

Fall 11-14-2018

Epistemological Disjunctivism: An Analysis and A Critique

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EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISJUNCTIVISM: AN ANALYSIS AND A CRITIQUE

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
Philosophy

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

December, 2018

Dedication

For all my teachers and for my parents

Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the faculty at the University of New Mexico for their guidance and mentorship. A special thanks to the administrative staff for all their help. I am especially indebted to my committee members Barbara Hannan, Paul M. Livingston, and Tim Black for offering their time, support, and guidance in the review of this project. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dissertation advisor Kelly Becker. Words cannot express the intellectual debt I owe to him. He has shown me, by example, what it is to be a good philosopher and a good human being. I am so privileged to have worked with him.

I am grateful for my friends and family for their encouragement in completing this project. I would like to thank my sister and brother-in-law Shital and Kalpesh, my younger sister Leena, and most of all, my parents, Navin and Manju Patel, for all their love, support, and encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I focus on the epistemological concerns regarding a disjunctivist theory of perception. More specifically, I focus on a critique of epistemological disjunctivism, a thesis about how our beliefs about the world are supported by perception. In order to explain the possibility of perceptual knowledge, an epistemological disjunctivist argues that one's epistemic support in a good case, *seeing that p* (e.g., seeing that there is a lemon on the table), is different in kind from one's epistemic support in a bad case, *seeming to see that p* (e.g., seeming to see that there is a lemon on the table). What I present here is the background motivations that support such a position and show that the theory faces various problems and may not clearly offer an adequate account of perceptual knowledge. By providing a critique of epistemological disjunctivism, I aim to show that it may not provide a better position than an alternate, empirically plausible, non-disjunctivist position in accounting for perceptual knowledge. This dissertation constitutes a substantial beginning to this project.

The focus of this dissertation addresses a central issue: It considers whether epistemological disjunctivism adequately provides an account of perceptual knowledge against skeptical concerns. I devote four chapters of the dissertation in formulating a critique of the most prominent accounts of epistemological disjunctivism. Since there has been an increased interest in knowledge-first epistemology, I include an addendum discussing a knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivist account and its merits and contrast that with a knowledge-first virtue epistemology position.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Perceptual experience plays a key role in acquiring knowledge about the world we live in and it continues to be a central topic of research in philosophy today. In understanding the role of perceptual experience, scholars have advanced competing positions in order to account for a fundamental problem in perception: the fact that our perceptual experiences are vulnerable to error. In other words, since there is always the possibility that what seem to be veridical (accurate) perceptual experiences are illusions or hallucinations, how is genuine perceptual knowledge possible? In addition, philosophers have often been inspired by an even deeper concern about how our perceptual experiences are actually about the world in the first place. Naïve realism, the view that we perceive objects directly and as they “really are,” has enjoyed a renaissance recently because it has been coupled with disjunctivism, which says that veridical experiences differ, either epistemically or metaphysically or both, in kind from non-veridical experiences. Disjunctivism offers the naïve realist an account of error and explains how knowledge is possible insofar as it derives from the veridical type of perceptual state. In this dissertation, I focus on the epistemological concerns regarding a disjunctivist theory of perception. More specifically, I focus on a critique of epistemological disjunctivism, a thesis about how our beliefs about the world are supported by perception. In order to explain the possibility of perceptual knowledge, an epistemological disjunctivist argues that one’s epistemic support in a good case, e.g. seeing that there is a lemon on the table, is different in kind from one’s epistemic support in a bad case, e.g., seeming to see that there is a lemon on the table. What I present here is the background motivations that support such a position and show that the theory faces various

problems and may not clearly offer an adequate account of perceptual knowledge. By providing a critique of epistemological disjunctivism, I aim to show that it may not provide a better position than an alternate, empirically plausible, non-disjunctivist position in accounting for perceptual knowledge. This dissertation constitutes a substantial beginning to this project.

The focus of this dissertation addresses a central issue: It considers whether epistemological disjunctivism adequately provides an account of perceptual knowledge against skeptical concerns. I devote four chapters of the dissertation in formulating a critique of the most prominent accounts of epistemological disjunctivism. Since there has been an increased interest in knowledge-first epistemology, I include an addendum discussing a knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivist account and its merits and contrast that with a knowledge-first virtue epistemology position.

What is Disjunctivism?

Disjunctivism, as a theory of perception, claims that the visual experience when one veridically experiences an object is different in kind from a non-veridical experience. Let's say you are sitting at your kitchen table and you have a visual experience of a bright, yellow lemon in front of you; you *see* the lemon. Now let's say you are prone to hallucinations or you are a brain-in-a-vat and you have a visual experience as of a bright, yellow lemon in front of you. The disjunctivist will argue that the visual experiences in both cases are not the same. In one case, you *see* a lemon in front of you (your experience is connected to the world in the right way) and in the latter case you only *seem to see* a lemon in front of you (your experience is *not* connected to the world in the right way). If one argues that a veridical experience and a non-veridical experience are essentially different mental state kinds or are

different mental event kinds, one holds a form of metaphysical disjunctivism. As mentioned, one motivation for metaphysical disjunctivism is naïve realism. Naïve realism is the view that a veridical, perceptual experience is relational, in which a mind-independent object is genuinely present to mind, and the various features of the mind-independent object partly constitute one's conscious experience.¹ However, it is important to note that the disjunctivist may not necessarily deny that the veridical experience and the non-veridical experience share a "common factor," for example that they both *appear* to have an object present to mind, or that the experiences are subjectively or phenomenally indistinguishable, but she does claim that the two experiences differ in kind. Therefore, the disjunctivist must take on the explanatory burden of addressing to what extent the veridical and non-veridical experiences are the same and to what extent they differ in order to maintain a disjunctivist theory. There are various motivations and ways of formulating a disjunctivist position to address this concern. For instance, some metaphysical disjunctivists will argue that there is some 'common element' that all the experiences share, but that element is not fundamental. Some will argue that there is no common element the two experiences share. Ultimately, metaphysical disjunctivism concerns what the nature of perceptual experience is and how to individuate perceptual state types.

Another motivation for disjunctivism is an epistemological one. This is the main focus for the dissertation. An epistemological disjunctivist argues that the two experiences differ in epistemological significance. For instance, when a subject veridically perceives an

¹ Martin (2004) argues that the reason to endorse disjunctivism is Naïve Realism. According to Martin, in a veridical experience, a mind-independent object is a constituent of one's experience and there is an awareness of a genuine relation to a mind-independent object. In this dissertation, I will refer to Martin's view as the traditional naïve realist view.

object, she has different *perceptual evidence* than if she were merely hallucinating.² In the case of a veridical perception, she is in a position to know that there is a lemon on the table and in the non-veridical perception, she is only in a position to know that it appears to her that there is a lemon on the table, but she is not in a position to know whether she is veridically perceiving or hallucinating. A motivation for an epistemological disjunctivist is to address a skeptical worry. An epistemological disjunctivist denies the ‘highest common factor’ thesis.³ This thesis claims that when we have a veridical perception, we are not in a “better” position to acquire knowledge than when we are hallucinating. Therefore, we are not in any position to know about the external world.⁴

It is important to note that some have argued that epistemological disjunctivism does not necessarily entail that the two experiences do not share some common factors.⁵ An epistemological disjunctivist could state that the two experiences share the same mental

² For a defense of various forms of epistemological disjunctivism, see Byrne and Logue (2008, 2009), Haddock and MacPherson (2008), McDowell (1982, 1994, 2008, 2010, 2011), Neta (2008), Snowdon (2005), Pritchard (2012a).

³ See McDowell (1982, 1994, 2008). McDowell states, according to the highest common factor theorist, “One’s capacity is a capacity to tell by looking: that is, on the basis of experiential intake. And even when this capacity does yield knowledge, we have to conceive the basis as the *highest common factor* of what is available to experience in the deceptive and non-deceptive cases alike, and hence as something that is at best a defeasible ground for the knowledge, though available with a certainty independent of whatever might put the knowledge in doubt” (1982, 471).

⁴ Wright (2008) argues that disjunctivism does not necessarily provide a defense against perceptual skepticism. He claims that Cartesian skepticism does not deny that our perceptual experience can involve a fact in the world that is making itself manifest in our experience, but even in these situations, we must remain “agnostic” as to whether we are actually perceiving or merely hallucinating.

⁵ For instance, some argue that McDowell’s epistemological disjunctivism does not commit him to metaphysical disjunctivism. See Byrne and Logue (2008, 2009), Haddock and MacPherson (2008), Snowdon (2005). In addition Pritchard (2012a) argues for epistemological disjunctivism that does not commit him to metaphysical disjunctivism. Byrne and Logue (2008, 2009) argue for a “moderate” version of disjunctivism in which case the subject could share a “common mental element” (which grounds their phenomenal similarity) but also claims that there is a significant difference in “mental respects” between a veridical perception and a hallucination.

elements (which grounds a phenomenal similarity), and thereby not commit to metaphysical disjunctivism. In other words, one can be an epistemological disjunctivist without being a metaphysical disjunctivist.⁶

One prominent account of epistemological disjunctivism is offered by John McDowell.⁷ According to McDowell, when one has a *seeing* experience, the ‘fact that p’ is made manifest in one’s experience. His disjunctivist position is that: *Either* one sees that p *or* one seems to see that p. Seeing that p is a reason-giving factive state. Seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p. In this dissertation, I argue that McDowell’s position is a form of metaphysical disjunctivism, indicating a tension with other interpretations that claim that McDowell’s epistemological disjunctivism does not commit him to metaphysical disjunctivism.⁸ However, in my work, after establishing a full account of McDowell’s position, I show that our inquiry into epistemological disjunctivism does not hang on the question of whether McDowell is in fact a metaphysical disjunctivist. Still, I will in parts of Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 question whether metaphysical disjunctivism does any substantial work in supporting epistemological disjunctivism.

The other prominent account of epistemological disjunctivism is offered by Duncan Pritchard.⁹ According to Pritchard, in a paradigmatic, normal case, one’s rational standing differs in kind from one’s rational standing in a corresponding bad (introspectively indistinguishable) case. In such a paradigmatic, normal case, one has *reflective access* to a

⁶ Pritchard (2012a) claims that epistemological disjunctivism does not itself entail that there is no common metaphysical essence to the experiences in good and bad cases (2012a, 24).

⁷ See McDowell (1982, 2008, 2011).

⁸ See footnote 5.

⁹ See Pritchard (2012a).

factive reason (seeing that p) for believing that p. In all other cases, one does not have reflective access to the *factive* reason, seeing that p. Unlike McDowell, I show that for Pritchard, seeing that p does not provide an indefeasible warrant for believing that p, but rather seeing that p provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that p. The notion of seeing that p for Pritchard is essentially a very good kind of perceptual state in good conditions, one that provides a basic warrant for belief, but does not include independent resources for defeating defeaters. Also, for Pritchard, even though the rational standing that is available to the subject in normal veridical perceptual experiences and corresponding introspectively indistinguishable experiences are radically different, that does not entail that there is no common metaphysical ground that the two experiences could share.

I turn to Pritchard's position to see how it avoids some of the problems that McDowell's position faces. However, I argue that Pritchard's position does not adequately provide the anti-skeptical results it aims to provide. In addition, I show that Pritchard's requirements for knowledge are the same as the requirements for knowledge for an undefeated justified true belief position. Both positions include having a justified true belief with no defeaters. The only difference between Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism and an undefeated justified true belief position is that Pritchard's position includes a high standard for justification (one's reason for believing is *factive*). In light of this, I claim that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than the traditional, non-disjunctivist justified true belief view in accounting for perceptual knowledge.

As stated, in this dissertation, I formulate a critique of the most prominent accounts of epistemological disjunctivism. I argue that they do not provide an adequate account of perceptual knowledge against skeptical concerns.

An Overview of the Dissertation Chapters and Addendum

In Chapter 2, I provide the background motivations that support John McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism. According to John McDowell, our perceptual experience is a form of "openness to reality" (1994). Perception is a direct, non-inferential awareness of the external objects that make up our world. Of course having *direct access* to the world does not guarantee that our experiences are not vulnerable to error. There is always the possibility our experiences are illusions, where objects do not appear as they really are, or hallucinations, where we merely seem to perceive objects. Since these possibilities of error exist and their respective experiences can be indistinguishable from veridical perceptions, the skeptic worries whether we can ever have knowledge of the external world. In addition to addressing the skeptic's concern, McDowell goes even further, claiming that unless we are capable of enjoying direct access to the world through perception, the very idea of objective mental content—content that involves a mind-independent world—is threatened.

In this chapter, I discuss McDowell's account of a direct perceptual mind-world link supporting a type of naïve realist position. Ultimately, I investigate whether what I call McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (MNRD) can provide an adequate framework for perceptual knowledge. I make a substantive interpretive claim about McDowell's work that is not uncontroversial, namely, that his epistemological disjunctivism is in fact supported by his metaphysics of perception. However, when looking at the full account of MNRD, we

find that nothing much to do with our inquiry into epistemological disjunctivism hangs on the question of whether McDowell is in fact a metaphysical disjunctivist.

Chapter 3 is devoted to Duncan Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism (2012a). This chapter examines how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position improves upon McDowell's account, but it also addresses the concern of whether Pritchard's position generates the anti-skeptical results it aims to provide. Specifically, I focus on the transition from MNRD to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position. I show that McDowell's notion of seeing that *p* does not account for how such a perceptual state provides an *indefeasible* warrant for believing that *p*. I discuss that for McDowell, in a good case, seeing that *p*, is a reason-giving, factive state that has a *strong* epistemic status. In addition, I argue that his position that seeing that *p* provides a conclusive warrant, rather than an indefeasible warrant, is also problematic. Thereafter, I show how Duncan Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism avoids the problematic notion of indefeasibility. Finally, I show that even though Pritchard's position may improve upon McDowell's account, it does not generate the anti-skeptical results it aims to provide.

In Chapter 4, I argue that McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (MNRD) is a metaphysical disjunctivist position. I contrast MNRD with a traditional naïve realist account. I indicate that MNRD can avoid some of the problems of phenomenal indistinguishability that the traditional naïve realist faces. Nevertheless, I argue that even though MNRD entails epistemological disjunctivism, it does not uphold the necessary epistemic distinction needed for the subject to know whether she is in a good case or a bad case. In addition, I discuss how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position makes no controversial commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism. However, I argue that Pritchard's view does not adequately

provide a *distinct* disjunctivist position since his disjunctivist view can be ‘translated’ into a version of a non-disjunctivist undefeated justified true belief (UJTB) view. In light of these concerns, I defend the claim there is no advantage in privileging disjunctivism as opposed to other non-disjunctivist positions.

In Chapter 5, I show that Pritchard’s standard for justification (one’s reason must be *factive*) is too high and cannot be met consistently with his accessibility requirement. If we remove Pritchard’s high standard of justification, we see that Pritchard’s epistemological disjunctivism is a version of a traditional undefeated justified true belief view (UJTB). More specifically, I show that the requirements for knowledge that Pritchard’s epistemological disjunctivism holds are the same requirements for knowledge that an UJTB position holds. In doing so, I argue that Pritchard’s epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than the traditional, non-disjunctivist justified true belief view in accounting for perceptual knowledge. Finally, I consider how Pritchard’s position could remove the problematic accessibility condition. If the accessibility condition is removed, Pritchard’s epistemological disjunctivism can viewed to be more like a knowledge-first position. A knowledge-first position claims that ‘knowledge’ is unanalyzable and knowledge is more basic than justified belief. This would be unlike a UJTB view, since in an UJTB view, seeing that p is reason for believing that p and knowing that p. Although I do not elaborate on this view in this chapter, in the addendum, I discuss how the problem with Pritchard’s position could motivate knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivism that may avoid some of the problems his position faces.

In the addendum, in light of the concerns in the previous chapter, I recommended that Pritchard’s position could remove the problematic accessibility condition. In doing so, we

can view Pritchard's position as a version of a knowledge-first position. I discuss some recent work by Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) that motivates a turn to Millar's Knowledge-First Epistemological Disjunctivism (KFED) to resolve some of the problems Pritchard's position faces. Moreover, Kelp and Ghijzen discuss some problems that KFED also faces. Although Kelp and Ghijzen agree that we often justify our perceptual beliefs by appealing to factive reasons, they do not support a disjunctivist position. Rather, they argue for a Knowledge-First Virtue Epistemology (KFVE) position. In this addendum, I briefly discuss Millar's KFED. Moreover, I discuss Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE and focus on how KFVE offers a better account of justification than Millar's KFED. But, ultimately, I argue that Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE faces other potential problems when it comes to their notion of abilities and justification.

