism* and *inferential externalism*. The inferential internalist believes that in order for me to be justified in believing *P* on the basis of *E*, I must be justified in believing that *E* makes *P* probable. The inferential externalist denies this. I noted earlier

that the principle of inferential justification is not self-evidently a meta-epistemological view, but in the context of this metaepistemological debate let us say that the inferential internalist holds, whereas the inferential externalist denies, that *S*'s justifiably believing that *E* makes *P* probable is literally a constituent of *S*'s being inferentially justified in believing *P* on the basis of *E*. Since this analysis invokes the concept of justification, it can only be construed as partially analyzing the concept of *inferential* justification. The internalist who adopts this analysis of inferential justification will be tempted to borrow a leaf from the book of paradigm externalism and offer a recursive analysis of justification.

Summary

I have sketched some of the main ways in which one might try to understand the internalism/externalism controversy. Earlier I argued that in general it is unwise to suppose that there is only one way of correctly analyzing even those concepts that find expression in ordinary discourse. If it is a mistake to insist that there is only one analysis of familiar concepts, it is an even more obvious mistake to suppose that there is only one way of understanding technical philosophical terminology. There are really only two criteria one might use in choosing one way of understanding the controversy over another. First, we have *paradigm* representatives of the opposing camps, and I assume we want to understand the controversy so that these paradigm internalists and externalists get put in their respective camps. Goldman, Nozick, Dretske, and Armstrong are externalists.⁷ Descartes, Hume, Chisholm, Price, and the Russell who emphasized the importance of direct acquaintance are internalists.⁸ I want to understand the controversy so that these philosophers stay, respectively, externalists and internalists. Second, and more important, we want to understand the controversy in a way that makes it most interesting. We want to see what the *fundamental* disagreement is between the paradigm internalists and the paradigm externalists.

I introduced this preliminary discussion of the internalism/externalism debate because I did not want to begin an examination of internalist versus externalist analyses of noninferential justification in a vacuum. At the same time, I do not want to complete our discussion of how best to define the fundamental nature of the controversy until we have a chance to look at some of the prominent internalists and externalists, as I shall do now, beginning with internalist foundationalism. As we

examine each view we shall try to keep clear the sense in which its proponent is or is not an internalist. Doing so should further clarify the implications of different forms of internalism and externalism.

Traditional Accounts of Noninferential Justification

Infallible Belief

If we look at some of the classic attempts to explicate the concept of noninferentially justified belief, we find that noninferential justification is often implicitly or explicitly identified with infallible belief. It seems fairly clear, for example, that Descartes wanted his foundations for knowledge to consist in beliefs that could not possibly be mistaken. When Price introduced the notion of sense data, knowledge of which would be included in the foundations of empirical knowledge, he contrasted sense data and their nonrelational properties with other sorts of things about which one could be mistaken, implying that the way to find the correct foundational knowledge is to scrape away from one's beliefs all that could be false. There are, however, a number of different ways of formulating the notion of an infallible belief. Lehrer (1974) initially suggests that we understand infallibility in terms of whether or not the occurrence of the belief entails the truth of what is believed:

- Ia. *S*'s belief that *P* at *t* is infallible if *S*'s believing *P* at *t* entails that *P* is true.

Let us construe the entailment broadly so that *P* may be said to entail *Q* if *P* formally, analytically, or synthetically entails *Q*. (*P* formally entails *Q* if it is a tautology that if *P*, then *Q*; *P* analytically entails *Q* when the proposition If *P*, then *Q* can be turned into a tautology through the substitution of synonymous expressions; *P* synthetically entails *Q* when the proposition If *P*, then *Q* is true in all possible worlds but is neither a tautology nor an analytic truth.)

Lehrer is a critic of foundationalism, and one should beware of helpful suggestions from coherentists on how to search for appropriate foundations for empirical knowledge. Although Ia gives a perfectly intelligible definition of infallibility, it is far from clear that it has much relevance to an attempt to understand noninferential *justification*. The problems with associating infallibility and noninferential justification are familiar and I will only sketch some of them. First, there are the paradoxes of entailment recognized by Lehrer himself. Every necessary

truth is entailed by every proposition, and thus if I happen to believe a necessary truth, *P*, the fact that I believe *P* will entail that *P* is true. Thus, by Ia my belief that *P* will be infallible whenever *P* is a necessary truth no matter how complex *P* might be. *P* could be a necessarily true mathematical proposition whose truth I could never “see” directly and whose proof I could never understand, but if I believed *P* because I always believe the first mathematical proposition I consider on Tuesdays, my belief that *P* would be infallible. Surely this concept of infallibility has precious little to do with whether or not my belief is justified.

To deal with this problem one can tinker (as Lehrer does) with the definition of infallible belief, but once one understands that mere entailment between the having of a belief and the truth of what is believed does not necessarily provide justification, one should be wary about assuming that it ever does, even in the few uncontroversial instances in which believing a contingent proposition entails that the proposition is true. The following beliefs are all infallible in the sense defined by Ia: my belief that I exist, my belief that I am in a conscious state, and my belief that I believe something. The first of these entailments appears to be the one that Descartes thought so significant in arriving at secure foundations. The entailments do hold, but is the mere existence of the entailment enough to provide anyone with justification? If it is not in the case of necessary truths entailed by beliefs, why should it be sufficient in the case of contingent truths entailed by beliefs?

Another standard objection to understanding foundational beliefs in terms of this concept of infallible belief is the alleged difficulty of finding *enough* empirical propositions that can be infallibly believed. Once one gets beyond the “trick” examples of belief in propositions whose content explicitly or implicitly refers back to the belief, the argument goes, there are no infallible empirical beliefs, and a foundationalism attempting to build on infallible beliefs understood in the above way is not going to support the edifice of justified beliefs we are trying to erect. Some philosophers attempt to establish this conclusion by considering specific candidates for infallible beliefs and describing elaborate hypothetical situations designed to convince us that we could reasonably decide that the beliefs in question were false. Thus Armstrong (1963) imagines us once again in a future characterized by a utopian neurophysiology. We are wired to complex machines that inform us that, despite the fact that we believe we are in pain, there is simply no indication of the sort of neural activity associated with pain. Might it not be reasonable in such a situation to conclude that we simply have a false belief that we are in pain? Lehrer (1974) argues that one can genuinely

(as opposed to merely verbally) confuse pains with itches and for that reason arrive at a false belief that one is in pain.