Overall, in my dissertation, I consider the problems generated by both McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism and Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism. The purpose of this dissertation was to show that the state-of-the-art work in epistemology reveals conceptual tensions in our aim for obtaining an understanding of the requirements for perceptual knowledge. I hope this work can inspire further research in epistemology and perception and motivate an exploration in alternative, non-disjunctivist views that are supported by psychologically- and empirically- oriented philosophical work in perception in order to account for perceptual knowledge.

Chapter 2:

John McDowell's Naïve Realist Disjunctivism (MNRD) and Objective Content

Introduction

Two fundamental philosophical questions conspire to demand a satisfying and coherent account of the interface between mind and world. How do mental states possess objective content? How is knowledge of the external world possible? Surely there must be a mind-world link, but how are we to understand this link? Since it is plausible that our cognitive contact with the world begins with perception, we will begin our investigation there. According to John McDowell, our perceptual experience is a form of “openness to reality” (1994). Perception is a direct, non-inferential awareness of the external objects that make up our world. Of course having *direct access* to the world does not guarantee that our experiences are not vulnerable to error. There is always the possibility our experiences are illusions, where objects do not appear as they really are, or hallucinations, where we merely seem to perceive objects. Since these possibilities of error exist and their respective experiences can be indistinguishable from veridical perceptions, the skeptic worries whether we can ever have knowledge of the external world. In addition to addressing the skeptic’s concern, McDowell goes even further, claiming that unless we are capable of enjoying direct access to the world through perception, the very idea of objective mental content—content that involves a mind-independent world—is threatened.

In a body of work developed over decades,¹⁰ McDowell offers a *type* of naïve realist theory of perception, aimed to answer both of our questions. According to a naïve realist, a perceptual experience is relational, in which a mind-independent object is genuinely present

¹⁰ See McDowell 1982, 1984, 1986, 1994, 2008, 2011, 2013a, 2013b.

to mind, and the various features of the mind-independent object partly constitute one's conscious experience.¹¹ McDowell accepts a version of this account. His view differs from a traditional naïve realist account because he argues that perceptual experience is both relational and contentful (2013a).¹²

In this chapter, I will discuss McDowell's account of a direct perceptual mind-world link supporting a type of naïve realist position. McDowell's view aims to resolve two possible concerns. First, it can show how our thoughts can have content in the first place or how objective content is possible. Second, this account then becomes part of McDowell's view on perceptual knowledge. Objective content is possible because some perceptions are essentially object-involving. "Good cases" of veridical perception (those where one has a genuine seeing experience, to be discussed at length below), are different from other "merely" veridical experiences and from non-veridical experiences (where one merely seems to see—as is likely already clear, the focus herein will be on visual experience). As we shall see, when this basic metaphysical picture involving object-dependent perception and thought is supplemented by epistemological considerations, McDowell will claim that in a good case veridical perception, where one "sees that p," one's justification for a perceptual claim is indefeasible and non-inferential (1982, 2008, 2011), which, in turn, helps explain how

¹¹ See Crane and French (2015) and Soteriou (2016). According to Soteriou, a naïve realist view is that, "the conscious perceptual experience that you have when you genuinely perceive the world is a relational phenomenon. The mind-independent entities in your environment that you perceive are constituents of that relation, and hence constituents of your experience, and when you genuinely perceive your environment, the phenomenal, conscious character of your experience is constituted, at least in part, by those mind-independent aspects of the environment that you perceive" (2016, 83).

¹² McDowell notes that Travis (2004) claims that perceptual experience is relational, but not contentful. Content, for Travis, does not play a role in how perceptual experience presents objects to us. McDowell disagrees. McDowell claims that, "Perception makes knowledge about things available by placing them in view for us. But it is precisely by virtue of having content as they do that perceptual experiences put us in such relations to things" (2013a, 144).

knowledge of other minds and the external world is possible. In order to account for error possibilities when it comes to knowledge of other minds and the external world, McDowell argues for a form of epistemological disjunctivism: a position in which one's epistemic warrant in a seeing experience is different in kind from one's epistemic warrant in a seeming to see experience (1982, 1986, 2008). In this chapter, I will investigate whether McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (hereafter MNRD) can provide an adequate framework for perceptual knowledge.

Let me be clear, then, that I am making a substantive interpretive claim, to be developed further below, about McDowell's work that is not uncontroversial, namely, that his epistemological disjunctivism is in fact supported by his metaphysics of perception. The trajectory of his writings certainly seems to support this reading, and I think it's illuminating. Fortunately, however, once we have the full account of MNRD in view, we will see that nothing much to do with our inquiry into epistemological disjunctivism hangs on the question of whether McDowell is in fact a metaphysical disjunctivist. Still, I will at a couple points, in the last two sections, and later in Chapter 4, question whether metaphysical disjunctivism does any real work in supporting epistemological disjunctivism.

Directedness Towards the World

It is fair to say that when we are engaged in the world, we both perceive objects in and believe things about the world. But how are we to understand the link between perception and belief? Moreover, how are we to understand the link between our mental

states and the world? In *Mind and World*, John McDowell sets out to understand how mind is *directed* towards the world.¹³ He states:

To make sense of the idea of a mental state's or episode's being directed towards the world, in a way in which, say a belief or judgment is, we need to put the mental state or episode in a normative context. A belief or judgment to the effect that things are thus and so—a belief or judgment whose content (as we say) is that things are thus and so—must be a posture or stance that is *correctly* or *incorrectly* adopted according to whether or not things are indeed thus and so. (If we can make sense of judgment or belief as directed towards the world in that way, other kinds of content-bearing postures or stances should easily fall into place.) This relation between mind and world is normative, then, in this sense: thinking that aims at judgment, or at the fixation of belief, is answerable to the world—to how things are—for whether or not it is correctly executed (1994, *xi-xii*).

One main point in this passage is that a normative context is necessary to make sense of the idea that mental states are in contact with the world. Our beliefs are about objects in the world and to understand the relation of how “thinking is answerable to the world,” we must understand how it is answerable to the “tribunal of experience,” which according to McDowell, is “conceived in terms of the world’s direct impacts on possessors of perceptual capacities” (1994, *xvi-xvii*). The perceptual capacities that are involved in perceptual experiences include *active* conceptual capacities. McDowell claims:

...we need a conception of experiences as states or occurrences that are passive but reflect conceptual capacities, capacities that belong to spontaneity [the involvement of conceptual capacities (9)] in operation...Experiences are indeed receptivity in operation; so they can satisfy the need for external control on our freedom in empirical thinking. But conceptual capacities, capacities that belong to spontaneity, are already at work in experiences themselves, not just in judgments based on them; so experiences can intelligibly stand in rational relations to our exercises of the freedom that is implicit in the idea of spontaneity (1994, 23-24).

¹³ McDowell's main objective in *Mind and World* (1994) is to provide a link between perception and belief *that things are thus and so*. He argues that the *Myth of the Given* and Donald Davidson's *coherentism* (1986) do not offer a clear understanding of how thought can have “empirical content,” as well as justify beliefs. McDowell's project is to understand both how perceptual experience must be constrained by external reality and how it must stand in rational relations to belief, in order to justify belief.

Since experience is a passive state that involves active conceptual capacities, experience can be viewed as playing a role in our thinking or how “thinking is answerable to how things are” and how it is required “to make sense of it as thinking at all” (1994, xii).¹⁴ For McDowell, it is our experiences, more specifically, our perceptual experiences, that form the basis for how thinking or thought includes objective content. In the following section, I will refer to some of McDowell’s earlier work (1984, 1986) that motivates this possibility.

McDowell’s Metaphysics of Mind: Singular Thoughts and Experiential States

When I see a tree in front of me, I am presented with a particular thing that I stand in relation with. When I have such a perceptual experience, I am in a position to make a judgment about what it is I see. I have a *singular, demonstrative* thought, “That is a tree.” My thought is about the tree and according to McDowell, my thought content is “object-dependent.”¹⁵ A necessary condition for me to have a thought of this kind is that the object (the tree) exists. If no object existed, then I would not have such a thought but instead an illusion of a singular thought. Here is a passage to illustrate how thought content concerns a given object or how it is object-dependent:

¹⁴ McDowell claims that conceptual capacities are already active in experience in a way that the subject can be *open* to the way things are in the world. McDowell states, “Conceptual capacities...can be operative not only in judgments—results of a subject’s actively making up her mind about something—but already in the transactions in nature that are constituted by the world’s impacts on the receptive capacities of a suitable subject; that is, one who possesses the relevant concepts. Impressions can *be* cases of its perceptually appearing—being apparent—to a subject that things are thus and so. In receiving impressions, a subject can be open to the way things manifestly are. This yields a satisfying interpretation for the image of postures that are answerable to the world through being answerable to experience” (1994, xx).

¹⁵ Often it is considered that a Fregean position defends a view in which a propositional attitude is *about* an object if the propositional content is said to determine the object or that the propositional content is available to be thought even if the object does not exist. In McDowell’s work (1984, 1986), he is influenced by Gareth Evans’ work, *Varieties of Reference* (1982), where Evans argues that Frege was committed to *de re* senses for singular terms. He defends a position that propositions or thoughts are object-dependent. Although this position is controversial given Frege’s own claims regarding referentless senses, McDowell encourages a reading that at least entertains the availability of such an idea (1986, 144-145).

A typical visual experience of, say, a cat situates its object for the perceiver: in the first instance egocentrically, but granting the perceiver a general capacity to locate himself, and the objects he can locate egocentrically, in a non-egocentrically conceived world, we can see how the experience's placing of the cat equips the perceiver... In view of the kind of object a cat is, there is nothing epistemologically problematic in suggesting that this locating perceptual knowledge of it suffices for knowledge of which object it is (again, even if the only answer the perceiver can give to the question is 'That one')...we can say that such objects are immediately present to the mind in a way that, given the connection between location and identity for objects of the appropriate kind, makes possible the targeting of singular thoughts on the objects...(1986, 140).

This passage indicates that there is a relation between the perceiver and the object (the cat), and what is *immediately* available to the mind is the object itself. For instance, given McDowell's position, the singular thought, "that [one] is F," is individuated according to the identity of the object (it is essentially *de re*) and yet the content of such a thought is *fully conceptualized*.¹⁶ What a *de re* belief is about is partly determined by the object that is present to the subject's cognitive world, and in order to incorporate the 'external' object, McDowell states that we must expand our understanding of cognitive space:

Allowing intrinsic object-dependence, we have to set whatever literally spatial boundaries are in question outside the subject's skin or skull. Cognitive space incorporates the relevant portions of the 'external' world (1986, 167).

¹⁶ In *De Re Senses*, McDowell describes a Burgean (1977) framework that states: a propositional attitude is essentially *de re* if the context that includes the *res* enters into determining whether the propositional attitude is correctly ascribed. For Burge, the correct ascription includes a *non-conceptual, contextual* relation between the believer and the object (1984, 284). McDowell argues for a Fregean position that would incorporate demonstrative thoughts such as, 'here' and 'there', as singular thoughts that include contextual factors, but unlike Burge's position, he argues such thought contents are *fully conceptualized*. Contrary to Burge's position, McDowell writes:

There is no more reason to accept that contextual factors are extraneous to the content-determining powers of a conceptual repertoire than there is to accept, in face of Frege, that what is expressed by a context-sensitive utterance cannot be partly determined by the context in which it is made. So for all that Burge shows, a conceptual repertoire can include the ability to think of objects under modes of presentation whose functioning depends essentially on (say) the perceived presence of the objects. Such *de re* modes of presentation would be parts or aspects of content, not vehicles for it; no means of mental representation could determine the content in question by itself, without benefit of context, but that does not establish any good sense in which the content is not fully conceptualized (1984, 287).

If there were no such thing as singular thoughts that are directly open to reality, then we could not understand how objective content is possible. It would leave us with a “fully Cartesian” picture in which “there are no facts about the inner realm besides what is infallibly accessible...” and it is not clear how such a picture is “entitled to characterize its inner facts in content-involving terms—in terms of its seeming to one that things are thus and so—at all” (1986, 150-152). In addition, McDowell states:

Once the subject’s cognitive world has been segregated from his involvement with real objects, this merely terminological move [of having *de re* content being partly determined by matters external to the subject’s cognitive world] cannot restore genuine sense to the idea that we can get our minds around what we believe—even when the belief is *de re* (1984, 293).

If we separate a subject’s cognitive world from his involvement with objects, then the subject’s cognitive world would be “confined to a tract of reality whose layout would be exactly as it is however things stood outside it” (1986, 151) and this would be fundamentally problematic—a straight path to skepticism.

So far I’ve discussed McDowell’s view of the singular aspects of singular thought. Of course, perception is a basic source of singular thoughts: one perceives that *x* is *F*. What about complete experiential contents, including their general components? According to MNRD, perceptual experiences are both relational and contentful. They get their content partly through the exercise of conceptual capacities (on which, more below) hence the perceptual content is conceptual. The following passage, from his later work (2013a), helps to clarify McDowell’s notion of perceptual content for a *seeing* experience:

On a relational conception, experience enables us to know things about the environment by placing us in cognitively significant relations to environmental realities. And in spelling out the idea that experiences have content, I presupposed something on those lines. I sketched an account in which the content of an experience of seeing enables it to make present to its subject a certain environmental reality, a

state of affairs or an object, thereby putting her in a position to have associated knowledge about her environment (2013a, 145).

This passage indicates that experience places us in a *cognitively* significant relation to our environment and it is the content of a seeing experience that enables a certain environmental reality to be made present to the subject. In light of this passage, it would seem that the content of a seeing experience is distinct from the content of a seeming to see experience. However, as McDowell develops this point, he states that it is not the content of a seeing experience that makes it a distinct experience from a seeming to see experience, but rather *how it has its content*. McDowell states:

On the content conception, the epistemic significance of an experience consists in its having content *in the way it does*. An experience that is a seeing can be like an experience that merely appears to put its subject in touch with a corresponding environmental reality in respect of *what* content it has. But a seeing is unlike a mere appearing in *how* it has its content. Seeings have their content in a way that is characteristic of seeings; they make environmental realities present to their subject. Thereby, on either version of the idea of experiential content, they put the subject in a position that leaves open no possibility of things not being as they would be believed to be in suitably related beliefs (2013a, 147).

Again, in this passage, it is important to recognize that it is not *what* the content is that makes a seeing experience one that is different from a seeming to see experience, but rather, it is *how* an experience has its content that determines whether the visual experience is a seeing experience.

Additionally, McDowell states:

That things are thus and so is the conceptual content of an experience, but if the subject of the experience is not misled, that very same thing, *that things are thus and so*, is also a perceptible fact, an aspect of the perceptible world (1994, 26).

The above passages indicate that taking things to be a certain way in experience is the conceptual content of the experience, and if the subject is not misled, it (the content) is the

fact that things are thus and so.¹⁷ And, it is this relation between the perceiver and the object in the world that grounds the representational character of the veridical experience.¹⁸

We saw that for McDowell singular aspects of genuine singular thoughts depend for their very content on an object. Suppose then one achieves a genuine singular thought, such as in a perception-based thought when one is not hallucinating. In some such cases, one's experience is a seeing and in others a mere seeming to see—one suffers an illusion about the

¹⁷ In McDowell's work (2013a), he claims that his position is slightly different from Sellars' position in discussing the content of experience. McDowell claims that the more familiar way of discussing experiential content is that it is propositional. For instance, he states that for Sellars' version, if an experience enables one to know that p, it is because the experience is of seeing that p (2013a, 144-145). McDowell slightly diverges from Sellars on this point. McDowell states:

And—here I diverge from Sellars—[experience] makes that knowledge available by making present to the subject a *state of affairs* consisting in there being something red and rectangular in front of her. That there is something red and rectangular in front of the subject is both the relevant aspect of the experience's content and what it enables the subject to know (2013a, 145).

In addition, McDowell discusses another version of Sellars' position that his position diverges from. In this version, experiential content is less than propositional and it is regarding the content of noun phrases. McDowell states:

On this version of the idea—again, here I diverge from Sellars—an experience that enables someone to know there is something red and rectangular in front of her, again in the most straightforward way, makes present to her not a state of affairs, but an *object*: something presented in the experience as red and rectangular and in front of her. On this version we cannot connect the experience's content so directly with what it enables its subject to know. But the connection is still obvious: if an experience presents someone with an object as red and rectangular and in front of her, it enables her to know there is something red and rectangular in front of her (2013a, 145).

In these passages, it seems McDowell emphasizes that experience makes *present* to the subject an environmental reality and by having the environmental reality present to the subject, it can make knowledge available. In a seeing experience, then, in light of McDowell's position, *how* the content is formed is what makes knowledge available. And again, if the subject is not misled, then the content is the fact that things are thus and so.

¹⁸ For McDowell, the representational character includes experiential content. Littlejohn (forthcoming a) finds this view problematic. He states, "The guiding thought is that if we think of perception as fundamentally being a relation between the perceiver and the particulars she sees, her experience will only have representational content the accuracy of which turns on how things are with this perceived particular if there's some process that yields a content by taking in the particulars we see and generating some sort of content from that. At the ground level, what's taken in would have to be something we see if indeed the perception grounds the representational character of the experience. Once we see this, it's hard to see what reason there could be for thinking that this transductive process that takes a non-propositional input and yields something that's the kind of content that can bear logical relations to belief couldn't simply yield a *belief's* content as opposed to an *experience's* content. If the aim is to acquire knowledge, I see no advantage for wiring things up one way rather than another" (17).

object. Here the content may be common to the good and bad cases, but how the experience has its content is different. Only in the former is reality present to mind. McDowell acknowledges that in cases of illusion, there would be an appearance that things are thus and so and the subject's experience would *purport to be of objective reality*,¹⁹ but what is made available in the two cases differs.

Let us take a broader view. McDowell is concerned with deep skeptical questions about how *thought* can be objective and how *experience* can even purport to be of objective reality. He offers a kind of transcendental argument that the possibility of objective mental content requires the *object-dependence* of singular thought contents, and he offers the picture of object-dependence to assuage the skeptical concern that we could have the very thoughts that we do but they could be completely detached from any objective reality. He also offers a kind of transcendental argument that the possibility of the *objective purport* of experience depends on a kind of *fact-dependent* experiential state, and he offers the picture of fact-dependence to assuage the skeptic who thinks that, because for all we know we might be radically deceived, our experience cannot even purport to be of objective reality (See also footnote 19). And appeal to such experiential states provides an answer to the more familiar skeptical question of whether knowledge is possible. Such an experiential state puts one in an epistemic position to know—"a position that leaves open no possibility of things not being as they would be believed to be" (2013a, 147).

¹⁹ To understand the view that our experiences at least purport to be of objective reality, McDowell argues for a type of "transcendental argument" that is influenced by Sellars (McDowell, 2008). McDowell summarizes, "In order to understand the very idea of objective purport of visual experience (to single out one sensory modality), we need to appreciate that the concept of experiences in which, say, it looks to one as if there is red cube in front of one divides into the concept of cases in which one sees that there is red cube in front of one and the concept of cases in which it merely looks to one as if there is a red cube in front of one (either because there is nothing there at all or because although there is something there it is not a red cube)" (2008, 380).

We also see two epistemological asymmetries arising from what certainly seem to be metaphysical disjunctivisms in McDowell. One either has a genuine singular thought, or one merely seems to have one. In the normal case where one does, one knows it because the object is present to the mind, but in the case where one merely appears to have a singular thought, one can falsely believe that it is genuine. Similarly, one can be in an experiential state where the world is directly open to view or this can merely seem to be so. In the normal case where the fact that things are thus and so is directly perceived, one knows it because the world is made manifest (2008, 381), but when one is misled one can falsely believe that one perceives veridically. The latter asymmetry explains how a certain skepticism cannot get off the ground since MNRD “removes [the] prop on which sceptical doubt depends” (2008, 385), the prop presumably being the worry that the experiences are the same in both cases and epistemically symmetrical—one can fail to know whether one is having either kind of experience.

Perceptual Content is Conceptual

As we have seen, McDowell argues that singular thought is individuated according to the identity of the object, and the content of such a thought is fully conceptualized. In *Mind and World*, McDowell sets out to show how perceptual experience includes conceptual content. As mentioned above, this occurs when one’s conceptual capacity is activated in experience bringing a particular object present to mind. Experience is *passive* (a case of receptivity in operation) and this forms the necessary *external constraint* on our conceptual capacities (1994, 10). Yet, McDowell argues that we would not be able to suppose that the capacities that are activated in experience are conceptual if they were only active in

operations of receptivity. Conceptual capacities are recognized for what they are because they are exercised in active thinking (1994, 11). He states:

Minimally, it must be possible to decide whether or not to judge that things are as one's experience represents them to be. How one's experience represents them to be is not under one's control, but it is up to one whether one accepts the appearance or rejects it. Moreover, even if we consider only judgments that register experience itself, which are already active in the that minimal sense, we must acknowledge that the capacity to use concepts in those judgments is not self-standing; it cannot be in place independently of a capacity to use the same concepts outside the context (1994, 11).

To further illustrate this point, he states:

...the passive operations of conceptual capacities in sensibility is not intelligible independently of their active exercise in judgment, and in the thinking that issues in judgment...The conceptual capacities that are passively drawn into play in experience belong to a network of capacities for active thought, a network that rationally governs comprehension-seeking responses to the impacts of the world on sensibility (1994, 12).

Perception is passive but involves elements that themselves belong to an active capacity.

McDowell argues that perceptual experiences put us in a position to judge whether *things are thus and so*, and in order for a subject to accept or reject an appearance, the subject must be able to rationally assess how things look to her. In doing so, he is indicating how perceptual belief (judgment) can be an act of reason. He states:

In a particular experience in which one is not misled, what one takes in is *that things are thus and so*. *That things are thus and so* is the content of experience, and it can also be the content of a judgment: it becomes the content of judgment if the subject decides to take the experience at face value. So it is conceptual content. But that *things are thus and so* is also, if one is not misled, an aspect of the layout of the world: it is how things are. Thus the idea of conceptually structured operations of receptivity puts us in a position to speak of experience as openness to reality. Experience enables the layout of reality itself to exert a rational influence on what a subject thinks (1994, 26).

Moreover, influenced by Wilfrid Sellars' position (1956), McDowell argues that such states must be placed within a space of reasons. Why? Well, such states play a fundamental role in

justifying beliefs.²⁰ In other words, such states provide a reason for believing that things are thus and so. However, this epistemological position faces another problem. If experiential states provide a reason for believing, then it seems that removing the “prop” does not fully remove skeptical doubt. Couldn’t states based on false perceptions also be placed within a space of reasons? Since a subject cannot phenomenally distinguish between the veridical and non-veridical experiences, the subject could believe that *things are thus and so* based on a false perception. And so, the skeptic can argue that *any* state based on perception can only provide a *defeasible* warrant for beliefs.²¹ In order to address this concern, McDowell argues for a form of epistemological disjunctivism: a position in which one’s epistemic warrant in a seeing experience is different in kind from one’s epistemic warrant in a seeming to see experience (1982, 1986, 2008). In a seeing experience, one’s justification for a perceptual claim is indefeasible (1982, 2008, 2011). In the following section, I will discuss in greater detail this position and how McDowell rejects the epistemological assumption that criteria are defeasible in order to show how knowledge of the external world and other minds is possible.

MNRD and the Possibility of Knowledge of Other Minds and the External World

The Possibility of Knowledge of Other Minds

McDowell first introduces the notion of indefeasibility in “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge” (1982) where he offers an account of knowledge of other minds, one that does

²⁰ McDowell (1994, xiv, footnote 2) is influenced by Sellars’ position in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* (1956), where Sellars writes: “In characterizing an episode or state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says (1956, 298-9)”

²¹ McDowell is aware of this concern, and in *Knowledge and the Internal* (1995), he argues against a “hybrid conception” of knowledge: one which includes a satisfactory standing in the space of reasons (incorporating *defeasible* reason) and also includes the fact that “what one takes to be so is indeed so” (1995, 881-882).

not face the epistemological problem that is generated when we conceive of minds as not directly accessible to others. To illustrate the epistemological problem that motivates his disjunctivism, let's briefly consider the case of believing that John is in pain. In the good case (non-deceptive case), it appears that John is in pain and John is (in fact) in pain. In the bad case (deceptive case), it appears that John is in pain, but John is not in pain. Now what generates the epistemological problem is that in both cases, it seems one only perceives John's behavior—John appears to be in pain. If we conceive of minds as not directly accessible to others, we commit to a view in which 'criteria' or the "kind of evidence" (1982, 455) in good cases and bad cases is the same. The problem with *this* 'criterial view,' according to McDowell, is that even in a good case the "reach of one's experience falls short of [the] circumstance" and so what "is available to one's experience is compatible with the person's not being in the inner state at all" (1982, 457). The evidence would be defeasible. He states:

...the support that 'criterion' yields for a claim is defeasible: that is, a state of information in which one is in possession of a 'criterial' warrant for a claim can always be expanded into a state of information in which the claim would not be warranted at all (1982, 455).

The possible skeptical problem with this view is that we "suppose that to experience the satisfaction of 'criteria' for a claim is to be in a position in which, for all one knows, the claim may not be true" (1982, 457). So, in the case mentioned above, if we limit perceptual evidence to the fact that John appears to be in pain, we are accepting that somehow the actual fact that John is in pain, John's inner state, is inaccessible to others. McDowell rejects such a model of knowledge. According to McDowell, what is available to experience in the two cases differs which in turn supports his epistemological disjunctivism. In the good case, the

fact that p (John is in pain) is made manifest to the perceiver, and in the bad case, what is available to experience is simply the fact that John appears to be in pain. In the good case, the genuine criteria, “ways of telling how things are” (1982, 470), are satisfied, and there is an “indefeasible connection between the actual, as opposed to apparent, satisfaction of a criterion and the associated knowledge” (1982, 470), and in the bad case there is only defeasible evidence. For McDowell, the two cases constitute distinct epistemic statuses.

The Possibility of Knowledge of the External World

Similar to the other minds case, there is a possible skeptical problem when it comes to knowledge of the external world. For example, given that there is a world independent of oneself and given that we experience the world perceptually, we must acknowledge that in *any* given perceptual experience, we could be experiencing an illusion or a hallucination. Since we cannot phenomenally distinguish between deceptive cases and non-deceptive cases, we are left with a position that the criteria for both cases (deceptive and non-deceptive) are defeasible.²² In other words, we assume that the warrant the two cases share has a common basis which McDowell calls the “highest common factor” (1982, 471). The following passage indicates the problem:

One’s capacity is a capacity to tell by looking: that is on the basis of experiential intake. And even when this capacity does yield knowledge, we have to conceive the basis as a *highest common factor* of what is available to experience in the deceptive and non-deceptive cases alike, and hence as something that is at best defeasible ground for knowledge, though available with certainty independent of whatever might put the knowledge in doubt (1982, 471).

²² This is a result of accepting that our perceptual capacity is fallible. McDowell states, “Let the fallible capacity be a capacity to tell by experience that such-and-such is the case. In a deceptive case, what is embraced within the scope of experience is an appearance that such-and-such is the case, falling short of the fact: a *mere* appearance. So what is experienced in a non-deceptive case is a mere appearance, too. The upshot is that even in the non-deceptive cases, we have to picture something that falls short of the fact ascertained, at best defeasibly connected with it, as interposing between the subject and the fact itself” (1982, 472).

According to the highest common factor thesis, what constitutes warrant in perceptual experience is the same in deceptive and non-deceptive cases. We conceive that the “information” or what is “available in experiential intake” is the same in both cases.²³

In the other minds case and the external world case, McDowell argues that if our perceptual evidence is limited to what *seems* to be the case, the (mere) appearance of another’s behavior or the (mere) appearance of the external world, rather than what we actually *see* to be the case, then we have not answered the skeptic’s concern. The satisfaction of criteria would be compatible with an inaccurate perception and false belief. In rejecting the highest common factor thesis, McDowell is arguing that some criteria do not fall short of the fact, and if and when evidence does fall short of the fact, it only *seems* that the criteria are satisfied.

Rejecting the Highest Common Factor Thesis and MNRD

Once we reject the highest common factor thesis, we can understand how in non-deceptive cases, one’s warrant is constituted by having direct access to the external world. McDowell states that in non-deceptive cases, the “fact itself is directly presented to view, so that it is true in the stronger sense that the object of experience does not fall short of the fact” (1982, 472-473). Or as he states, “the content of knowledge is simply presented in the data”

²³ This analysis is supported by the following passage: “Suppose we assume that one can come to know that someone else is in some ‘inner’ state by adverting to what he says and does. Empirical investigation of the cues that impinge on one’s sensory organs on such an occasion would yield a specification of the information received by them; the same information would be received by the deceptive case as well. That limited informational intake must be processed, in the nervous system, into the information about the person’s ‘inner’ state that comes to be at one’s disposal; and a description of the information-processing would look like the description of an inference from the highest common factor. Now there is a familiar temptation, here and at the analogous point in reflection about perceptual knowledge of the environment in general, to suppose that one’s epistemic standing with respect to the upshot of the process is constituted by the availability to one’s senses of the highest common factor, together with the cogency of the supposed inference” (1982, 476-77).

(1982, 473) and so appearance does not “[get] in the way of the subject and the world” (1982, 474).

So far in our discussion of MNRD, we can see how some experiential states of their very nature are veridical—they are individuated by reference to objects in the world and facts are present to mind. However, since veridical and non-veridical experiences are phenomenally indistinguishable, in order to account for their epistemic difference, MNRD incorporates an epistemological disjunctivist position. It is the epistemological disjunctivist position that plays the crucial role in explaining how such states provide an indefeasible warrant for believing that *p*. The epistemological disjunctivist position is: *Either* one sees that *p* (one has a veridical experience in suitable conditions—I will discuss what such conditions are in detail in the next section) *or* one seems to see that *p* (one has a “merely” veridical experience or a non-veridical experience). It is the perceptual state, *seeing that p*, that provides an indefeasible reason for believing that *p*.²⁴ In a seeming to see that *p* state, one’s experience *misleadingly* presents itself as being a seeing that *p* experience when it is not. From here on, when discussing MNRD, McDowell’s epistemological disjunctivism will be included. In the next section, I will discuss this in greater detail.

²⁴ For McDowell, not only does seeing that *p* entail *p* is true, but it also puts one in a position to know that *p*. Regarding McDowell’s position, Haddock and Macpherson (2008) state:

The idea of seeing that *p* is central to McDowell’s epistemological outlook; it is the idea of an experiential, factive, and epistemic state. The state is experiential in that if *S* sees that *p* then it looks to *S* as if *p*—where the consequent is interpreted phenomenologically, rather than ascribing a tentative judgment of *S*. It is factive in that if *S* sees that *p*, then *p* is so. And it is epistemic in the following two respects: that *S* sees that *p* provides an indefeasible reason for *S* to believe that *p*; and, if *S* does see that *p*, then *S* is in a position to know that *p*—or, as McDowell...puts it, “knowledge of the fact” that *p* is “made available” to him” (2008, 5).

McDowell's Epistemological Disjunctivism

As previously mentioned, in order to account for error possibilities, while maintaining the anti-skeptical impact of “openness,” MNRD includes a form of epistemological disjunctivism: a position in which one’s epistemic warrant in a seeing experience is different in kind from one’s epistemic warrant in a seeming to see experience. There is a difference in the epistemic standing of experience between good and bad cases. And, according to McDowell, in a seeing that *p* state, there is a “feature of the objective environment [that] is perceptually present to one’s self-consciously rational awareness” (2011, 37). Since there is a difference in the epistemic standing of an experience in good and bad cases, the epistemic standing of an experience supervenes on something about the experience. This poses an important question: Does MNRD subscribe to metaphysical disjunctivism—a position in which the perceptual experiences are different in *kind* (constitute distinct mental state kinds) between good and bad cases?²⁵ Although the answer is not quite clear, it is fair to say that, in light of MNRD, the epistemic difference between the good and bad cases must be a difference in what is *present* to the subject in experience.²⁶ In this section, I will discuss how

²⁵ A metaphysical disjunctivist position may require an understanding of how mental content is individuated. If one argues that veridical experience and non-veridical experiences are essentially different mental kinds, then mental content is individuated by whether there is a mind-independent object that enters into the nature of the experience. Byrne and Logue argue that ‘metaphysical disjunctivism’ should be a position that is committed to stating that there is no common mental element between a veridical perception and a hallucination. They propose a *distinct use* of ‘metaphysical disjunctivism’ in their work. Moreover, they argue for a *moderate view* which states that the two experiences do share a common core, but yet they differ in other respects mentally (See Byrne and Logue, 2008). Another type of metaphysical disjunctivism acknowledges that there is an introspectively indistinguishable mental kind that the two cases share but this mental kind is just not an essential kind. For instance, one does not have to be a type of metaphysical disjunctivist that is defined by Byrne and Logue.