We will return to these arguments shortly, but there is a very general argument designed to establish that the foundationalist’s favorite candidates for noninferentially justified empirical beliefs are not infallible. It is a Humean sort of argument that proceeds from the simple observation that in the vast majority of cases, the belief that *P* is one state of affairs and *P*’s being the case is a different state of affairs. If these really are two distinct facts, then why couldn’t one have the one without the other?⁹ Although it does not add much to the logical force of the argument, one can again employ our hunches about how the brain might work to rhetorically bolster the argument. Consider again a standard candidate for an infallible empirical belief, my belief that I am in pain now, for example. It is surely *possible* that the region of the brain causally responsible for producing the belief that I am in pain is entirely different from the region of the brain causally responsible for producing the pain. There may be a causal connection between the occurrence of the “pain” brain event and the occurrence of the “belief” brain event, or vice versa, but even if the causal connection holds it will be a contingent fact that it does. It hardly seems that the neurophysiologist could discover these (or any other) causal connections purely a priori. But if the brain state responsible for my belief that I am in pain is wholly different from the brain state responsible for the pain, and if the connections between them are merely nomological, then it is in principle possible to produce the one without the other. The belief will not entail the truth of what is believed.

Infallible Justification

The foregoing argument has a great deal of plausibility, I think, and in any event it has always seemed strange to me to search for foundations in mere *belief*. What justifies me in believing that I am in pain? The mere fact that I believe that I am in pain? What *is* it about this belief that makes it so different from other beliefs? Why does my belief that I am in pain constitute a kind of justification but my belief that there are ghosts does not constitute a kind of justification? The appeal to belief as a justifier borders on a non sequitur if one is genuinely attempting to find a useful characterization of a special kind of epistemic relation one can bear to truth that obviates the need for inference.

As BonJour pointed out, this same lack of a genuine response seems to characterize those foundationalists who seek to identify the source of

noninferential justification with the fact that makes the noninferentially justified belief true.¹⁰ When asked what justifies one in believing that one is in pain, this foundationalist identifies the pain itself. What justifies me in believing that I am having a certain visual sensation is the visual sensation itself. But what is it about the pain or the visual sensation that makes it a justifier? When you believe that I am in pain, my pain doesn't justify you in believing that I am in pain (according to this foundationalist account), so there must be something different about my *relationship* to my pain that enters into the account of what constitutes the justification. It is the fact that I have a kind of access to my pain that you don't have that makes my belief noninferentially justified while you must rely on inference. One still needs an account of what this relation is, but before we consider such an account it is worth noting that we could have defined the concept of infallible belief in a way that makes it potentially more useful in developing a foundationalist theory of justification. The relevant question is not whether my belief entails the truth of what is believed. It is, rather, whether my *justification* entails the truth of what is believed:

- Ib. *S*'s belief that *P* at *t* is infallible if *S*'s justification for believing *P* at *t* relevantly entails the truth of *P*.

It is necessary to qualify the entailment as relevant to circumvent the problems already discussed in connection with Ia. Whenever I have any justification at all for believing a proposition that turns out to be necessarily true, that justification will entail the necessary truth. But we do not want just any sort of justification to yield infallibly justified belief even if the object of that belief is a necessary truth. What is the difference between relevant and irrelevant entailment? This question is notoriously difficult to answer, but intuitively it should have something to do with the fact that would make true the proposition entailed and the fact that would make true the proposition that entails it. More specifically, we could say that *P* relevantly entails *Q* only if the fact that would make *P* true is at least a constituent of the fact that would make *Q* true. This suggestion can be considered at best only a preliminary suggestion, since we will obviously need a more detailed account of facts and their constituents. That I have grey hair entails that someone has grey hair, but is my having grey hair a constituent of the fact that is someone's having grey hair? There is certainly a sense in which it is something one can point to in answer to the question "What makes it true that someone has grey hair?" One cannot appropriately point to

my having grey hair as something that makes it true that two plus two equals four. An enormous amount of work would have to be done in order to develop a coherent, plausible relevance logic, but these few comments might allow me to get away with using the concept of relevant entailment in this context.

Acquaintance and Noninferential Justification

I have suggested that neither a belief nor the truth of what is believed is by itself a plausible justification at all, let alone the kind of justification that might entail the truth of what is believed. Rather, we must stand in some sort of special *relation* to the truth of what is believed, or more precisely, we must stand in some sort of special relation to the fact that makes true what we believe. I have argued elsewhere that the most fundamental concept required to make sense of traditional foundationalism is the concept of acquaintance. In order to explain my acquaintance theory of noninferential justification, however, I must briefly digress and sketch a highly controversial theory of truth and intentionality.

I take the primary bearers of truth value to be thoughts (which I also refer to as propositions). The secondary bearers of truth value are the linguistic items that express them. Thoughts I take to be nonrelational properties of a mind or self, properties whose presence is logically distinct from, though no doubt causally dependent on, and paralleled by, brain states. Thoughts can be true or false. True thoughts correspond to or "picture" facts. False thoughts fail to correspond. A fact is a nonlinguistic complex that consists in an entity or entities exemplifying properties. The world contained facts long before it contained minds and thoughts. In one perfectly clear sense the world contained no truths before there were conscious beings, for without conscious beings there would be no bearers of truth value. There were facts that would have made true the relevant thoughts had they existed, and by employing counterfactuals we can make good sense of such commonplace assertions as that it was true hundreds of millions of years ago that there were no conscious beings.

Although I once thought the difference between believing, fearing, hoping, and other intentional states should be understood in terms of a relation that the mind bears to its thought, I now believe that every intentional state *is* a thought. Believing that there are ghosts, fearing that there are ghosts, and hoping that there are ghosts are all *species* of the same thought that there are ghosts. Believing and hoping that there

are ghosts stand to each other as a blue and a yellow Ford Mustang stand to each other. We can represent true and false belief respectively as follows:

S believes truly that $P = \text{Df}$	$'P'*_s$ and $'P' C P$
S believes falsely that $P = \text{Df}$	$'P'*_s$ and it is not the case that there exists some fact x such that $'P' C x$

where s stands for S , $'P'$ stands for the thought that P , $*$ indicates that the thought is a belief, C stands for correspondence, P refers to the fact that P , and x is a variable.

This correspondence theory of truth avoids the need for such ontological nightmares as nonexistent states of affairs to serve as the "objects" of false beliefs, and it preserves a much more natural way of understanding the *referents* of sentences, analogous to the referents of names and definite descriptions. Unlike Frege, we have no need for such mysteries as The True and The False to serve as the referents of true and false sentences, respectively. Rather, we adopt the more straightforward view that just as the successful use of a name refers to an individual, so the successful—that is true—attempt to refer to the world with a descriptive sentence succeeds in picking out a fact. Some names, like "Pegasus," do not succeed in referring to any individual, and some sentences, like "Dogs have eight legs," do not refer to any fact. New theories of reference aside, having a referent is not necessary for having meaning, and the thoughts that false sentences express give those sentences meaning despite the fact that they fail to refer.

Acquaintance is *not* another intentional state to be construed as a nonrelational property of the mind. Acquaintance is a *sui generis relation* that holds between a self and a thing, property, or fact. To be acquainted with a fact is not *by itself* to have any kind of propositional knowledge or justified belief, and for that reason I would prefer not to use the old terminology of knowledge by acquaintance. One can be acquainted with a property or fact without even possessing the conceptual resources to *represent* that fact in thought, and certainly without possessing the ability to linguistically express that fact. But if this is true, what has acquaintance got to do with epistemology?