²⁶ Some have argued that epistemological disjunctivism (specifically McDowell’s epistemological disjunctivism) does not commit him to metaphysical disjunctivism. See Byrne and Logue (2008, 2009) and Haddock and MacPherson (2008). In addition, Pritchard (2012a) argues for epistemological disjunctivism that does not commit him to metaphysical disjunctivism. But, it is not clear on whether one can be an epistemological disjunctivist without committing to metaphysical disjunctivism. See Gomes (2011) for a

for McDowell, a *seeing* experience includes more than what one ordinarily thinks of as a veridical perception (e.g. veridical visual perception of an object in good lighting). The epistemic difference between seeing experiences and seeming to see experiences is ultimately due to a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity.

What is a seeing that p experience?

According to McDowell, in the good case, the fact that p is made manifest to the perceiver. If the fact that p is made available to S, then S is in a position to know that p. S's reason for believing that p is that she sees that p and seeing that p is reflectively accessible to S. S's reason is indefeasible and so, equipped with that reason, it is not possible for S to be deceived. This implies that the perceptual state, seeing that p, is not only a factive state, but that seeing that p is a reason-giving state. Moreover, according to McDowell, seeing that p provides a reason in which S is entitled to claim that she sees that p and knows that she sees that p:

What does entitle one to claim that one is perceiving that things are thus and so, when one is so entitled? The fact that one is perceiving that things are thus and so. That is a kind of fact whose obtaining our self-consciously possessed perceptual capacities enable us to recognize on suitable occasions, just as they enable us to recognize such facts as that there are red cubes in front of us, and all the more complex types of environmental facts that our powers to perceive things put at our disposal (2008, 387).

To further illustrate his position, he states:

My ability to recognize zebras is fallible, and it follows that my ability to know when I am seeing a zebra is fallible. It does not follow—this is the crucial point—that I cannot ever have the warrant for believing that an animal in front of me is a zebra constituted by seeing that it is a zebra. If the animal in front of me is a zebra, and conditions are suitable for exercising my ability to recognize zebras when I see them

discussion on whether one can be an epistemological disjunctivist without also being a metaphysical disjunctivist (if one is an epistemological internalist). Also, it seems that if one is committed to naïve realism, then one would be committed to a form of metaphysical disjunctivism.

(for instance, the animal is in full view), then that ability, fallible though it is, enables me to see that it is a zebra, and to know that I do (2008, 387).

As seen in these passages, McDowell argues that it is *exercising* one's fallible perceptual capacities on suitable occasions that puts one in the right kind of perceptual state—a state in which the fact that p is made available to the perceiver. If one has a veridical experience in good conditions, then it would seem that on McDowell's account having such an experience would suffice to be the kind of seeing experience that provides an indefeasible warrant for believing. But this is insufficient for seeing that p for McDowell. As we will see, McDowell's use of 'seeing that p' is a term of art. For McDowell, a seeing experience is more than veridically experiencing an object in good conditions (for example, seeing a zebra in good lighting, etc.) A seeing experience requires a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity in order to be considered a relevant seeing experience:

Philosophers often talk as what is important is whether an experience is veridical. But for an experience to be veridical would be for things in the environment to be the way it makes them seem to be, and that does not suffice for an act of a capacity of the kind we are considering to be non-defective. For a non-defective act of a capacity to know by looking that something in front of one is, say, red, it is not enough that one sees a red thing in a good light for getting to know the colours of things, even if one's colour vision is in perfect working order (2013a, 152).

One may ask, "What, then, is a non-defective exercise?" To begin answering this question, we can take a look at a scenario McDowell discusses that separates different cases that do not count as seeing experiences:

...if one's senses are actually out of order, though their operations are sometimes unaffected: in such a case, an experience subjectively indistinguishable from that of being confronted with a tomato, even if it results from confrontation with a tomato, need not count as experiencing the presence of a tomato. Another case in which it may not count as that is one in which there are lots of tomato façades about, indistinguishable from tomatoes when viewed from the front...One counts as experiencing the fact making itself manifest only in the exercise of a (fallible) capacity to *tell* how things are (1982, 475 fn.1).

In this passage, the first scenario does not count as a seeing experience (as a seeing a tomato experience) even if S is confronted with a tomato because S's experience involves poorly functioning senses—S's senses are out of order (S may have blurry vision, S may have taken a vision-impairing drug, etc.). This claim seems uncontroversial since most philosophers would agree that S would not actually be having a seeing experience even if the tomato were in front of her. However, the second scenario seems controversial. According to McDowell, S's experience does not count as a seeing experience because S does not see a tomato in good objective conditions. One way to understand this case, in light of McDowell's position, is that even if S veridically experiences a tomato, *the fact that there is a tomato* is not made manifest in S's experience. S does not non-defectively exercise her perceptual capacity and so S does not see that p. Another way to understand this case, not McDowell's, is that S does exercise her perceptual capacity so *the fact that there is a tomato* would be made manifest in S's experience. This fact can help explain her true belief that there is a tomato. The problem is that S is still not in a position to know that there is a tomato. So, maybe what McDowell means by a defective exercise here, is that since the objective conditions are bad, S is *not aware* of this fact and so S is not in a position to know. Since S is not aware of the fact there is a tomato, S does not non-defectively exercise her perceptual capacities and that is why she is not in a position to know. Either way, in such a case, for McDowell, veridically experiencing an object, even when one's "senses are [not] actually out of order," is not sufficient for what counts as a seeing experience if one does not exercise one's perceptual capacity non-defectively. This case illustrates that in order to understand McDowell's position, as noted earlier, we may have to accept his use of 'seeing that p' as a term of art. Its use is not reflective of the ordinary use of 'seeing that p.' Seeing that p is more than a

perception ordinarily understood. It is a perception in suitable conditions, where no defeaters are present (I will discuss such conditions in more detail later in this section).

The second scenario is similar to the famous example of seeing a barn in fake barn country (Goldman, 1976 (originally discussed by Carl Ginet)). In the original case, Henry sees a barn and forms the belief that there is barn. His belief is true and Henry is justified in believing that there is barn. But let's say that the area Henry is in is fake-barn country and most of the barns in that area are fake barns. One can argue that in this case Henry does not know because, even though, on a more traditional view, his belief is justified, there is an element of luck in his coming to have a true belief. However, it seems perfectly reasonable to claim that Henry's vision is working just fine, and one might say that Henry *sees* that there is a barn. But again, this does not accord with McDowell's special notion of seeing that p. McDowell would argue that Henry's experience is not a seeing that there's a barn experience since the exercise of his perceptual capacity is not functioning properly. As already mentioned, the failure does not seem to be visual since Henry's experience is veridical. It would seem that for McDowell, even if Henry's experience is veridical, it is not so solely *through* a non-defective exercise of his perceptual capacity, but also significantly through luck. This indicates a challenge in understanding McDowell's notion of 'what a perceptual capacity is a capacity to do.' One way to put this point is that for McDowell, a perceptual capacity is more than what is ordinarily thought of as a perceptual capacity. So, for McDowell, like 'seeing that p,' we see that a 'perceptual capacity' could also be considered as a term of art. Here is the concern: Given that Henry's vision is working properly and grounds a true belief, why accept McDowell's inflated notion of what counts as a relevant perceptual state? I will discuss this concern in greater detail in the next section.

As mentioned earlier, according to McDowell, the non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity enables one to see that p and also enables one to know that one sees that p. Haddock and MacPherson claim:

So, in McDowell's account, the fact that I see that p, and the fact that I know that I see that p, are equally the upshots of the operation of my abilities to recognize Fs when I see them (2008, 10).

It is important to note that only when suitable conditions are in place does S see that p and is S in a position to know that p. To better understand McDowell's notion of suitable conditions, I will discuss various cases to help distinguish between good conditions and bad conditions. More specifically, I will discuss cases that illustrate what counts as good and bad objective conditions and good and bad subjective conditions.

First, let's start with cases where objective conditions are good. These will include normal environmental conditions where, for example, there are no fake barns or fake tomatoes around, no bad lighting, etc. In other words, there are no unknown objective error-possibilities. Also, it seems that good objective conditions would rule out any objective defeaters (unknown true propositions that would prevent S from being in a position to know).

Perhaps a clarification of my usage of the term 'defeater' is in order.²⁷ For some, a defeater is any true proposition, known or unknown, which, were it accessible to the agent, would undermine her epistemic status. For others, only known error-possibilities are labeled 'defeaters,' and unknown error-possibilities are simply construed as bad objective conditions. For example, Pritchard discusses unknown objective error-possibilities as bad objective conditions (2012a). An example of the former occurs when one sees a barn in the field and is

²⁷ See "Defeaters in Epistemology" by Michael Sudduth, *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* for a review of defeaters in the literature.

later told by and believes a reliable informant that the barn one sees is a fake-barn. In such a case, the subject is aware of an undefeated defeater. A paradigm example of the latter is the case of fake barns, where their existence is unknown to the agent. Herein for McDowell's position, I will use the term 'defeater' for both kinds of case, and where necessary, I will call the former 'subjective defeaters' and the latter 'objective defeaters.' For example, let's say that S sees a tomato in the field. Now suppose that the local newspaper has published an article claiming that in this particular field there are mostly fake tomatoes around. S has not read the newspaper—making the defeater an unknown objective defeater that prevents S from being in a position to know that there is a tomato in the field. In good objective conditions, there are no such unknown objective defeaters. In addition, good objective conditions include cases in which S's senses are working properly, for example, when S has not taken any vision-impairing drugs.

Bad objective conditions would include abnormal environmental factors, such as having fake tomatoes around, bad lighting, or an intake of vision-impairing drugs—while affecting the subject, is objective because it is unknown. Also, it seems bad objective conditions would include unknown objective defeaters (as mentioned above: a local newspaper claims that most of the tomatoes in the particular area are fake tomatoes). Since such conditions prevent S from being in a position to know that there is a tomato in the field, they constitute bad objective conditions. In these cases, even if S veridically experiences a tomato, S would not *see that* there is a tomato in the field.

Good subjective conditions would include conditions in which the subject is not in possession of any undefeated defeater. For instance, suppose S sees a tomato in good objective conditions (no fake tomatoes around, no bad lighting) and there are no unknown

objective defeaters. But now, let's say a reliable informant convinces S that there are fake tomatoes around. In such a scenario, S would be in possession of an undefeated defeater and so this would not count as good subjective conditions. In order for subjective conditions to be good, there must be no undefeated defeater that the subject possesses. If the subject is in possession of an undefeated defeater, then the subjective conditions are bad.

Again, for McDowell, only when S has a veridical experience in suitable conditions (there are no subjective and objective defeaters present), S sees that p. If there are subjective and/or objective defeaters present, then S does not see that p and S is not in a position to know that p.

Does Metaphysical Disjunctivism Support Epistemological Disjunctivism?

To illustrate some of the above points and what counts as a seeing that p experience, let's look at the following example:²⁸

Let's say there are two twins, Ted and Ed, and you can't tell them apart. Now suppose Ted hits you. One may argue that there is nothing counterintuitive about saying that it is Ted who hits you, even though you cannot distinguish your situation from one in which Ed hits you. It is not as though there is some third thing – the “appearance” or “look” shared by Ed and Ted – that is really what hits you.

I will distinguish different cases for this example to illustrate, what seems to be, McDowell's inflated notion of a seeing that p experience and what counts as a perceptual capacity. As we have previously seen, for McDowell, a seeing that p experience differs from a mere veridical experience. In addition, given our discussion of MNRD in the beginning of the chapter, we saw that the difference between a genuine seeing experience and other experiences (mere veridical and non-veridical) is not the content (except where singular aspects of content are concerned), but how a seeing experience has its content. What McDowell means by “how

²⁸ This example was given to me by Allan Hazlett.

[experience] has its content,” is simply being in a case where an environmental reality is made available and one sees that p. If one’s perceptual capacity is exercised non-defectively, then one has a seeing that p experience and the fact that p is present in experience and one is in a position to know that p. By discussing the various cases below, I will show that, McDowell’s notion of a seeing that p experience, leaves open unanswered epistemological questions. In addition, we will see that his notion of a perceptual capacity is really just a *rational* capacity, a capacity to defeat potential defeaters. McDowell gives us an account of perceptual knowledge in which perceptual experiences require a satisfaction of conditions that go beyond ordinary perception—having good objective conditions that go beyond one’s ken, or in some cases, conditions that require having background reasons to defeat defeaters.

Case I: Let’s say Ted’s twin, Ed, is in Prague and far from the town that Ted is located.

Moreover, let’s say there are no defeaters present (subjective or objective). Now, let’s say Ted hits you and you *see* Ted is the person who hit you. In this experience, Ted is placed in view for you. Your cognitive capacities work in a way that makes Ted’s visible features present to you in your experience. There is some perceptual relation between you and Ted that plays a role in grounding this experiential state. In light of McDowell’s position, how this experience has the content it has is due to the non-defective exercise of your perceptual capacity—the fact that Ted is the person who hit you is made present to mind. In this case, you see that Ted is the person who hit you and you are in position to know that Ted is the person who hit you.

Case II: Let’s say Ted hits you, but this time, unbeknownst to you, Ed is in town. So, it could have been Ed who hit you. Since Ed is in town, there is an unknown, objective defeater present. Now in this case, according to McDowell, you do not see that Ted is the person who

hit you and you do not know that Ted is the person who hit you. In order to understand McDowell's position in this scenario, we must refer back to how his notion of a seeing experience is more than a mere veridical experience. In this case, your experience would be considered a veridical experience of Ted hitting you, but it would not be considered a seeing experience. Why? Well, in this case, the fact that Ted is the person who hit you is not made present to you. Seeing that *p* involves a lack of objective defeaters.

This scenario is also similar to the previously discussed environmental luck cases (e.g. Henry's fake-barn case). In order to better understand environmental luck cases and provide a way to interpret McDowell's notion of seeing that *p*, we can refer to Littlejohn's work. Littlejohn (forthcoming a) discusses how a veridical experience is not sufficient to put one in a position to know. He argues that in environmental luck cases, while one has a veridical experience, the "features of the things that they see don't enable them to recognize" (14) the particular object (e.g., a barn) as a general fact (e.g., there is a barn). So, in our example, in light of Littlejohn's position, while you have a veridical experience, the features of Ted don't enable you to recognize Ted as the person who hit you. So recognizing Ted is the person who hit you would require that Ted have a "distinctive look that would trigger a disposition to classify" (14) him as the person who hit you. Since Ted does not have such a distinctive look, the "correctness of the classification cannot be attributable to the subject's sensitivity to the features of the objects that would show that the relevant facts obtained" (14). In other words, in this case, since Ted doesn't have a distinctive look, there is no particular feature in Ted's appearance that can trigger a disposition to classify him as the person who hit you. Therefore, there is no *indication* in your veridical experience that the relevant fact, the fact that Ted is the person who hit you, obtains. Now would McDowell

agree? Yes. McDowell would agree that in such a case the fact that Ted is the person who hit you would not be made present in your experience. In other words, there would be no indication in your veridical experience that suffices for having such a fact made present to you.

Now, in light of McDowell's account, one may *misleadingly* grasp one's experience as a seeing that p experience. One does so because one's ability to grasp one's experience as a seeing that p experience does not include an ability to perceptually discriminate between a seeing that p experience and a seeming to see that p experience. More importantly, this case indicates that in grasping one's seeming to see that p experience as a seeing that p experience, there would be no indication in one's seeming to see that p experience that it is not a seeing that p experience. However, this leaves us asking a few questions. Since seeing that p involves a lack of objective defeaters, how is one supposed to know that? If whether one sees that p depends on factors about which one doesn't know (factors beyond one's ken), then when one cites that one sees that p as a reason for believing that p, how is one's justification better than when it seems that p? And, since seeing that p requires the non-defective exercise of one's fallible capacity, then what kind of exercise of one's fallible capacity is *this* one?

Case III: Let's say Ed is in Prague again and far from town. Ted hits you, but now, this time, Mary a reliable informant, comes along and tells you it wasn't Ted who hit you, but it was Ed. You do not know that Mary is wrong. Since you are aware of this undefeated defeater, you do not know that Ted is the person who hit you. In this case, your experience is in good objective conditions. The environmental conditions are not bad. Ed is not in town and so there are no objective defeaters playing a role. However, there is a subjective defeater

present. In light of McDowell's position, the fact that Ted hit you *would not* be made manifest in your experience. You would not be having a seeing that p experience. Seeing that p involves having no subjective defeaters present. Although there is no real objection in understanding that seeing that p involves having no subjective defeaters, there is a difficulty in understanding McDowell's position, since he often presents this type of case as involving a kind of good case perception whereas it clearly involves more. For instance, one can argue, in light of McDowell's position, that if there are undefeated defeaters present, the fact that Ted is the person who hit you *would* be manifest in your experience except you are not aware of such a fact. The fact that Ted is the person who hit you would not be in "full view" since the defeater is not defeated. For instance, in regard to the undefeated defeater case, McDowell states, the subject is 'deprived of the awareness' (2013b, 269) that she is in a position to know that p and so the exercise of her perceptual capacity is defective. McDowell says that in such cases, S doesn't realize that she *is* in a position to know.²⁹ Again, this seems to indicate that in the undefeated defeater case, there is a kind of good case perception, and seeing that p may not require having 'no subjective defeaters,' since later, if one defeats the defeater, McDowell claims that one can realize that one saw that p (see footnote 29). But, there is an interpretative problem here. This interpretation is inconsistent with McDowell's overall position. When taking into consideration McDowell's overall position, according to

²⁹ McDowell states, "The difference between seeing that P and visually acquiring the belief that P can be brought out by noting that one can realize later that one was seeing that P, though one did not know it at the time and so did not at the time acquire the belief that P. "I thought I was looking at your sweater under a kind of illumination that makes it impossible to tell what colours things are, so I thought it merely looked brown to me, but I now realize I was actually seeing that it was brown." In saying something on these lines, one registers that one had, at the relevant past time, an entitlement that one did not then realize one had. One was in a position to acquire a bit of knowledge about the world, but because of a misapprehension about the circumstances, one did not avail oneself of the opportunity. One did not form the relevant belief, let alone get to know that that was how things were" (2003, 680-681).

what his view *should* be, is that, S is not in a position to know *at all* since S's experience is not a seeing that p experience.

Regardless of the above concern, the main point for McDowell's overall position is that in the undefeated defeater case, one's experience is not a seeing that p experience. If one's experience were a seeing that p experience, then the fact that p would have already come into "full view." And, if the fact that p came into "full view" then it would have required that one's perceptual capacity, which really is a rational capacity, must have been exercised in order to defeat the defeater. Moreover, at the time of the experience, if one was able to defeat the defeater, then one would see that p. One would be able to grasp that one's experience is a seeing that p experience and not a seeming to see that p experience, but not because there was an indication in one's experience that it is a seeing that p experience, but because one had access to background information or reasons that can dismiss the defeater. As we can see, this case highlights that a seeing that p experience requires having background reasons to defeat defeaters (conditions that go beyond ordinary perception).

To recap, Case I shows us that a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity simply means being in a case where an environmental reality is made available and one sees that p. Case II shows us that McDowell's notion of seeing that p requires having good objective conditions that go beyond one's ken—leaving open various unanswered epistemological questions. Case III shows us that McDowell's notion of a perceptual capacity really is a rational capacity and that a seeing that p experience requires having background reasons to defeat defeaters.

My aim in this section was to show that the account McDowell offers for his notion of a seeing that p experience and a perceptual capacity is not explanatorily powerful. What I

mean by this simply is that in order to give an account of perceptual knowledge, McDowell ‘reverse engineers’ the requirements for perceptual knowledge to arrive at a notion of seeing that p that fulfills such requirements. Perhaps this is fine for an espoused ‘quietist’—someone for whom the task of philosophy is simply to achieve a helpful description of matters so as to dissolve philosophical problems—but one can be forgiven for *seeming to see* in McDowell an original account of an independently characterized notion of a seeing experience that includes an anti-skeptical solution. Indeed, his distinctions between kinds of mental states—for example singular thoughts and empty thoughts that only seem to be singular—and between kinds of experiences—seeing and seeming to see—encourage a reading on which the epistemology is grounded in a substantive metaphysics. What one gets is an attempt to “remove the prop” that gives rise to skeptical doubt. However, in order to remove the prop, we must start by assuming that we have knowledge of many things. And, what we know is rationally grounded. The picture McDowell gives us is that in a good case veridical perception, where one “sees that p,” one’s justification for a perceptual claim is indefeasible and non-inferential. But, as we saw in this section, a seeing that p experience ends up including a satisfaction of conditions that go beyond ordinary perception, such as having good objective conditions beyond one’s ken and, in some cases, having defeater-defeating reasons in order to fulfill the requirements for knowledge.

When we take a closer look at the ‘reverse engineered’ requirements for perceptual knowledge so that seeing that p fulfills them, we find that any metaphysical difference between a seeing that p experience and seeming to see that p experience does not do much work in grounding epistemological disjunctivism, because the metaphysical difference ends up depending on the epistemic position (whether there are good objective conditions or

whether one has defeater-defeating reasons), not vice versa. So, overall, when we consider McDowell's position, we realize that it is not really the perceptual state, ordinarily so-called, that generates the disjunction—good or bad. Rather, it seems in a good case, all the epistemological work is done by having good circumstances beyond one's ken or having background information that positions one to defeat any potential defeaters and this requires the exercise of our rational capacity.

But, there is one more problem his position faces. According to McDowell, it is not quite clear if having background information or reasons is necessary to put one in a position to know. For instance, in his later work, McDowell (2013a) acknowledges that a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity does not necessarily include having independent reasons for excluding spoiling scenarios. He states, "In a non-defective act of the capacity to know colours by looking, one knows that something's colour is visually present to one, and so knows, at least implicitly, that no spoiling scenario is actual" (2013a, 154). Moreover, he goes on to state:

The line of thought I have been considering makes it seem that the ultimate ground for a claim to know something about the environment would have to be a ground one independently has for excluding spoiling scenarios. But the line of thought is wrong. The ultimate ground for a claim to know something about the environment is that one's experience makes a relevant environmental reality present to one. In claiming that warrant, one must be ready to acknowledge that the claim issues from a capacity that is fallible, so there is a risk of its turning out to be wrong. But if it is not wrong, one's knowledge about the environment is warranted in just the way in which, knowingly running that risk, one claims it is" (2013a, 154).

If there is a non-defective act of one's capacity, then a seeing that p experience is *sufficient* to put one in a position to know that p (without having any background information). The problem, however, is that in cases that have undefeated defeaters present, not only is one not in a position to know that one is having such an experience, but rather one's experience

would not be considered a seeing that p experience since the perceptual state requires more than a good case perception for it to be sufficient to put one in a position to know that p.

Why McDowellian Epistemological Disjunctivism?

Overall, for McDowell, there is an epistemic difference between seeing experiences and seeming to see experiences. But this pushes us to ask what McDowell means by experience. McDowell thinks that there's an epistemic difference between a genuine seeing experience and a merely veridical experience and/or a non-veridical experience, but this doesn't suffice for knowledge, given the possibility of fake barns and undefeated defeaters. Therefore, it seems McDowell builds on his notion of experience. A seeing experience is relational but must include an absence of defeaters or having background reasons that overcome defeaters, implying that a seeing experience is broader than a mere perceptual state. However, as mentioned, it is not exactly clear if having background reasons to overcome defeaters is necessary for a non-defective exercise of one's capacity to put one in a position to know. Therefore, it is not exactly clear if McDowell's notion of a non-defective exercise of perceptual capacity provides the explanatory power needed to understand the asymmetry between good and bad cases.

In this chapter, I provided a substantive interpretive claim about McDowell's work—that his epistemological disjunctivism is supported by his metaphysics of perception. However, after understanding his account of MNRD and inquiring about his epistemological disjunctivist position, I hope to have shown that there was nothing much that ended up hanging on the question of whether McDowell is in fact a metaphysical disjunctivist. As we saw in this chapter, McDowell's singular thought thesis involves a metaphysical distinction between real and illusory singular thoughts, but his position did not give us an account of

how one is really supposed to know which singular thought is real and which is illusory? McDowell uses parallel transcendental arguments to establish his singular thought ideas and his claims regarding seeing experiences and seeming to see experiences, at least suggesting that he thinks of these latter as distinct mental state kinds. But again, since sometimes the real difference is in the environment (circumstances outside one's ken), it's not the "better" mental state kind that produces the better epistemic position, but the reverse, one sees that p because one is in a better epistemic position, not vice versa. This indicates that his metaphysical disjunctivism doesn't do much work. Rather, as noted, the difference between good and bad cases is due to good circumstances beyond one's ken or having background information that positions one to defeat any potential defeaters.

Given the concerns addressed in this chapter, we are left with some unanswered epistemological questions. One such question is, "why accept McDowell's inflated notion of a seeing experience and his account of a perceptual capacity?" Both of these notions seem far from our ordinary understanding of what counts as a visual perception and a perceptual capacity. And how much work is done by McDowell saying that in a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity, one implicitly knows there's no defeater? How does one know that? Finally, McDowell claims that in a seeing that p experience, one has an indefeasible warrant for believing that p. Does such a warrant exist? Or is he just talking about undefeated warrants? All this motivates a turn to Pritchard's account of epistemological disjunctivism. Pritchard's account may be considered an improved version, albeit one that owes a great debt to McDowell. In the next chapter, we will discuss Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism and how it avoids some of the problems that McDowell's account faces. According to Pritchard, seeing that p is a veridical experience in good

objective conditions (which is closer to our ordinary understanding of what counts as a good perception). And given the controversy over whether McDowell is a metaphysical disjunctivist and whether such a position actually helps the epistemological picture, it might be useful to look at Pritchard's account since he argues for an epistemological disjunctivist position without being a metaphysical disjunctivist.

Chapter 3:

From MNRD to Duncan Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we looked at McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (MNRD) and whether it can provide an adequate framework for perceptual knowledge. According to MNRD, in a good case, a seeing experience provides an epistemic warrant for belief that is different in kind from the epistemic warrant in a seeming to see experience (1982, 1986, 2008, 2013a). In a good case, one's justification for a perceptual claim is indefeasible and non-inferential (1982, 2008, 2011). However, we also saw that for McDowell, a seeing that *p* experience requires a satisfaction of conditions that go beyond ordinary perception—having good objective conditions that go beyond one's ken, or in some cases, conditions that require having background reasons to defeat defeaters.

In this chapter, I will focus on the transition from MNRD to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position. I will show that McDowell's notion of seeing that *p* does not account for how such a perceptual state provides an *indefeasible* warrant for believing that *p*. In addition, I consider McDowell's later work (2013a) where he claims that one's justification for a good case provides a *conclusive* warrant rather than an indefeasible warrant. I argue that even if this might be a more plausible position, McDowell's account still does not provide a clear understanding of how exactly seeing that *p* provides a conclusive warrant.

So, to begin, in this chapter, I will briefly revisit McDowell's concept of indefeasibility. Moreover, I will discuss in greater detail how, for McDowell, in a good case, seeing that *p* is a reason-giving, factive state that has a *strong* epistemic status and so suffices

epistemically for believing that p. Seeing that p provides an indefeasible, reflectively accessible warrant for believing that p. I show that McDowell's notion of seeing that p does not account for how such a perceptual state provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p. In addition, I argue that his position that seeing that p provides a conclusive warrant, rather than an indefeasible warrant, is also problematic. McDowell's position leaves open some unanswered epistemological questions. For instance, one may ask, "Why does the notion of seeing that p require that there are no undefeated defeaters present?" Another question might be, "Why think that one can ever achieve an indefeasible warrant on the basis of perception?" And, last, "If seeing that p implies believing that p, then how can seeing that p provide an independent basis for believing that p?"

These unanswered questions motivate the turn to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position. I will show how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism avoids the problematic notion of indefeasibility (2011, 2012a). Pritchard argues that in an epistemic good case, seeing that p is a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p, but unlike McDowell, Pritchard does not entertain the notion of indefeasibility. According to Pritchard, seeing that p simply requires a veridical perception in good objective conditions. In addition, for Pritchard, seeing that p provides good grounds for believing, but in addition, one must be positioned to defeat defeaters to have adequate grounds for believing. So, unlike McDowell, Pritchard argues that seeing that p provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that p. Finally, I aim to show that even though Pritchard's position may improve upon McDowell's account, it does not generate the anti-skeptical results it aims to provide.

Indefeasibility and Seeing that p

As discussed in the previous chapter, McDowell first introduces the notion of indefeasibility in “Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge” (1982) where he offers an account of knowledge of other minds and the external world, one that does not face the epistemological problem that is generated when we conceive of other minds and the external world as not directly accessible. To illustrate the epistemological problem that motivates his disjunctivism, let’s briefly take a look again at the case of believing that John is in pain. In the good case (non-deceptive case), it appears that John is in pain and John is (in fact) in pain. In the bad case (deceptive case), it appears that John is in pain, but John is not in pain. Now what generates the epistemological problem is that in both cases, it seems one only *perceives* John’s behavior (that John appears to be in pain). So at best, one has defeasible evidence that John is in pain. By limiting perceptual evidence to the fact that John appears to be in pain, we are accepting that somehow the actual *fact* that John is in pain is inaccessible to others. McDowell rejects such a model of knowledge. According to McDowell, what is available to experience in the two cases differs, which in turn, supports his epistemological disjunctivism. In the good case, the fact that p (John is in pain) is made manifest to the perceiver and in the bad case, what is available to experience is simply the fact that John appears to be in pain. In the good case, the genuine criteria—“ways of telling how things are” (1982, 470)—are satisfied, and there is an “indefeasible connection between the actual, as opposed to apparent, satisfaction of criterion and the associated knowledge” (1982, 470) and in the bad case there is only defeasible evidence. For McDowell, the two cases constitute distinct epistemic statuses. When it comes to the two experiences, McDowell acknowledges that they are subjectively indistinguishable, but he argues that what is available in the two

experiences differs.³⁰ As mentioned earlier, in the good case, the fact that p is made manifest to the perceiver. If the fact that p is made available to S, then S is in a position to know that p. S's reason for believing p is that she sees that p and seeing that p is reflectively accessible to S. S's reason is indefeasible and so equipped with that reason, it is not possible for S to be deceived. This implies that the perceptual state, seeing that p, is not only a factive state, but that seeing that p is a reason-giving state that has a *strong* epistemic status. In the previous chapter, I discussed that being in a seeing that p state requires good objective and subjective conditions.

First, recall the idea of good objective conditions. These will include normal environmental conditions where, for example, there are no fake trees, no bad lighting, etc. Basically, there are no unknown objective error-possibilities. Also, it seems that good objective conditions would rule out any objective defeaters (unknown true propositions that would prevent S from being in a position to know). For example, let's say that S sees a tree in the quad. Now suppose that the school newspaper has published an article claiming that in this particular quad there are mostly fake trees around. In this case, there is an unknown objective defeater that prevents S from being in a position to know that there is a tree in the quad. In good objective conditions, there would be no such unknown objective defeaters. In addition, good objective conditions include cases in which S's senses are working properly, for example, when S has not taken any vision-impairing drugs.

³⁰ Miller (2008) claims "it is not clear...whether the difference with respect to what the experiences take in requires that there be a difference in psychological kind between the experiences. It all depends on whether the experiences are individuated in terms of what, if anything, they take in" (2008, 587). Millar also claims that McDowell argues for a "picture on which experience is essentially world-involving and thus essentially relational" (2008, 591). As I argued in chapter 1, if the experiences are individuated in terms of the objects they take in, then McDowell's commitment to a type of naïve realism is problematic since it is not clear what is present in experience that makes a seeing that p experience an *epistemically distinct kind* of experience. For the purposes of this chapter, I will not discuss this problem any further.

Bad objective conditions would include abnormal environmental factors, such as having fake trees around, bad lighting, or an intake of vision-impairing drugs. Also, it seems bad objective conditions would include unknown objective defeaters (for example, as mentioned above, where a school newspaper claims that most of the trees in the quad are fake). Since such conditions prevent S from being in a position to know that there is a tree in the quad, they constitute bad objective conditions. In such cases, S would not *see that* there is a tree in the quad.

Good subjective conditions would include conditions in which the subject is not in possession of any undefeated defeater. For instance, suppose S sees a tree in good objective conditions (no fake trees around, no bad lighting) and there are no unknown objective defeaters. But now, let's say a reliable informant, Mary, convinces S that there are fake trees around. In such a scenario, S would be in possession of an undefeated defeater and so this would not count as good subjective conditions. To illustrate this we can take another case that McDowell (2011) discusses. In response to Crispin Wright (2008), McDowell considers a scenario where a subject is told by experimenters that on some occasions, the light is not suitable for her to exercise her capacity to know the color of the thing she is looking at, when in fact, the light is suitable in such cases. According to McDowell, since the subject is aware of an undefeated defeater (the light is not suitable), it would be irrational for the subject to take herself to be in a position to know that the present occasion is one in which the light is suitable and not one in which the light is not suitable. He claims:

It would be irrational for [the subject] to take herself to be in a position to know that the present occasion is not such an occasion. And that implies that she is not in a position to know that the thing is green, even though her visual state is related to the actual colour of the thing in just the way that, outside this context, would equip her to know that (2011, 47).