Sellars once argued that the idea of the given in traditional epistemology contains irreconcilable tensions. On the one hand, to ensure that something's being given does not involve any other beliefs, proponents of the view want it to be untainted by the application of *concepts*. The

kinds of data that are given to us are also presumably given in sense experience to all sorts of other creatures. On the other hand, the whole doctrine of the given is designed to end the regress of justification, to give us secure foundations for the rest of what we justifiably infer from the given. But to make sense of making inferences from the given, the given would have to be propositional. Minimally, the given must have a truth value. But the kind of thing that has a truth value involves the application of concepts or thought, a capacity not possessed by at least lower-order animals.¹¹

The solution to the dilemma presented by Sellars and others is to reemphasize that acquaintance is not *by itself* an epistemic relation. Acquaintance is a relation that other animals probably bear to properties and even facts, but it also probably does not give these animals any kind of justification for believing anything, precisely because these other animals probably do not have beliefs to begin with. Without *thought* there is no truth, and without a bearer of truth value there is nothing to be justified or unjustified. But how does acquaintance give us noninferential justification? My suggestion is that one has a noninferentially justified belief that P when one has the thought that P and one is acquainted with the fact that P , the thought that P , and the relation of correspondence holding between the thought that P and the fact that P . No single act of acquaintance yields knowledge or justified belief, but when one has the relevant thought, the three acts together constitute noninferential justification. When everything that is *constitutive* of a thought's being true is immediately before consciousness, there is nothing more that one could want or need to justify a belief.

The reader might well complain that if mere acquaintance with a fact does not constitute an epistemic property, surely one cannot conjure up an epistemic property by multiplying acts of acquaintance. But if this is intended to be a formal objection to the view I presented, it involves committing the fallacy of division. Because none of the components of a complex state of affairs constitutes the exemplification of an epistemic property, it does not follow that the complex does not constitute the exemplification of such a property. Classical acquaintance theorists like Russell appropriately emphasized the role of acquaintance with particulars, properties, and even facts in grounding justification. But a fact is not a truth, and what one needs to end a regress of justification is a direct confrontation with *truth*. To secure that confrontation, one needs to be directly aware of not just a truth-maker (a fact to which a truth corresponds) but also a truth-bearer (a thought) and the correspondence that holds between them.

Because the relations of acquaintance and correspondence that the above account appeals to are *sui generis*, there is precious little one can say by way of trying to explain the concept to one who claims not to understand it. Because acquaintance is not like any other relation, there is no useful genus under which to subsume it. One can give examples of facts with which one is acquainted and in this way present a kind of "ostensive" definition of acquaintance, but philosophers who think the concept is gibberish are unlikely to find themselves acquainted with their being acquainted with various facts. When one is acquainted with a fact, the fact is *there* before consciousness. Nothing stands "between" the self and the fact. But these are metaphors and in the end are as likely to be misleading as helpful. Correspondence, too, is sometimes thought of as a picturing relation, but the picturing metaphor is largely responsible for the caricature of the view one so often encounters in the cruder theories of "ideas" as pale copies of reality. It is tempting to at least mention the metaphor of a Kodak print and the scene it depicts as a way of explaining the relation that a true thought bears to the fact with which it corresponds, but most thoughts are not "pictures" and the relation of correspondence has nothing to do with any kind of similarity that holds between the thought and the fact it represents. Correspondence is not like anything else; it cannot be informatively subsumed under a genus, and it cannot be analyzed into any less problematic concepts.

Is acquaintance a source of infallible justification? The answer is in one sense straightforward. If my being acquainted with the fact that *P* is part of what justifies me in believing *P* and if acquaintance is a genuine relation that requires the existence of its relata, then when I am acquainted with the fact that *P*, *P* is true. The fact I am acquainted with is the very fact that makes *P* true. The very source of justification includes that which makes true the belief. In a way it is this idea that makes an acquaintance foundation theory so attractive. I have no need to turn to other beliefs to justify my belief that I am in pain because the very fact that makes the belief true is unproblematically before consciousness, as is the correspondence that holds between my thought and the fact. Again, everything one could possibly want or need by way of justification is there in consciousness.

Notice that the infallibility of the justification provided by acquaintance is due to the presence of the fact itself as a constituent of the justifier. It is interesting to note that in this respect there are remarkable similarities between this classic version of foundationalism and at least some paradigmatic externalist views. On certain causal theories of di-

rect knowledge, for example, my belief that *P* is justified by its being caused in the appropriate way by the fact that *P*, the very fact that makes my belief true. If a causal relationship between the fact that *P* and my belief that *P* were a kind of justification, then that justification too would be infallible. Its existence would, trivially, entail the truth of what I believe. From the fact that a certain justification is infallible, it does *not* follow that one could not mistakenly believe that one has an infallibly justified belief. Certainly the causal theory I have just sketched would have no difficulty imagining a person who mistakenly concluded that his belief that *P* was caused by the fact that *P*, and if the causal theory were correct, that person could mistakenly infer that the justification in support of his belief entailed the truth of what he believed. Similarly, I think that it is in principle possible for a person to mistakenly conclude that he is acquainted with something actually known only through inference. One might trust a philosopher with a mistaken epistemology, for example, and falsely, perhaps even justifiably, believe that one is acquainted with a fact when one is not. Although this complicates matters considerably, I also argue that it may be possible on an acquaintance theory to have noninferential justification that does not entail the truth of what is believed. Specifically, I have argued that one might be acquainted with a fact very similar to the fact that makes *P* true, and such acquaintance might give one a justified but false belief that *P*. It should be clear that this admission is perfectly compatible with the rather trivial claim that when one's justification for believing *P* consists in part in being acquainted with the fact that *P*, that justification is infallible in that it entails the truth of *P*.

If I am asked what reason I have for thinking that there is such a relation as acquaintance, I will, of course, give the unhelpful answer that I am acquainted with such a relation. The answer is question-begging if it is designed to convince someone that there is such a relation, but if the view is true it would be unreasonable to expect its proponent to give any other answer. I can also raise dialectical considerations and object to alternatives. One of the dialectical advantages of the above view is that it can easily respond to some of the classic arguments against the existence of noninferentially justified belief.

One of the most discussed arguments against foundationalism again focuses on concepts. There is no truth value without concept application, the argument goes. But to apply a concept is to make a judgment about class membership, and to make a judgment about class membership always involves relating the thing about which the judgment is made to other paradigm members of the class. These judgments of

relevant similarity will minimally involve beliefs about the past, and thus be inferential in character. Our reply to the argument is straightforward. To make a judgment, say that this is red, involves having the thought that this is red, but the thought does not involve relating this to some other thing. Indeed, it is in principle possible to produce a thought of red in the mind of someone who has never experienced a red thing. Since language is only a secondary and conventional means of representation, it goes without saying that the inferential character of our judgments concerning the linguistically correct way to express a thought are neither here nor there when it comes to the question of whether the thought expressed can be noninferentially justified.

The intelligibility of the above account does rest on the intelligibility of a world that has structure independent of any structure imposed by the mind. Without nonlinguistic facts that are independent of the thoughts that represent them, one could not make sense of a relation of acquaintance between a self and a fact, a relation that grounds direct knowledge. Indeed, I suspect that it is concern with this idea that lies at the heart of much dissatisfaction with traditional foundationalism. Since Kant there has always been a strong undercurrent of antirealism running through philosophy. The metaphor again is that of the mind imposing a structure on reality. And there is an intuitively plausible sense in which one can genuinely wonder whether it makes sense to ask about the number of colors that are exemplified in the world independently of some framework provided by color concepts. But despite the periodic popularity of extreme nominalism and rampant antirealism, it is surely absurd to suppose that it is even in principle possible for a mind to force a structure on a *literally* unstructured world. There are indefinitely many ways to sort the books in a library and some are just as useful as others, but there would be no way to begin sorting books were books undifferentiated. The world comes to us with its differences. Indeed, it comes to us with far too many differences for us to be bothered noticing all of them. And it is in this sense that the mind *does* impose order on chaos. Thought is abstract in the sense that many different actual properties can all correspond to a single thought of red. And it is up to us how finely we want to draw our color concepts. Although I understand that the empirical evidence is at best questionable, it is common for philosophers to call our attention to the alleged fact that some cultures have far more finely grained color concepts than our culture. If one distinguishes color concepts from linguistic terms to express those concepts, the empirical claim is difficult to assess, but one must surely admit that the alleged phenomenon is in principle pos-

sible. Given the above framework for understanding thought and truth, there would be a sense in which the one culture would entertain truths about colors that the other culture would be causally unable to accept. But the fact that there is good sense to be made of the relativity of conceptual frameworks should not mislead one into thinking that the properties exemplified in the world depend for their existence on concepts.

The Acquaintance Theory of Noninferential Justification and the Internalism/Externalism Debate

I have presented at length a view that I take to be the most plausible version of classical foundationalism. In what sense, if any, is it internalist? Well, on the specific version of the view I defended, thought is an internal property of the mind, if by "internal" one means "nonrelational." The crucial concepts of acquaintance and correspondence, however, are relational. It is true that given my own views in normative epistemology, it turns out that it is always a mental state or feature of a mental state with which we are acquainted, and so the complex act of being acquainted with *X* will involve constituents all of which are "internal" to the subject. But it should be emphasized that the *meta-epistemological* acquaintance theory of noninferential justification does not by itself entail any position with respect to what might be the objects of acquaintance. In previous discussion of the attempt to define internalism in terms of internal states being sufficient for justification, I noted that one might be a sense-datum theorist who thinks one can be directly acquainted with the fact that the surface of a physical object exemplifies a certain property. One might think that there are mind-independent universals and claim to be acquainted with them. One might think that there are mind-independent, nonoccurrent states of affairs and claim to be acquainted with logical relations that hold between them. It is at best unclear as to whether or not any of the above acts of acquaintance should be called internal states, and thus equally unclear as to whether a foundationalism defined using the concept of acquaintance is always going to be a species of "internal state" internalism.

As we saw earlier, being internal might also be understood in terms of access. There appears to be a historical use of "in" the mind which makes "in" an epistemic concept. When philosophers used to argue that sense data are "in" the mind, they may have sometimes meant only that we have a kind of privileged access to sense data. Does an

acquaintance theory hold that when one is noninferentially justified in believing *P* one has access to—that is, knowledge or justified belief about—the fact that one has such justification? On the face of it, the answer seems to be no. In the paradigm case, I am noninferentially justified in believing *P* when I have the thought that *P* and am simultaneously acquainted with the thought that *P*, the fact that *P*, and the relation of correspondence holding between them. To have noninferential justification for believing that I am noninferentially justified in believing *P*, I must have that rather complex thought and simultaneously be acquainted with its correspondence to an equally complex fact. And for me to be noninferentially justified in believing that I am noninferentially justified in believing that I am noninferentially justified in believing that *P*, I must be acquainted with facts so complex as to boggle my poor consciousness. Indeed, I am not sure I can keep things straight past the fourth or fifth level. The position that in order to have a noninferentially justified belief on an acquaintance theory one *must* be noninferentially justified in believing that one has such justification invites a vicious regress of infinitely many, increasingly complex conscious states. I would strongly suggest that classic foundationalists decline the invitation.

In his influential attack on foundationalism, BonJour (1985) tried to entice the foundationalist into accepting what amounts to strong access internalism. His argument then involved claiming that any attempt to stop the regress of justification with a noninferentially justified belief would inevitably fail, because the justification would necessarily involve other beliefs. The argument was presented in a schematic way so that it applies to any version of foundationalism including the acquaintance theory discussed above. Let *X* be the properties of a belief that the foundationalist says constitute my noninferential justification for believing *P*. BonJour argues (pp. 31–32) that internalism entails that my belief's being *X* could give me justification for believing *P* only if I were (1) aware that my belief has these properties *X* and (2) aware that when a belief has properties *X* it is likely to be true. At least, one of these propositions could be known only as a result of inference. (I argue later that BonJour is committed to the view that knowledge of probability relations is noninferential and so is really committed to the conclusion that it is the awareness of characteristics *X* that will require inference.)

If to be noninferentially justified in believing *P* requires that I have the justified *belief* that I am noninferentially justified in believing *P*, then it initially seems correct that there could not really be any noninferential justification. My belief that *P*, you recall, is noninferentially

justified only if its justification does not consist even partially in the having of other justified beliefs. But my belief that I am justified in believing *P* is a different belief than the belief that *P*, and if the justified metabelief is required for the justification of the first-level belief, how can the first-level belief be noninferentially justified? Ultimately, I believe that the foundationalist must conclude that one cannot hold that noninferential justification entails being justified in believing that one has noninferential justification. Such a view does lead to a vicious regress. In discussing access requirements, however, I briefly distinguished two ways in which one might introduce such requirements, only one of which leads to *conceptual* regress. There is an important distinction between a belief's justification *entailing* the having of other justified beliefs and a belief's justification *consisting* in the having of other justified beliefs. In evaluating the nature of the regress generated by access requirements, we must keep this distinction firmly in mind.

The iteration requirement for noninferential justification is literally *unintelligible* if the access requirement is thought of as part of the *analysis* of justification. One is challenged to come up with a set of conditions *X* that *constitute* noninferential justification for believing *P*. One is then invited to accept the claim that those conditions constitute justification only if one adds awareness of them. But that is tantamount to admitting that *X* was not a satisfactory analysis to begin with. *The idea that X constitutes one's justification for believing P only if one's awareness of X is added to X is equivalent to holding that X constitutes one's justification for believing P only if it does not really constitute one's justification for believing P.* If I must embrace that conditional to be an internalist, I wash my hands of the view.