In addition, McDowell states:

... a perceptual state in which a feature of the environment is present to a subject, in the relevant sense, would have to be a non-defective exercise of a self-consciously possessed and exercised capacity to get into perceptual states that put the subject in a position to know... And that is not how it is with the subject's perceptual state in the case we are considering (2011, 47-48).

These passages (what I will call Case 1) signals that even in situations where objective conditions are actually good (the lighting in fact is suitable) and S has a veridical experience, S is not in a position to know that p, indicating that S did not get into the relevant perceptual state—actually see that the thing is green. Here, we can take note of how McDowell closely aligns 'seeing that p' with 'being in a position to know that p,' which helps us grasp his intuitively inflated notion of a perceptual state. As McDowell points out in the case at issue in the quotation, it would be considered irrational for the perceiver to take herself to be in a position to know that p since she is aware of a potential undefeated defeater—the conditions are not suitable (her warrant could be defeated). In such a case, the undefeated defeater “undermines her capacity to know the colours of things by looking, even on an occasion on which the light is in fact suitable for the capacity” (2011, 49). S does not non-defectively exercise her “self-consciously possessed perceptual capacity” (2011, 47-48) to put her in a position to know that p, again indicating that S did not get into the right kind of perceptual state—seeing that p. If S did exercise her perceptual capacity non-defectively, then S would have been in a seeing that p state and S would have had an indefeasible warrant for believing that p—S's reason would have *excluded* conditions that are not suitable.³¹ In doing so, S would have had reflective access to the fact that her indefeasible warrant is itself factive.³²

³¹ See Dennis (2014) in order to understand the scope of McDowell's indefeasibility claim. Dennis states that there is an underlying assumption in McDowell's indefeasibility claim: “namely, that an indefeasible warrant

Another concern that McDowell discusses is the distinction between seeing that p and believing that p. The standard way of understanding how seeing that p is distinct from believing that p is: if objective conditions are good and S has a veridical experience, then S sees that p and is in a position to know that p, but because of an inability to dismiss potential defeaters, S does not have reflective access to one's factive warrant and therefore does not form the relevant belief that p. Below (Case 2) is McDowell on this point:

The difference between seeing that P and visually acquiring the belief that P can be brought out by noting that one can realize later that one was seeing that P, though one did not know it at the time and so did not at the time acquire the belief that P. "I thought I was looking at your sweater under a kind of illumination that makes it impossible to tell what colours things are, so I thought it merely looked brown to me, but I now realize I was actually seeing that it was brown." In saying something on these lines, one registers that one had, at the relevant past time, an entitlement that one did not then realize one had. One was in a position to acquire a bit of knowledge about the world, but because of a misapprehension about the circumstances, one did not avail oneself of the opportunity. One did not form the relevant belief, let alone get to know that that was how things were (2003, 680-681).

McDowell's attempt to capture the more standard way of grasping the distinction between seeing that p and believing that p appears to be inconsistent with his overall view. In the above scenario, for McDowell to remain consistent with his notion of seeing that p, he

would be invulnerable to *future* defeat. Against this, we might suggest that the notion of defeasibility relevant to McDowell's claim is a contemporaneous rather than a diachronic idea: to say [S's] warrant is indefeasible is to preclude defeat contemporaneous with his experience, not all future defeat" (4104). The problem with this contemporaneous idea is that, "it cannot make sense of a distinction between indefeasible and merely undefeated warrant" (4104). Therefore Dennis argues that in order to understand McDowell's indefeasibility claim, we must retain the diachronic conception of defeasibility. However, the problem it seems is that, even if we understand McDowell's notion of indefeasibility by retaining a diachronic conception of defeasibility, it is not clear how McDowell's position can adequately support this conception. For instance, if McDowell's notion of indefeasibility is contemporaneous, then it only *means* undefeated, and if it is diachronic, then it only *is* (now) undefeated?

³² Dennis (2014) discusses many counterexamples to McDowell's indefeasibility claim and argues that in order to respond to these counterexamples, one must "add that factive warrants can be reflectively accessible to their possessors" (4100). Regarding the examples, he states, "...if [S's] experience equipped him with an indefeasible warrant, he must have been able to know that his warrant is in good order by reflecting on the experience itself... And since we can devise any number of error possibilities that [S] might come across...[S] must know (on the basis of his experience) that his warrant excludes any such error possibility. In other words, [S] must know on the basis of his experience that his warrant was factive" (4106).

cannot claim that once the defeater is defeated, the subject was (previously) actually seeing that p. To illustrate the point using McDowell's example, once the subject becomes aware of the fact that the lighting is actually good and the original defeater (the lighting is bad—the color of the sweater may have been black or purple or blue) is defeated, McDowell cannot claim that the subject was seeing that the sweater was brown. At the time of the original experience, the subject was aware of an undefeated defeater (for all the subject knows the color may have been black or purple or blue) and so the conditions were not suitable. The subject did not exercise her perceptual capacity non-defectively and so her experience was not actually a seeing that p experience and she was not in a position to know that p. The subject did not have access to an *indefeasible* warrant. So according to McDowell's overall view, in this case, if S had actually seen that p, then S would have had reflective access to an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and would have already been in a position to exclude potential defeaters. In other words, seeing that p would have sufficed for believing that p. Maybe at best, what McDowell can claim is that the subject was in a position to see that p, but given his requirements for a seeing that p experience, it is not clear what that would even mean!

To help illustrate McDowell's position, here is a quick overview of what must be included in McDowell's notion of seeing that p:

1. It is a veridical perception. At minimum, it is a factive perceptual state.
2. It requires suitable conditions. For example, one's senses should be in proper working order and there should not be any bad objective and/or subjective conditions (no intake of vision-impairing drugs, no fake trees around, no unknown objective defeaters, and no undefeated subjective defeaters).

3. To get into the state of seeing that p, there must be a non-defective exercise of one's fallible perceptual capacity. The non-defective exercise of one's fallible perceptual capacity puts one in a position to know that p and puts one in position to know that one sees that p.
4. Seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and therefore puts one in a position to exclude any potential defeaters. If one is in a position to exclude any potential defeaters, then the factivity of seeing that p must be reflectively accessible. In other words, one has access to the fact that one's warrant is factive. If one is not in such a position, then one does not actually see that p.
5. Overall, seeing that p has a strong epistemic status and suffices for believing that p.

The perceptual state, seeing that p, is a distinct reason-giving, factive state that has a strong epistemic status. When one sees that p, then one is in a position to know that p. However, in cases that have undefeated defeaters present, if later the defeater is defeated, in order for McDowell to stay consistent with his notion of seeing that p, he cannot claim that in such cases, S's experience was actually a seeing that p experience and that S saw that p. If S had actually seen that p, then S would have had an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and would have already been in a position to exclude any potential defeaters. Given there is an inconsistency in McDowell's position, it is not clear how seeing that p can provide an indefeasible warrant. In the case at issue above, McDowell claims one saw that p with a warrant that not only wasn't indefeasible, but was actually defeated!

In his later work, McDowell (2013a) claims that one's justification in a good case provides a conclusive warrant rather than an indefeasible warrant. This seems to be a more plausible position (depending on the meaning of 'conclusive'). In order to see how McDowell develops this claim, we must take a look again at his notion of a non-defective vs. defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity. Below is an account in which the exercise of one's perceptual capacity is defective and so S does not have a conclusive warrant for believing that p:

Suppose someone is in the hands of scientists experimenting with illumination that is undetectably unsuitable for knowing colours by looking: in a few trials things look as if they have the colours they have, and in most trials they do not. When this subject is confronted by a thing that is, say, red, and it looks red to her through the effect of ordinary light on her visual equipment, which is functioning properly, she is not thereby in a position to know that the thing is red. Though her experience is veridical and normally caused, it is a defective act of her capacity to know colours by looking. It is an act of that capacity, in that the thing looks red to her. But it is not an act in which she is in a position to know the thing's colour by looking (2013a, 152).

In this case (Case 3), even if S has a veridical experience, it would be a defective act of her capacity and so S would not be in a position to know that the thing is red. In such a case, S would not see that the thing is red since the environment is bad (there is a possibility of a spoiling scenario). Now, if the environment were good, then S would be in a seeing that p state and would be aware that she sees that p. How? Well, according to McDowell, in a good case, a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity does not require having independent reasons for excluding all possible error-possibilities. He states:

But surely one cannot establish, for all conceivable scenarios in which acts of the capacity would be defective, that those scenarios are not actual, as a precondition for taking a current act of the capacity to yield knowledge (2013a, 153).

In addition, he states:

As before, the apparent problems dissolve when we recognize that knowing one's experience provides conclusive warrant for a belief about the environment is a non-

defective act of the same fallible capacity that is non-defectively in act in knowing the relevant things about the environment. In a non-defective act of the capacity to know colours by looking, one knows that something's colour is visually present to one, and so knows, at least implicitly, that no spoiling scenario is actual" (2013a, 154).

Moreover, he goes on to state:

The line of thought I have been considering makes it seem that the ultimate ground for a claim to know something about the environment would have to be a ground one independently has for excluding spoiling scenarios. But the line of thought is wrong. The ultimate ground for a claim to know something about the environment is that one's experience makes a relevant environmental reality present to one. In claiming that warrant, one must be ready to acknowledge that the claim issues from a capacity that is fallible, so there is a risk of its turning out to be wrong. But if it is not wrong, one's knowledge about the environment is warranted in just the way in which, knowingly running that risk, one claims it is (2013a, 154).

These passages again indicate that if there are no undefeated defeaters present and S veridically experiences a red thing in a good environment, S is in a seeing that p state, and in order for S to be aware that she sees that the thing is red, she *does not* need to have independent grounds for defeating all possible spoiling scenarios. In such cases, S would see that the thing is red and would be aware that she had such a conclusive warrant. Notice that having a conclusive warrant in this situation is a more plausible position than having an indefeasible warrant since an indefeasible warrant would have excluded all possible spoiling scenarios. Now, if we look at this scenario and contrast it with the brown sweater scenario (Case 2), we notice there is a difference between the two cases. Case 2 is one in which the subject was aware of a defeater (the lighting is bad). Since S was aware of this defeater, S did not non-defectively exercise her capacity. Given what McDowell argues in his later work (2013a), he could respond to the brown sweater scenario by stating that the exercise of her perceptual capacity is defective because S was *not aware* that she sees that the sweater is brown—she was not aware that she had a *conclusive warrant*. However, the problem is, how could S's reason really provide a conclusive warrant at the time of her experience if there

was a defeater present? McDowell could claim that once the defeater is defeated, S would realize that she did have a conclusive warrant—that she did see that the sweater was brown. But then, this would indicate that a non-defective exercise of one’s capacity requires that seeing that p not only includes that one have a veridical experience in good lighting conditions, but also, to *be aware* that one sees that p, a non-defective exercise of one’s capacity includes having independent reasons to defeat any potential defeaters.

So, even though having a conclusive warrant is more plausible than having an indefeasible warrant, McDowell’s position is still not clear how one can have a conclusive warrant in a scenario that has a possible defeater present. More importantly, his position is not clear on *what* exactly one’s perceptual capacity is a capacity to do. This was discussed in the previous chapter in greater detail, but for the purposes of this chapter, my objective was to show that whether McDowell’s position includes a notion of seeing that p that provides an indefeasible warrant or whether it provides a conclusive warrant, there is a problem in understanding exactly what a non-defective exercise of one’s perceptual capacity is a capacity to do. To recapture this problem, let’s take a look again at the three different cases discussed earlier:

1. In Case 1, which is a case of having an undefeated defeater present in an otherwise good case, the exercise of S’s perceptual capacity would be defective and S would not be in position to know that p, and therefore S would not get into the relevant seeing that p state.
2. In Case 2, it can be argued that the exercise of S’s capacity is defective because S is not aware that she sees that p. If her capacity were exercised non-defectively,

then S would have had reflective access to seeing that p and would have had independent grounds for defeating possible defeaters.

3. In Case 3, the exercise of her capacity is defective since S is not in position to know that p and was not in a seeing that p state. If the exercise were non-defective, then in order to have reflective access to seeing that p, S *would not* have needed independent grounds for defeating all possible defeaters. In a good case with no undefeated defeaters, if one exercises one's capacity non-defectively, then one not only sees that p but one has reflective access to such a reason, and therefore is in a position to know that p.

Again, what these cases indicate is that it is not clear what exactly a non-defective exercise is for McDowell and how such an exercise puts one in a perceptual state that can provide an indefeasible or even a conclusive warrant for believing that p. These concerns motivate the turn to Pritchard (2012a). For Pritchard, seeing that p requires a veridical perception in objectively good conditions. In addition, Pritchard avoids any claim that seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p. And last, according to Pritchard, seeing that p provides good grounds for believing that p, but in addition, one must be positioned to defeat defeaters to have adequate grounds for believing that p.

In the following sections, I will discuss Duncan Pritchard's version of epistemological disjunctivism that incorporates a notion of seeing that p that provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that p. Similar to McDowell's position, Pritchard argues that seeing that p provides a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p, but unlike McDowell, Pritchard's position avoids the problematic notion of indefeasibility.

Finally, I will show that even though Pritchard's position improves upon McDowell's work, it does not generate the anti-skeptical results it aims to provide.

Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism

In Duncan Pritchard's recent work (2011, 2012a), which is associated with John McDowell's work, he argues for a version of epistemological disjunctivism that provides an account of perceptual knowledge.³³ His core thesis for epistemological disjunctivism is:

In paradigmatic cases of perceptual knowledge an agent, S, has perceptual knowledge that ϕ in virtue of being in possession of rational support, R, for her belief that ϕ which is both *factive* (i.e., R's obtaining entails ϕ) and *reflectively accessible* to S (2012a, 13).

Pritchard's objective is to show that epistemological disjunctivism reconciles the distinction between epistemic externalism and epistemic internalism in the domain of perceptual knowledge. More specifically, he aims to reconcile an epistemic externalist position which requires an objective connection between one's warrant for believing and the relevant facts in our environment with an epistemic internalist position which requires that one's warrant for believing is reflectively accessible (2012a, 1-3). To illustrate this, let's say that in a good case, S veridically experiences a tree in front of her in a normal environment (objective conditions are good and no deceptions occur) and subjective conditions are good (S is not aware of any undefeated defeaters).³⁴ In such a case, a paradigmatic, normal veridical case,

³³ There is one important difference between McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism and Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism. As mentioned earlier, it is not clear whether McDowell thinks that metaphysical disjunctivism grounds epistemological disjunctivism. Pritchard, on the other hand, argues for epistemological disjunctivism that does not entail metaphysical disjunctivism (2012a, 23-24). According to his position, "we can leave it an open question for our purposes whether an epistemological disjunctivist should be a metaphysical disjunctivist" (2012a, 24).

³⁴ Pritchard claims that if the conditions are such that a subject is aware of sufficient grounds for doubt or *should be aware* of such grounds, then conditions are subjectively bad. For instance he says, "...we clearly do not want a scenario to count as subjectively epistemically good just because the agent—through, say, sheer inattentiveness on her part—doesn't become aware of a defeater that she should have become aware of" (2012a,

Pritchard argues that S's rational support is both factive and reflectively accessible (2012a, 2-3). The rational support in such cases is provided by factive states, such as, *seeing that p*.

According to Pritchard, in a bad case where S's brain has recently been envatted (objective conditions are not good!), S only *seems to see that p* and *blamelessly* believes *p*, and so lacks knowledge that *p*.³⁵ In the bad case, S does not have a factive reason that is reflectively available. Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position holds that the rational support that one possesses in a good case is different in *kind* from the rational support that one possesses in an introspectively indistinguishable deceptive case (illusion or hallucination) (2012a, 16). In the following paragraphs, we can briefly take a look at the various cases to show how Pritchard develops this distinction.

According to Pritchard, when S veridically experiences *x* (e.g.—an object, such as, a lemon, table, tree, barn, etc.) in cases that include good objective conditions, then S sees that *p*. In addition, if there are good subjective conditions (S is not aware of any undefeated defeaters), then S is in possession of a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that *p* and knows that *p*. He calls these good cases, *good+ cases* (2012a, 25-34). First, to capture the idea of good objective cases, he states:

... [the] characterization of an objectively good epistemic scenario is that the agent is reliably forming her perceptual beliefs in such a manner that they will inevitably be

30). I will discuss Pritchard's various distinctions between good and bad objective conditions and good and bad subjective conditions later in this section.

³⁵ In such cases, Pritchard states, "the agent is in a situation which is experientially introspectively indistinguishable from the first, and hence which blamelessly prompts her to form a belief in the same proposition with as much conviction as in the first case" (2012a, 15). In the second case, S lacks knowledge that *p*, and therefore according to Pritchard, also lacks reflectively accessible, factive rational support (the type of support the agent has in the first case). See Madison (2014) for an argument indicating that in such cases, Pritchard's "appeal to 'blamelessness' is insufficient to account for the judgment that things are going well...insofar as the subject is believing rationally, reasonably, and as he ought, given how things seem to him" (2013, 9).

true in environments which are suitably conducive to this belief-forming process, and that the agent is in just such an environment (2012a, 29-30).

In good objective conditions, the environment is normal and the subject's cognitive faculties are working properly. So suppose that S veridically experiences a tree in front of her and the objective conditions are good. This would entail that there are no fake trees around or S has not ingested any vision-impairing drugs. In such cases, S sees that p. Seeing that p doesn't require good subjective conditions. However, if one sees that p and in addition, the subjective conditions are good, then in such a case, a good+ case, S possesses a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that there is tree in front of her and S knows that there is tree in front of her.

Pritchard claims that in *merely* good cases when S veridically experiences a tree and objective conditions are good, but the subjective conditions are bad, S still sees that p (2012a, 25-34). In these cases, according to Pritchard, S is in a position to know that p, but since the subjective conditions are bad—S is aware of an undefeated defeater—S is not positioned to defeat the defeater and therefore does not have reflective access to seeing that p and lacks adequate grounds for believing that p. To illustrate this, let's say that S veridically experiences a vase on the table and the objective conditions are good (no fake vases around, the lighting is good, etc.), but then S's husband comes in the room and tells her convincingly that he recently bought a new device that creates holograms and that the vase she is looking at is a hologram. The subject is unable to dismiss the defeater and so does not have adequate grounds for believing that there is a vase on the table. Now, suppose that later, S's husband tells her that he was just playing a joke on her and the vase she saw was a real vase. A key difference in this type of case, is that for Pritchard, unlike McDowell, since S veridically experiences the vase in good objective conditions, S sees that there is a vase on the table and

is in a position to know that there is a vase on the table. For Pritchard, seeing that p and being in a position to know that p do not require that there are no undefeated defeaters present, only that objective conditions are good.³⁶ For McDowell, this is not quite clear. For McDowell, either S would not be in the relevant seeing that p state and would not be in a position to know that p (See again Case 1) or S would not be aware that she sees that p (See again Case 2). If the exercise of her capacity were non-defective, not only would S see that p, but to be aware that she sees that p, she would have independent reasons to dismiss the defeater.

We can see at this point how Pritchard's notion of 'seeing that p' differs from McDowell's notion of 'seeing that p.' Unlike McDowell, Pritchard does not claim that seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant or even a conclusive warrant for believing that p. In addition, unlike McDowell, Pritchard's notion of seeing that p and being in a position to know that p is compatible with having undefeated defeaters present. However, as have seen, McDowell does claim that when S realizes that the defeater was misleading (in the present case, S learns that her husband was joking), S comes to learn that she had indeed seen that p. But again, this point is inconsistent with his considered view of what seeing that p and being in a position to know that p requires. If seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant or even a conclusive warrant, then how can she have such a warrant if there was an undefeated defeater present? In addition, the notion of indefeasibility is problematic for a further reason, one distinct from the inconsistency that arises when McDowell tries to capture the more standard notion of seeing that p even when one doesn't have an indefeasible warrant. That further reason is that the very idea of an indefeasible empirical warrant is implausible for it

³⁶ See Pritchard (2012a, 26-27) for his example of this point. See Ghijsen (2015) to see how Pritchard's example is problematic.

requires that one's warrant rules out all possible sources of error. This concern, however, is addressed in his later work. As noted earlier, McDowell (2013a) claims that in a good case with no defeaters (subjective or objective), the non-defective exercise of one's capacity does not necessarily require one to exclude all possible errors. The problem is that even if a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity can provide such a warrant, it is still not clear exactly what a non-defective capacity is a capacity to do for McDowell (or if it is an exercise of a *capacity* at all—since it depends on the world's cooperating in a way beyond one's ken, e.g. no fake barns). This is where Pritchard's disjunctivism may provide some relief.

Pritchard does not make any claims that seeing that *p* provides an indefeasible warrant or even provides a conclusive warrant for believing that *p*. Rather, Pritchard's notion of seeing that *p* provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that *p* (Pritchard's notion of seeing that *p* is helpful since he is motivated to solve the *basis problem* (2012a, 21)—a problem I will discuss in the next section). So according to Pritchard, in merely good cases, *S* does see that *p* and gains a position to know that *p* even though *S* does not have adequate grounds for believing that *p* and does not know that *p*. In this sense, Pritchard captures the 'standard' notion of seeing that *p*—it is essentially a very good kind of *perceptual* state in good conditions, one that provides a basic warrant for belief, but does not include independent resources for defeating defeaters. The idea seems to be that perception in good conditions is one kind of epistemic support. It provides an independent reason to believe that *p* but may be overridden by other reasons, other independent reasons to overrule potential defeaters. However, one may argue that Pritchard's view is in fact similar to McDowell's view, since in the case of undefeated defeaters being present, McDowell's notion of a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity includes having independent reasons for

defeating defeaters. But, the problem is that when it comes to a non-defective exercise in a good case, McDowell's notion of such an exercise does not include having independent reasons to exclude all possible defeaters, presumably because he wants seeing that *p* alone to offer an indefeasible or a conclusive warrant.

Finally, according to Pritchard, all the other cases are bad epistemic cases and so S does not see that *p*. For example, a merely bad scenario would be a situation where S visually perceives a tomato in the field in good subjective conditions, but bad objective conditions because there are mostly fake tomatoes around. In this case, Pritchard would state, S sees a tomato, but S does not see that there is a tomato in the field. In these cases, S is not in a position to know that *p*, and so S does not see that *p*. For the purposes of this chapter, I will not discuss the remaining bad epistemic cases (bad+, bad++, bad+++) that Pritchard discusses since in such cases, as stated, S does not see that *p* (2012a, 29-34).

Pritchard's Notion of 'seeing that *p*,' the Basis Problem, and the Distinguishability Problem

Pritchard's notion of seeing that *p* provides a weaker, independent basis for believing that *p* and is not itself sufficient for knowing that *p*. For Pritchard, further epistemic conditions have to be met to ensure that there are no undefeated defeaters present in order for S to know that *p*. Pritchard's motivation for his notion of seeing that *p* is to solve the *basis problem* (2012a, 21). The basis problem, for the epistemological disjunctivist, is that if seeing that *p* is just a way of knowing that *p*, then how can seeing that *p* form the rational basis for knowing that *p*? We will come back to this problem in the following section.

Another concern the epistemological disjunctivist faces, according to Pritchard, is the *distinguishability problem* (2012a, 21). Remember, for the epistemological disjunctivist, only

in epistemic good+ cases, does one have reflective access to a factive reason. If that is the case, then it seems the subject should be able to subjectively distinguish between an epistemic good+ case and a corresponding epistemic bad case since all that is required is that she is able to see that the relevant factive reason is reflectively available (2012a, 21). But, the question is, “How can this be possible if we also accept that the two cases are subjectively indistinguishable?” In other words, “How can one have reflective access to a factive reason if epistemic good cases, where factive reasons are available, are indistinguishable from epistemic bad cases, where factive reasons are not (2012a, 91-100)?

In the following sections I will discuss in greater detail Pritchard’s response to these two problems. In doing so, I aim to show how Pritchard’s epistemological disjunctivist position improves upon McDowell’s work.

Epistemological Disjunctivism and the Basis Problem

The basis problem is the concern of how seeing that p can constitute the epistemic basis for knowing that p if seeing that p is just a way of knowing that p. According to Pritchard, seeing that p, like knowing that p, is “factive and robustly epistemic,” but he argues that one cannot simply presuppose that a subject knows that p by claiming that seeing that p is *just a particular way* of knowing that p (2012a, 25-26). To understand his position we can think of the case discussed earlier that includes good objective conditions and a veridical experience—for instance, one veridically experiences the color green in good lighting (no deception occurs). In such a case, if one becomes aware of a potential defeater that cannot be dismissed (for example, being told by the experimenter that the lighting is bad, when in fact it is good), then one’s reason for believing is undermined. Pritchard discusses two important points that need to be established if we are to understand how seeing that p

provides an epistemic basis for knowing that p. First, he claims that we must distinguish between being in a state that “guarantees knowledge” from being in state that “puts one in a position to gain knowledge” (2012a, 26). According to Pritchard, seeing that p is “robustly epistemic in the weaker latter sense rather than in the more robust former sense” (2012a, 26). Second, he states that seeing that p, unlike knowing that p, does not entail believing that p (2012a, 26). To illustrate these two points, we can return to our example again. Pritchard would argue that if one veridically experiences the color green in good objective conditions, then one actually sees *that* the color is green and therefore one is in a position to gain knowledge that the color is green (2012a, 26). Yet, seeing that p, in this case, does not entail believing that p since one is aware of a potential defeater that cannot be dismissed. Again, Pritchard’s notion of seeing that p does not have the strong epistemic status that McDowell argues for. In such a case, for McDowell, if S did see that p, it is not clear how such a warrant would have been indefeasible or even conclusive for believing that p since there is an undefeated defeater present. Even if one had such a warrant, then to be aware that one sees that p, the exercise of one’s non-defective capacity would have required having independent reasons for defeating any potential defeaters. If there were no undefeated defeaters present, then the non-defective exercise would have put one in a seeing that p state. One would have been aware that one sees that p and would have had a conclusive warrant that would have sufficed for believing that p.

Although it may seem like there is a significant difference between McDowell’s position and Pritchard’s position when it comes to the basis problem, it could just be that there is simply a terminological difference between McDowell’s notion of ‘seeing that p’ and Pritchard’s notion of ‘seeing that p.’ For instance, Pritchard’s notion of ‘seeing that p’ is just

McDowell's notion of 'seeing that p' except it does not include a non-defective exercise of a capacity to defeat defeaters. To capture the sense of 'basing' Pritchard wants, one must simply take away any background knowledge (independent evidence available to defeat defeaters) and claim that the veridical perceptual state is the perceptual basis of belief. So, McDowell's notion of 'seeing that p' and Pritchard's notion of 'seeing that p' just become notational variants. Yet, the problem is that 'seeing that p' is normally understood as a good *perceptual* state, whereas, in order to remain consistent with McDowell's idea of indefeasible warrant or a conclusive warrant in perception, we must accept that 'seeing that p' is *more* than a good case of perception. McDowell's notion of 'seeing that p' requires a non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity that in some cases requires having independent reasons for defeating defeaters. Pritchard's position relieves us of any commitments to an inflated notion of a good case perception in order to better understand the *distinct* contributions to knowledge. For Pritchard, a good case scenario would include veridical perceptions in good objective conditions *and* further reasons that allow the subject to potentially dismiss any possible defeaters. So let's recapture Pritchard's position:

1. Even in the best possible scenario, an epistemic good+ case, Pritchard does not claim that seeing that p provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p.
2. According to Pritchard, if one sees that p and in addition, has further reasons to defeat defeaters so no undefeated defeaters are present, then one has adequate grounds for believing that p and knowing that p.
3. Pritchard argues for a weaker, independent notion of seeing that p to solve the basis problem.

For the purposes of this chapter, my aim is to only show how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position improves upon McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism position. I will not discuss the more important concern, which is whether the epistemological disjunctivist can adequately resolve the basis problem.³⁷

Epistemological Disjunctivism and the Distinguishability Problem

The other problem the epistemological disjunctivist faces is the *distinguishability problem*—which concerns the fact that a subject cannot phenomenally distinguish between seeing that p and seeming to see that p. If S cannot phenomenally distinguish between this case and a bad case, then S will believe that p based on an illusion or a hallucination. To understand this problem, we can look at Pritchard's notion of a good+ case and a corresponding epistemic bad case. In a good+ case, the epistemological disjunctivist argues that S has reflective access to a factive reason for believing that p. So the concern is, how can we reconcile the fact that in a good+ case, the relevant factive reason is reflectively available for believing that p, where such a reason is not available in a corresponding epistemic bad case since the two cases are phenomenally indistinguishable?

According to Pritchard, what motivates the distinguishability problem is the 'discrimination principle.' The discrimination principle is:

If S has perceptual knowledge that ϕ , and S knows that another (known to be inconsistent) alternate ψ does not obtain, then S must be able to perceptually discriminate between the object at issue in ϕ and the object at issue in ψ (2012a, 73).

³⁷ Ghijzen (2015) challenges Pritchard's solution to the basis problem. As mentioned, for the purposes of this chapter, I will set this challenge aside. Since both Pritchard and McDowell argue that seeing that p provides a rational basis for knowing that p, it seems that only Pritchard is offering a solution to the basis problem. So even if Pritchard's solution to the basis problem is problematic, his solution can be viewed as an improvement when comparing it to McDowell's epistemological disjunctivist position.

In order to understand this principle, Pritchard refers to Dretske's *zebra case*.³⁸ Suppose Zula visits the zoo and sees a zebra in an area that is marked 'zebra.' Let's say that all the circumstances in this situation are normal and Zula's cognitive faculties are working normally. Does Zula know that it is a zebra?³⁹ Well, we can stipulate that in this case Zula knows that it is zebra. If Zula knows that it is zebra, then it follows that it is not a cleverly disguised mule. Zula can deduce that it is not a cleverly disguised mule. Therefore, Zula knows that it is not a cleverly disguised mule. According to Pritchard, the concern that Dretske has is if Zula knows it is not a cleverly disguised mule, then in light of the discrimination principle, Zula must be able to perceptually discriminate between a zebra and a cleverly disguised mule. Zula must have discriminating evidence that it is a zebra rather than a cleverly disguised mule, but Zula lacks such evidence. She does not have discriminating evidence to dismiss the potential error-possibility that it is a cleverly disguised mule.

The problem with this scenario, according to Pritchard, is that one assumes that the only relevant evidence that Zula has available to her is discriminating evidence. But why accept that discriminating evidence is the only relevant evidence one has? Pritchard argues that if Zula knows it is a zebra, then Zula must have better evidence in 'favor' of her belief that it is zebra rather than the case that it is not a zebra. He claims, "we should be suspicious of the fact that Zula can come to know that what she is looking at is a zebra 'just by looking,'

³⁸ Pritchard refers to Dretske (1970) for this example.

³⁹ According to Pritchard, intuitively we would say Zula knows. He states, "Her belief meets many of the criteria we might wish to lay down on theory of knowledge. For example, it is reliably formed, it is virtuously formed, it is safe (i.e., roughly, her true belief could not have easily been false), it is sensitive (i.e., roughly, had what she believed been false, then she wouldn't have believed it), it is evidentially well-founded, and so on" (2012a, 69).

at least if this phrase is meant to indicate that the evidential support that Zula has for her belief is merely that evidence which is offered by the bare visual scene before her” (2012a, 77). He argues, rather, that perceptual evidence can “involve a wide range of specialist evidence and background knowledge” (2012a, 77) or what he calls “adequate favoring evidence” (2012a, 82) that supports her belief. Having possession of such favoring evidence and background knowledge can be relevant to the evidential support that S has for her perceptual knowledge.

The importance of having favoring evidence rather than discriminating evidence is highlighted when we consider the distinguishability problem. In the epistemic good+ case, Zula sees that it is a zebra and is in a position to know that it is a zebra. Zula’s factive reason for believing that it is a zebra is reflectively available to her. But suppose John tells Zula that for all she knows what she sees is a cleverly disguised mule. If Zula has no grounds for believing that what she sees is a cleverly disguised mule (and some reason to think that, e.g. zoos don’t display fakes), then she could dismiss such an error-possibility. She can dismiss this error-possibility by being in possession of reflectively accessible, favoring evidence that supports her belief. By being in possession of favoring evidence, Zula is able to reflectively distinguish between a good+ case and a bad case without discriminating evidence. Pritchard states:

The ultimate conclusion of the distinguishability problem...merely demands that the subject can reflectively distinguish between the good+ case and a corresponding bad case. But one can satisfy *that* demand merely by being in possession of favouring epistemic support with regard to the pair of cases in question, and by making the relevant competent deductions. One will be able to know, via introspection and a priori reasoning alone, that one is in the good+ case rather than the corresponding bad case even though one cannot perceptually discriminate between these two scenarios...(2012a, 96).