One can avoid this sort of *incoherent* access internalism by holding that *X* by itself constitutes justification and is therefore sufficient for justification, but that the very nature of *X* metaphysically entails that one has an awareness of *X*. On such a view the *analysis* of justification would not involve reference to second-level awareness of the conditions that constitute justification. Consider an analogy. *P*'s being true entails that it is true that *P* is true. In accepting this proposition I am *not* committed to including its being true that *P* is true in the analysis of what makes *P* true. In the same way, a strong access internalist could argue that it is necessarily true that the conditions that constitute justification always obtain together with conditions that constitute being justified in believing that they obtain even though the conditions that constitute the second-level justification do not belong in an analysis of the conditions that constitute first-level justification. Such a view avoids a conceptual

regress (just as holding that *P*'s being true entails that it is true that *P* is true involves no conceptual regress). Unlike the regress of truth, however, the strong access requirement seems to give rise to a *vicious* regress. First-level justification entails the existence of second-level justification, which entails the existence of third-level justification, and so on ad infinitum. The metabeliefs required get more and more complex, and even if a finite mind can have an infinite number of justified beliefs, it is hard to see how it could have an infinite number of ever increasingly complex beliefs (supported by increasingly complex justification).

As I pointed out earlier, it is much easier to be a weak access internalist. One must still be careful to avoid the conceptual incoherence described above. One should not construe the possibility of access as a further condition in the *analysis* of justification. Nevertheless, one could argue that it is true, perhaps even necessary in some metaphysical sense, that when I am justified in believing *P* there is the possibility of access to that justification. I suggested earlier that if the possibility of access is understood broadly enough, the view is perfectly compatible with most versions of externalism. Whenever one has noninferential justification for believing *P*, I certainly think that it is logically possible that one has justification for believing that one is noninferentially justified in believing *P*. Furthermore, whenever one is noninferentially justified in believing that *P*, I think that it is in principle possible to have a noninferentially justified belief that one has a noninferentially justified belief. Of course, to have a justified belief at the second level would require possessing the requisite concepts, that is, it would require the capacity to think of such things as acquaintance and correspondence; and it is not certain that nonphilosophers possess such concepts—it's not even certain that most philosophers today possess such concepts. A *noninferentially* justified belief that one has a noninferentially justified belief that *P* would also require acquaintance with the complex set of acquaintances that constitute noninferential justification for believing *P*. And while I think that acquaintance is the sort of thing one could be acquainted with, I am not suggesting that whenever one is acquainted with something one is acquainted with the fact that one is acquainted with it. As we move up levels, it is not even clear to me that it is *causally* possible to become acquainted with the ever increasingly complex facts involving acquaintance that would be required to yield noninferentially justified beliefs.

If this version of what I am calling traditional foundationalism does not *entail* "internal state" internalism and denies strong access inter-

nalism and even some versions of weak access internalism, why call it internalism at all? The answer I suggested earlier points to its reliance on the *sui generis* concept of acquaintance that is fundamental to epistemology and that cannot be reduced to nonepistemic concepts, particularly the nomological concepts upon which all externalists build their analyses. I argued earlier that the heart of the internalist/externalist debate may have little to do with access requirements for justification (though it does have something to do with access to inferential connections). That never was the fundamental point of disagreement between internalists and externalists, and the proof of this is that externalists could in principle incorporate access requirements into their still *externalist* metaepistemological theories. Consider an odd sort of reliabilist, for example, who argues that one is noninferentially justified in believing that *P* when the belief that *P* is produced by a reliable process that takes as its "input" states that are not beliefs (I will discuss such a view in more detail shortly). And now suppose that our reliabilist decides that this is not enough, that one also needs "access" to the fact that the belief is produced this way. When asked what such access would consist in, the reliabilist responds that it would involve having a reliably produced belief that one has a reliably produced belief. And access at the third level would require having a reliably produced belief that one has a reliably produced belief that one has a reliably produced belief. Now no actual externalist is going to hold that justification at the first level requires that there be a justified metabelief about the justification of that first-level belief, and an attempt to incorporate such a view into one's externalism might well involve all kinds of insuperable problems including the potentially vicious regresses described earlier. But that is irrelevant to the question I am raising. However misguided an externalism with built-in access requirements might be, the theory will be no less externalist because of those access requirements if the access is still understood in causal terms.

The fundamental difference between externalism and one historically prominent and important form of internalism is that the internalist wants to ground all justification on a "direct confrontation" with reality. In the case of a noninferentially justified belief, the internalist wants the fact that makes true the belief "there before consciousness." The externalist can pay lip service to these desires by giving an externalist analysis of being confronted with a fact or having a fact before consciousness, but the internalist is convinced that no attempt to explain that immediacy in terms of *nomological* relations will succeed.

The above diagnosis of the essential difference between internalism

and externalism is complicated by the fact that some externalists will deny that they are *reducing* epistemic concepts to nonepistemic nomological concepts. Goldman, for one, is clear about the fact that he is not trying to *define* epistemic terms “naturalistically.”¹² Such definitions, he feels, would leave out the alleged normativity of the terms of epistemic evaluation. He is, nevertheless, attempting to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for a belief’s being justified—he is trying to discover the conditions on which epistemic justification *supervenes*. There are as many different species of supervenience, however, as there are species of necessity and sufficiency, and it is clear that the kind of supervenience that Goldman thinks one discovers in a correct philosophical analysis is stronger than any sort of lawful connection. In terminology that is not popular with all philosophers, one might describe his conception of a philosophical account of justification to be the search for conditions that are synthetically necessary and sufficient for *S*’s being justified in believing *P*. And I would qualify the earlier discussion of the fundamental difference between traditional foundationalism and external foundationalism to emphasize that the traditional “internal” foundationalist denies that the fundamental confrontation with reality that yields noninferential justification can be reduced to, or even be viewed as strongly supervenient upon, nomological relations. (*X* strongly supervenes on *Y* only if in all possible worlds in which *Y* obtains *X* obtains.)

At the risk of being repetitive, I want to make clear one more time that I am happy to recognize that there is more than one way to define the internalism/externalism controversy. Indeed, I insist on recognizing importantly different interpretations of the controversy. I have tried to explain why I think it is most illuminating to characterize the *heart* of the controversy as a disagreement over the plausibility of naturalism in epistemology. I also emphasize again that the acquaintance account of noninferential justification I offered is only one version or species of an internalism that rejects naturalistic epistemology. Obviously, one might agree with me that the fundamental mistake of externalism is its attempt to reduce the epistemic to the nomological but deny that an understanding of epistemic concepts should be based (in part) on the *sui generis* concept of acquaintance. Chisholm, for example, uses a different primitive in advancing his version of internalism.¹³

I have tried to develop a plausible traditional foundationalist account of noninferential justification, and even before contrasting it with an externalist foundationalist account of noninferential justification, I have tried to indicate what I take to be the most illuminating sense in which

it is an internalist view. I have argued that traditional foundationalists should be very careful about accepting strong and some weak access requirements. Earlier, however, I emphasized the need to make clear the distinction between accepting access requirements and accepting both clauses of the principle of inferential justification. The principle of inferential justification entails neither strong nor weak access internalism. It is a principle whose second clause will be rejected by almost all externalists, and by focusing on this fact we will be able to draw another important distinction between *inferential* internalism and *inferential* externalism. That metaepistemological difference will be revealed in their respective analyses of inferential justification.

Inferential Internalism, the Analysis of Inferential Justification, and a Conceptual Regress Argument for Foundationalism

The Principle of Inferential Justification

When I first introduced the principle of inferential justification, I noted that one need not take the principle to be the expression of a metaepistemological view at all. It could be accepted as a very general proposition of normative epistemology. In fact, though, I think that the principle is best understood as an implicit commitment to a certain analysis of inferential justification.

What is it to be inferentially justified in believing *P*? Well, if one looks at paradigm examples of appeals to evidence in support of belief, it is *prima facie* plausible to suggest that one’s belief in some proposition *E* can justify one in believing another proposition *P* only when one’s belief that *E* is itself justified and one has justification for thinking that *E* makes *P* probable. If asked why the conditional is true—indeed, necessarily true—it is tempting to suggest that it just describes that of which having evidence consists. As I said, one can make the claim initially plausible simply by looking at the ways in which it seems appropriate to *challenge* someone’s claim to have good (epistemic) reasons for believing something. If I tell you that the world will end this century and offer as my evidence that there is an omnipotent God who has decided that he will destroy the world at midnight on January 31, 1999, you are presumably perfectly entitled to challenge the reasonability of my belief about the earth’s extinction by challenging the reasonability of my belief about God. If, for example, I admit that I have no

reason for thinking that there is a God with this desire, you can surely *for that reason* dismiss my claim to have inferential justification. Similarly, if I am talking to an astrologer who infers from the present alignment of planets that there will be prosperity this year, I am perfectly entitled to challenge the reasonability of this conclusion by challenging the reasonability of the astrologer's thinking that there is a connection between the two states of affairs. If the astrologer shrugs her shoulders and admits it is just a whimsical hunch that Jupiter's alignment with Mars might have something to do with economic prosperity here on earth, I can *for that reason* dismiss the astrologer's claim to have a justified belief about prosperity based on the position of planets relative to one another. I underscore "for that reason" in anticipation of the externalist's objection that I am guilty of level confusion.

The externalist will probably argue that when one raises questions about the astrologer's reasons for thinking that there is a connection between the alignment of planets and the affairs of humans, one is challenging the astrologer's reasons for thinking that she has a justified belief. One is not directly attempting to establish that the belief is unjustified. Because one expects, *ceteris paribus*, people to conform their beliefs to what they have reason to think is rational, one expects a person to abandon a belief when faced with the fact that they have no reason to think that it is rational. But on the face of it, this seems like a convoluted attempt to disguise the obvious. I am not merely telling the astrologer that she has no reason to believe that her belief is justified, I am telling the astrologer that her belief is unjustified, and a sufficient condition for her belief's being unjustified is that she does not have the slightest reason in the world for thinking that the positions of planets have anything to do with rising economies.

The second clause of the principle of inferential justification is rejected even by some philosophers who share at least some internalist intuitions. In "An Internalist Externalism" Alston offers a kind of compromise between access internalism and access externalism. Alston distinguishes the *ground* of our justification for believing *P* from the *adequacy* of that ground. A ground for *S* to believe *P* is some fact about *S* that makes likely the truth of *P*.¹⁴ For *S* to be justified in believing *P*, according to Alston, *S* must have grounds for believing *P* and the grounds must be the kind of thing to which *S* has potential access. On the other hand, Alston thinks it would be far too strong to require that *S* be able to access the *adequacy* of these grounds, that is, the *connection* between the grounds and that for which they are grounds (p. 239).

I suspect that Alston's primary concern with the stronger requirement

(our analogue of the second clause of the principle of inferential justification) is just the specter of skepticism. He is worried that for some commonplace beliefs most people (indeed, most philosophers) cannot figure out how the various candidates for justifying grounds do make probable the truth of the propositions for which they are alleged grounds. As I noted in chapter 2, the second clause of the principle of inferential justification is a powerful weapon in the skeptic's arsenal, and Alston is no doubt right to be worried. But why even require that to have justified belief one must have potential access to justifying grounds (though not to the fact that they are justifying grounds)? Alston's answer to this question is revealing.

Like many other externalists Alston makes the distinction alluded to earlier between *S*'s being justified in believing *P* and *S*'s *justifying* a belief that *P*, where the latter involves showing or arguing for the conclusion that one is justified in believing *P*. But though he insists that the concepts are distinct, Alston appears to argue that there is an intimate connection between them. We wouldn't have any *interest* in a concept of justified belief that is not compatible with our discovering the grounds of that justification (p. 236). But if Alston is right about this, it makes no sense to require access to grounds and not require access to their adequacy. To show that a belief is justified one would need to establish that some state *is* a justifying ground of that belief, and this would involve establishing the relevant connection between the ground and the truth of the proposition supported by that ground.

As I said earlier, I do not think that the principle of inferential justification does confuse conditions for being inferentially justified with conditions for being justified in claiming to be inferentially justified. We will reject our astrologer's beliefs as unjustified *for the reason* that the astrologer has no reason to believe that there is a probabilistic connection between astrological evidence and astrological predictions. It does *seem* that we commonly grant inferential justification in other cases where one has no access to the inferential connection, but this may reflect only that we take for granted the existence of such access without thinking reflectively (philosophically) about the relevant inferences. I daresay if we were part of a community of committed and unreflective astrologers, we might be quite satisfied that we had astrologically justified beliefs without ever wondering how we satisfy the second clause of the principle of inferential justification. But if upon philosophical prodding we suddenly realized that we had no reason to think that there were any legitimate astrological inferences, we would (or at least should) abandon *for that reason* any claim to have astrologically justified belief.

An anonymous referee once suggested to me that the second clause of the principle of inferential justification should be replaced with one that makes no reference to probability. Specifically, one might claim that to be justified in believing P on the basis of E , one must be (1) justified in believing E and (2) justified in believing that if E then P . But one must immediately inquire as to the interpretation of the conditional, if E then P . One thing seems obvious. If one is trying to understand how one could be justified in believing P through or by justifiably believing the conjunction of E and if E then P , one should not interpret the conditional as a contingent, truth-functionally complex conditional of material implication that is not made true by a *connection* between E and P . E materially implies P just means either *not- E* or P . Now when one is justified in believing E (that is, when one satisfies the first clause of the principle of inferential justification), then the only way to be justified in believing *not- E* or P (in the absence of justifiably believing that there is a connection between E and P) is to justifiably believe P . Our revised principle, then, would tell us that to be justified in believing P on the basis of E , one must be justified in believing E and justified in believing P . But if we already had justification for believing P , one would not need to infer P from E !¹⁵

The only conditional that one could plausibly appeal to in a principle of inferential justification is one that asserts a *connection* between E and P . But what kind of connection should we view the conditional as asserting? Entailment is one candidate, but we can surely justifiably believe P on the basis of E even when E does not entail the truth of P . What we seem to need is the kind of connection that holds between the premises and conclusion of a good argument. When a deductively invalid argument is good, the premises must make probable the conclusion. To be justified in believing P on the basis of E , one must be justified in believing that the inference from E to P is legitimate. To justifiably believe that an inference from E to P is legitimate just is to justifiably believe that E makes probable P (where E 's entailing P can be thought of as the upper limit of making probable, that is, the case where the probability of P given E is 1). But now we are back to the earlier version of the principle of inferential justification. To be justified in believing P on the basis of E , one must be justified in believing that E makes probable P (that is, that the inference from E to P is legitimate).

But are there not other connections between E and P that we could justifiably believe obtain and that would give us justification for believing P provided that we have justification for believing E ? Suppose, for

example, we know that there is a causal connection between E and P . If we know that E is the cause of P and we know that E , can we not know on that basis that P ? The answer is yes, but only because this will be a case of deductively inferring P from F where F = the conjunction of E and E causes P . That conjunction entails P (on at least most conceptions of causality), and if we are aware of the entailment relationship, we will have inferential justification for believing P by satisfying the principle of inferential justification as it applies to the inference from F to P . But as epistemologists we will want to know what the evidence is for thinking that E causes P . Call that evidence $E1$. The philosophically interesting question will concern the relationship between $E1$ and the proposition that E causes P . And on the suggestion I have made, to justifiably believe that there is a causal connection on the basis of $E1$ one would have to know that the reasoning from $E1$ to the proposition asserting causal connection is legitimate, that is, that $E1$ makes probable the existence of a causal connection.

A Conceptual Regress Argument for Foundationalism

If we are going to *analyze* inferential justification employing our concept of noninferential justification and using the principle of inferential justification as our guide, what will our analysis look like? To be successful our analysis will eventually need to eliminate the use of the term "justified." S is justified in believing P on the basis of E only if S is justified in believing E and justified in believing that E makes probable P . But what is the analysis of justification? When we considered traditional arguments for foundationalism earlier, we emphasized the way in which acceptance of the principle of inferential justification might seem to give rise to a vicious *epistemic* regress. The traditional foundationalist, anxious to avoid skepticism, worries that without foundations, having a justified belief would entail having an infinite number of different justified beliefs. But if we are building the principle of inferential justification into an analysis of the very concept of justification, we have a more fundamental vicious *conceptual* regress to end. We need the concept of a noninferentially justified belief not only to end the epistemic regress but to provide a conceptual building block upon which we can understand all other sorts of justification. I would argue that the concept of noninferential justification is needed (whether one is a skeptic or not) in order to *understand* other sorts of justification, much the same way that the concept of something being good in itself is needed in order

to understand other ways in which things can be good. Consider the analogy.

Notice that one could argue for the concept of intrinsic goodness as a way of avoiding an epistemic regress. Suppose we crudely define being good as a means in terms of producing something that is good. A philosopher could argue that not everything is good as a means, for if everything were good as a means, a finite mind could never know, or even be justified in believing, that something is good. To know that X is good I would have to know that it leads to something else Y that is good, but if everything is good only as a means, then to know that Y is good I would have to know that it leads to something else Z which is good, and so on ad infinitum. If one then includes as a premise a rejection of radical skepticism with respect to knowledge of what is good, one has an argument for the view that some of the things we know to be good we know to be intrinsically good. But one could just as easily leave the epistemology out of it. It seems to me that the view that there is only instrumental goodness is literally unintelligible. To think that something X is good if all goodness is instrumental is to think that X leads to a Y that is good by virtue of leading to a Z that is good, by virtue of. . . , and so on ad infinitum. But this is a vicious conceptual regress. The thought that X is good, on the view that all goodness is instrumental, is a thought that one could not in principle complete. The thought that a belief is justified, on the view that all justification is inferential, is similarly, the foundationalist might argue, a thought that one could never complete.

Just as one terminates a conceptual regress involving goodness with the concept of something being intrinsically good, so one terminates a conceptual regress involving justification with the concept of a noninferentially justified belief. On the internalist account of noninferential justification just sketched, the concept of a noninferentially justified belief is ultimately explicated in terms of the sui generis relation of acquaintance. As an initial attempt, then, we might try to define justification in terms of noninferential justification as follows:

S is justified in believing P when (1) S is noninferentially justified in believing P OR (2) there is some proposition E such that S is noninferentially justified in believing E and that E makes probable P OR if S is not noninferentially justified in believing E , there is some other proposition $E1$ such that S is noninferentially justified in believing $E1$ and that $E1$ makes probable E OR if S is not. . . , AND if S is not noninferentially justified in believing that E makes probable P , then there is some proposition F such

that S is noninferentially justified in believing F and that F makes probable that E makes probable P OR if S is not noninferentially justified in believing F . . .

This has the familiar form of a recursive analysis of justification that is now so familiar to us through Goldman's attempt to provide a recursive reliabilist analysis of justification. The base clause is S 's being noninferentially justified in believing P . If the base clause is not satisfied, then S 's justification must be traceable to noninferentially justified beliefs. But because as inferential internalists we are accepting *both* clauses of the principle of inferential justification, once inference is involved there must always be at least two noninferentially justified beliefs. One provides one with premises, as it were. The other provides one with the appropriate evidential connection between premises and conclusion.

The above analysis is unsatisfactory as it stands. There are two problems, one dealing with defeaters of justification, the other dealing with loss of probability through repeated inferences. Consider the first. Intuitively, I may have an impeccable, foundationally terminated chain of reasoning, but the resulting belief is unjustified because there is other information and other valid reasoning available to me which, had it been used in addition to the reasoning I did use, would have led me to the opposite conclusion. Second, it is a well-known feature of probability relations that they are not transitive. From the fact that P makes probable Q and Q makes probable R it does not follow that P makes probable R . And this is so not only because the possibility of error "adds up" with each inference. In fact, one can give examples where P makes probable Q and Q makes probable R , but P makes probable not- R . That $n = 2$ entails (the upper limit of making probable) that n is prime, and that n is prime makes likely that n is odd. But that $n = 2$ does not make likely that n is odd—indeed, it entails that it is not odd.

These problems also afflict other *externalist* analyses of justification, and I suggest that we postpone an attempt to solve them until the next chapter when we see how they arise in connection with reliabilism. The sort of solution we propose for our traditional recursive analysis of justification may also be available to the externalist.

Before turning to externalist versions of foundationalism, it might be useful to make a distinction here, perhaps overdue, between the existence of justification for a belief and a belief's actually being justified. Suppose that S is noninferentially justified in believing both that E and that E makes probable P (where S has no other evidence bearing on the

truth of *P*), but that *S* does not believe *P*. In this situation I say that *S* has justification for believing *P* but does not have a justified belief that *P* (for *S* does not even believe that *P*). Suppose that *S* is noninferentially justified in believing *E* and that *E* makes probable *P* (where no other evidence bears on the truth of *P*) and *S* does believe *P*, but what causally sustains *S*'s belief is something other than the good epistemic reasons *S* possesses. Although it is a matter of some controversy, many philosophers would again refuse to count *S*'s belief as justified. Even if *S* has justification for believing *P*, the belief will not be justified unless the justification *S* has causally sustains the belief.¹⁶ The existence of a nomological connection between *S*'s justification and a resulting belief, though necessary, is probably not sufficient for the resulting belief's being justified. As Audi (1993, chapter 8) argues in a sophisticated discussion of different concepts of "basing" and "inference," there are all kinds of puzzles arising from the possibility of deviant causal chains. Thus, if I justifiably believe *E* and justifiably believe that *E* makes probable *P*, and this somehow causes my psychiatrist to use hypnosis to induce my believing *P*, many philosophers would still refuse to regard my belief as justified. What one probably needs is the concept of a nondeviant causal chain,¹⁷ but the problem of defining clearly "relevant" causal connection so as to make the concept immune to counterexamples has plagued not only causal theorists of "basing" relations but causal theorists of perception, reference, and intentionality (to give just a few examples).

Although it is not at all clear that ordinary discourse will always insist on the distinction made here between beliefs for which one has justification and beliefs that are causally sustained in the appropriate way by such justification, it does seem to be a useful distinction nevertheless, and I will continue to mark it using the locutions as indicated earlier. The expression "*S* has justification for believing *P*" will be used in such a way that it implies nothing about the causal role played by that justification in sustaining belief. The expression "*S*'s belief that *P* is justified" will be taken to imply both that *S* has justification and that *S*'s justification is playing the appropriate causal role in sustaining *S*'s belief. It seems obvious that in the context of normative epistemology, philosophers qua philosophers should be interested primarily, or perhaps even exclusively, in questions as they relate to having justification. Once one settles whether or not one has justification for believing some proposition, the question of whether the belief is justified becomes an empirical question concerning causal connections, an empirical question that goes beyond the scope of philosophical investigation.

Notes

1. See Luper-Foy 1985 for the argument that knowledge is "external."
2. BonJour (1985) is perhaps the paradigm of an internalist who understands the view this way.
3. It seems to me that this is the strongest form of access that Chisholm would recognize as necessary for justification. See Chisholm 1989, p. 76.
4. I discuss Alston's view later in this chapter.
5. In one of the most sophisticated attempts to combine the insights of contemporary externalism, traditional foundationalism, and the coherence theory of justification, Ernest Sosa makes a move very similar to this. While he is a fairly straightforward externalist with respect to what he calls *animal* knowledge (requiring no access requirements for the person who has such knowledge), he feels the force of requiring some sort of access to the conditions constituting animal knowledge if a person is to have *reflective* knowledge (the kind of knowledge that a philosopher will seek). For reflective knowledge Sosa does require a kind of access to the source of a belief being reliable (apt). Unlike the externalist I am imagining here, however, it seems to me that Sosa turns to coherence (albeit coherence externally understood) as the way in which one achieves access to the fact that one's beliefs are appropriately (virtuously) produced. See Sosa 1991: the point is made throughout a number of articles contained in the collection.
6. Goldman's attempt to define the reliability of a process in terms of whether it would produce mostly true beliefs in *normal* worlds (Goldman 1986) probably abandons nomological conceptions of reliability. But Goldman has now abandoned that idea.
7. Goldman 1979, 1986, 1988; Nozick 1981; Dretske 1969, 1981; and Armstrong 1968.
8. Descartes 1960; Hume 1888; Chisholm 1957, 1989; Price 1950; and Russell 1926, 1959.
9. Ayer (1956, 19) presents this argument.
10. See BonJour 1985, pp. 58–78.
11. The argument is given in Sellars 1963, pp. 131–32 and also in BonJour 1985, chap. 4.
12. See Goldman 1979, p. 1.
13. In Chisholm 1989 the primitive conceptual building block for the analysis of other epistemic concepts is *S* being more justified in believing one proposition than another.
14. Alston is very cautious in saying what this probability connection is, but it is clear that it involves an "objective" connection of some kind. I discuss probability relations further in chapter 7.
15. It will, of course, be true that someone who satisfies the two clauses of this revised principle of inferential justification will be justified in believing *P*. The question is whether we will have offered an illuminating account of how one gets justification *through* inference.

16. For an excellent discussion of the distinction, see Audi 1993, especially chap. 8. For a view that downplays the importance of causal requirements, see Foley 1987, chap. 4.

17. See again Audi 1993, pp. 257–62, for a more detailed discussion of kinds of problematic causal intermediaries and how one might handle them in analyzing what it is for someone to believe something *for* a reason.

Chapter Four

Externalist Versions of Foundationalism

In the last chapter we looked at traditional versions of foundationalism often associated with internalism. I developed in more detail the version of traditional foundationalism that I take to be most plausible. That foundationalism ends the epistemic and conceptual regress of justification with the concept of direct acquaintance, a concept that is *sui generis*, that cannot be reduced to any more fundamental concepts. Having distinguished a number of different theses often associated with the technical distinction between internalist and externalist epistemologies, I made clear the senses in which an acquaintance theory of noninferential justification is and is not internalist in structure. The specific acquaintance theory I defended is *consistent* with “internal state” internalism, provided that we identify internal states with nonrelational properties of the mind and those relations whose relata involve only the mind and its nonrelational properties. I cautioned, however, that one can be an acquaintance theorist who takes the relata of acquaintance to include entities external to the mind, and it is difficult to include such a theory as a species of “internal state” internalism. I then argued that an acquaintance theorist (and any other metaepistemologist) would do well to stay away from strong access internalism, a view that simply invites a vicious regress. Although traditional foundationalists can often accommodate versions of weak access internalism, I argued that it might be a mistake to view one’s commitment to weak access internalism as lying at the heart of the internalist/externalist debate. In most of the senses in which an internalist can incorporate a weak access requirement, so can an externalist without leaving the framework of externalism. Finally, I argued that acquaintance theories and other paradigm traditional foundationalisms might best be thought of as