According to Pritchard, not only is the favoring evidence reflectively accessible, it is also factive. He states:

More specifically, the idea is that [the subject], if she is indeed in possession of factive reflectively accessible rational support in favor of her knowledge that *p*, has grounds available to her, which when supplemented with relevant competent deductions anyway, ensure that she can know that she is in the good+ case... (2012a, 96-97).

So, being in possession of factive, favoring rational support *suffices* to enable S to exclude an error-possibility that is raised. In this situation, S's factive, favoring rational support provides her with *reasons* for believing that she sees that *p* and she can deduce that she is in an epistemic good+ case and know that she sees that *p*.

On the other hand, S's favoring evidence might *not suffice* to enable her to exclude an error-possibility that is raised with good epistemic grounds. In such a case, as noted earlier—called a merely good case, Pritchard states that S is in possession of an undefeated defeater for her belief that *p* and therefore is not warranted in believing that *p* (2012a, 99). S is no longer in an epistemic good+ case (since subjective conditions are bad) and so she is not in a position to know that she sees that *p*. Regarding the merely good case, Pritchard states:

...although it remains true in a merely good case that the agent sees that *p*, it is not part of the epistemological disjunctivist thesis to claim that this is reflectively accessible to the agent. Accordingly, one cannot run the distinguishability problem without stipulating that the agent is in the good+ case, since it is only if she is in this case that she has reflective access to the factive reason which is needed to get the problem underway (2012a, 99).

This passage indicates that if S cannot rationally dismiss potential error-possibilities, then even if S sees that *p*, S does not have reflective access to this factive reason and therefore S is not in a position to know that she sees that *p*. But, what exactly does Pritchard mean by having reflective access to one's factive reason? Pritchard claims that a factive reason is

reflectively accessible in a sense that “the subject can come to know through reflection alone that she is in possession of this rational support” (2012a, 13). So in a merely good case, if there is an undefeated defeater present, the subject cannot come to know through reflection alone that she sees that p. To briefly capture Pritchard’s position in understanding cases in which S has perceptual knowledge that p, there are four criteria that need to be considered:

1. S must see that p. Seeing that p provides an independent ground for believing that p.
2. Seeing that p must be reflectively accessible.
3. S must also have factive, favoring evidence to support her perceptual warrant.
4. S must form the relevant belief that p.

When considering these factors, it seems that Pritchard offers a way of resolving the distinguishability problem by showing us that in an epistemic good+ case, S has reflectively accessible factive rational support that is available to her that is not available to her in a corresponding epistemic bad case. The possession of such rational support provides the necessary *epistemological* distinction between an epistemic good+ case and a corresponding bad case in maintaining a disjunctivist position. If there is a defeater present, then the necessary epistemological distinction is determined by having reflective access to one’s factive, favoring evidence that can dismiss the defeater and then one has reason to believe that one sees that p and can deduce that one is a good+ case. But does Pritchard’s position generate the anti-skeptical results he aims to provide? In the following section, I will show that having possession of reflectively accessible factive, favoring evidence in support of a disjunctivist position leads to another epistemological problem—the *regress problem*.

Favoring Evidence and Skepticism

As noted earlier, Pritchard does not assume that the only relevant evidence in determining the distinction between seeing that *p* and seeming to see that *p* is discriminating evidence. Take again the good+ case, the case in which Zula sees that there is a zebra in the zoo. Now if an error-possibility is raised, then we must understand how such a skeptical scenario affects Zula's epistemic position. In the zebra case, Zula either dismisses the error-possibility as one that is merely raised or she takes the error-possibility seriously (2012a, 94). By "merely raised," Pritchard means that "there is no good epistemic basis for thinking that this error-possibility should be taken into account" (2012a, 94). If the error-possibility is taken seriously, then there are "good grounds for supposing that the creature before [Zula] is a cleverly disguised mule..." (2012a, 98). According to Pritchard, if the error-possibility is merely raised then Zula does not need to appeal to her favoring evidence. Zula can simply appeal to her reflectively accessible factive reason and that suffices to exclude the error-possibility (2012a, 125). If the error-possibility is motivated and *S* has factive, favoring evidence to dismiss the error-possibility, then that would suffice for Zula to believe that she sees that *p*—she has an undefeated, perceptual warrant. Zula can deduce that she is in the good+ case and know that she sees that *p*. If Zula is unable to dismiss the error-possibility, then Zula does not have adequate factive, favoring evidence to dismiss the error-possibility. Therefore, Zula does not have reflective access to an undefeated, perceptual warrant since she is no longer in a good+ case. However, unlike the zebra case, Pritchard acknowledges that a concern arises when it comes to factive, favoring evidence and radical skeptical scenarios. Take for example the following argument (2012a, 84):

- I. *S* has perceptual knowledge that she has hands.

- II. If S knows that she has hands, then S knows that she is not a brain-in-a-vat (BIV).
- III. S knows she is not a BIV.

According to Pritchard, the problem in the radical skeptical scenario, unlike the zebra case, is if S were a BIV, then *all* of S's evidence (discriminating and favoring evidence) is called into question. In other words, in the radical skeptical case, the rational basis for S's beliefs is called into question *en masse* (2012a, 123). If S were a BIV, then S would lack all evidence that supports her belief that she is not a BIV. This is unlike the zebra case, since in that case, as Pritchard notes, the cleverly disguised mule error-possibility is specific to a "particular perceptual belief" and so Zula "can appeal to independent grounds in support of her belief that what she is looking at is not a cleverly-disguised mule, grounds which are not called into question by the cleverly disguised mule hypothesis" (2012a, 123).

Although there seems to be a potential concern regarding radical skepticism, Pritchard offers a way the epistemological disjunctivist can respond to the radical skeptic by appealing to her reflectively accessible factive rational support. The crucial point Pritchard makes is that in the radical skeptical scenarios, the BIV error-possibilities are "never epistemically motivated but are instead only merely raised" (2012a, 126). In an epistemic good+ case, if a BIV-error-possibility is raised, then in light of Pritchard's position, S has *reason* to believe that the error-possibility is merely raised. The reason is that there are no empirical grounds that would support such an error-possibility.

Pritchard seems to incorporate a Wittgensteinian notion of a 'hinge' proposition in order to understand how the BIV error-possibility is merely raised.⁴⁰ In a good+ case, S has

⁴⁰ See Wittgenstein (1969). Wittgenstein finds Moore's common-sense argument that he has rational support for his belief that he has two hands to be incoherent. In light of Wittgenstein's critique, Pritchard claims (2012b):

reflective access to factive evidence (S sees that p) and S knows that she sees that p. If S knows that she sees that p, then S knows she is not a BIV. And so, it logically follows that S knows that she is not a BIV. And, as a hinge proposition, there is no empirical grounds against it. The skeptical hypothesis (the BIV error-possibility) is unmotivated and considered to be merely raised.

To illustrate this point, Pritchard has us consider a *BIV-based radical skeptical* argument stated here (2012a, 111):

- I. I don't know that I'm not a brain-in-a vat (BIV).
- II. If I know that I have two hands, then I know that I am not a BIV.
- III. I don't know that I have two hands.

In this scenario, it's not that the skeptic is claiming to have any empirical evidence for the BIV hypothesis; rather the skeptic is just unable to know that the BIV hypothesis is false (2012a, 126). If she were claiming to have empirical evidence for the BIV hypothesis, then it would be problematic. To illustrate the problem, Pritchard states:

Take, for example, Moore's (1939, cf. Moore 1925) famous commonsense defence of his anti-sceptical beliefs. Moore thinks that he has an adequate rational basis for his beliefs in those propositions which he is most certain of—so-called 'Moorean' propositions, such as that he has two hands—but Wittgenstein argues that this is incoherent. As he puts it:

My having two hands is, in normal circumstances, as certain as anything that I could produce in evidence for it.

That is why I am not in a position to take the sight of my hands as evidence for it. (OC, §250)

If one's belief that one has two hands could be rationally supported by one's beliefs about what one presently sees—which are *ex hypothesi* less certain—then were one not to see one's hand when one looks for them then this would be a reason to doubt that one has hands. But of course in normal circumstances not seeing your hands when you look for them is more of a reason to doubt your eyesight than to doubt that you have hands. This shows, claims Wittgenstein, that which we are most certain of is not rationally supported at all, but is rather the hinge relative to which we rationally evaluate—and thus “test”—other propositions (2012b, 257).

In light of our example, then according to Wittgenstein, it is not that we know that we are not a BIV, but rather we are not a BIV is a hinge proposition (not really a belief, but it is taken to be true) and such propositions are “foundations of our language-games” (OC, §401–403, see fn 3, Pritchard 2012b, 256)

Suppose, for instance, that one receives testimony from otherwise reliable testifiers to the effect that one is a BIV. The problem is, of course, that if one is a BIV, then one's informants are no more real than one's non-existent hands. But then why should their testimony carry any epistemic weight? The point in play here is an entirely general one of course. Because it is the very nature of radical sceptical hypothesis that they call one's empirical beliefs into question en masse, it is therefore inevitable that they will call into question whatever empirical basis one takes oneself to have for supposing such a hypothesis is true (2012a, 127).

In addition, Pritchard states:

There is also further reason why the radical skeptical challenge does not incorporate such empirical claims, and this is that to do so would require the sceptic to take on empirical commitments of their own, and the sceptic—if she is doing her job properly anyway—simply isn't in the business of doing that (2012a, 127).

Again, these passages indicate that the *reason* S believes that a BIV error-possibility is merely raised and not epistemically motivated is because there are no empirical grounds to support the BIV error-possibility. Since S has reason to believe that a BIV error-possibility is merely raised, then having possession of reflectively accessible, factive rational support suffices to dismiss the error-possibility. In other words, Pritchard states:

...once we recognize that if we have reflectively accessible *factive* rational basis for our beliefs, then we do not need independent grounds to dismiss *ungrounded* error-possibilities which are inconsistent with this rational support (2012a, 130).

The factive evidence (one sees that *p*) is reflectively accessible to S and S knows that she sees that *p* without any *further empirical* evidence (Greco, 2014).⁴¹ Since S knows that she sees that *p* on the basis of seeing that *p*, S knows that she is a good+ case.

At first glance, it seems that Pritchard does provide us with a solution to the radical skeptical problem. However, Pritchard's account of 'knowing by reflection alone' becomes

⁴¹ Greco (2014) states that for Pritchard, "...when the disjunctivist claims that one can have reflective access to factive grounds (for example, that one sees that *p*), the claim is that one can have this access without *further* empirical investigation. But, crucially, one knows that one sees that *p* on basis of seeing that *p*. And so it is not *a priori*, not without any empirical means, that such knowledge is generated" (117-118).

problematic when it comes to how one knows by reflection alone the two *distinct* contributions to knowledge (seeing that p and favoring evidence).⁴² In a good+ case, S has access to seeing that p and comes to know that she sees that p on the basis of seeing that p. As noted, this signifies that one can come to know that one sees that p without any further empirical evidence (Greco, 2014). However, when it comes to distinguishing between seeing that p cases and seeming to see that p cases, the rational support S has for believing that she sees that p is via her factive, favoring evidence. The distinction between the two cases is determined by S's ability to reflectively distinguish between seeing that p and seeming to see that p cases. If S's reflectively accessible factive, favoring evidence is not grounded by any empirical means like seeing that p, then one cannot help but ask, "what is the basis for knowing one's factive, favoring evidence?," since knowing one's factive, favoring evidence provides the rational support for S's belief that she sees that p. Pritchard's internalism requires that one's evidence is reflectively accessible and this includes one's factive, favoring evidence in support of one's perceptual warrant. But in order to know one's favoring

⁴² There are two alternative notions to understanding reflective accessibility that may not generate the concern brought up here. Cunningham (2016) argues that the notion of reflective access does not mean that one is in a position to know that one's belief that p is *based on* the reasons that one possesses. Rather, one alternative to understanding the notion of reflective access is, "Being in a position to demonstrate, by reflection, that one's belief is well-supported by reasons in favour of it would only require that one is in possession of the relevant reasons and that one is in a position to call those reasons to mind as reasons to believe that p via some act of reflection available to one. It doesn't obviously require one to be in a position to know that one's belief that p is based on those reasons" (2016, 128). The other alternative is to see that it is not clear that, "to be in a position to use a reason one possesses in a process of deliberation one must be in a position to know by reflection that one is in the state that constitutes one's possession of one's reason. All that seems required is that one is able to bring one's reason to mind as a reason to believe that p, by some reflective activity available to one during the course of one's deliberation" (2016, 128). Although these alternatives are plausible positions, they do not seem to be what Pritchard has in mind (2012a) since these modifications would require a commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism (Cunningham, 2016), which Pritchard's position does not endorse. In addition, the two alternatives may not help with cases in which one has reflective access to one's factive, favoring evidence. I will develop this concern in this section.

evidence, one must have reflective access to the basis for such evidence, which would require reflective access to *that* evidence, and so on, eventually generating—the *regress* problem.⁴³

To illustrate this, let's go back to the case when Zula sees that there is a zebra, but a reliable informant tells Zula that what she sees is a cleverly disguised mule. This scenario indicates that even if there is a good case of perception, Zula sees that p, Zula only knows that there is a zebra because she has factive, favoring evidence that could defeat the error-possibility that was raised. Again, Pritchard's internalism requires that her favoring evidence is reflectively accessible. If her favoring evidence is factive (just like, if Zula sees that p—it is a good case of perception), on what grounds does Zula know that her favoring evidence is itself factive? Suppose we do grant that Zula has possession of favoring evidence to support her perceptual warrant, then it seems we must also grant that Zula possesses a *reason* for believing that her favoring evidence is itself factive, and in turn a *reason* for believing that her favoring evidence for her favoring evidence is factive, etc. (indicating the regress problem).⁴⁴ This problem is generated because unlike the good+ case in which one knows that one sees that p on the basis of seeing that p, one does not know one's favoring evidence via any empirical means and so one must come to know this by a priori reasoning or introspection. One must have reflective access to the rational support for believing one's

⁴³ See Kelp and Ghijsen (2016) for how Pritchard's explanation of what it means to have reflective access to one's reasons is not satisfactory. One problem is that if reflective access is understood in terms of knowledge, then it may lead to the regress problem. Yet, as noted earlier, if we take reflective access to mean that one knows that one sees that p on the basis of seeing that p, via empirical means, and not a priori reasoning, then it may not lead to the regress problem (See Greco, 2014). I argue that reflective accessibility is problematic when we consider having reflective access to one's factive, favoring evidence since such evidence is not on the basis of empirical means.

⁴⁴ For a thorough analysis of the problem of reflective accessibility and favoring support, see Ranalli (2018). Ranalli argues that the epistemological disjunctivist does not give an account of *how* one can get the initial purely non-empirical favoring support that one's state of mind is a seeing that p state of mind.

favoring evidence in order to reflectively distinguish a good+ case from a bad case, which in turn, means having reflective access to that evidence, and so on. Without addressing what the non-empirical basis is for one's favoring evidence, Pritchard's notion of 'knowing by reflection alone' does not adequately resolve the distinguishability problem in order to provide the anti-skeptical results his position aims to provide.

Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism and McDowell's Epistemological

Disjunctivism Revisited

As we've seen, Pritchard's position has us consider reflectively accessible, factive, rational support in order to understand the *epistemological distinction* between an epistemic good+ case and a corresponding bad case. Pritchard argues that in an epistemic good+ case, seeing that p is a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p, but unlike McDowell, for Pritchard, seeing that p does not provide an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and does not already put one in a position to exclude error-possibilities (since there may be undefeated error-possibilities present). In an attempt to solve the *basis problem*, Pritchard's notion of seeing that p provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that p and so seeing that p can come apart from knowing that p. Pritchard's position relieves us of any commitments to an inflated notion of a good case perception in order to better understand the *distinct* contributions to knowledge. For Pritchard, a good case scenario would include veridical perceptions in good objective conditions *and* further reasons that allow the subject to potentially dismiss any possible defeaters. In an epistemic good+ case, if an error-possibility is raised, because one has possession of reflectively accessible factive, favoring evidence, one has adequate grounds for believing that p and knowing that p. In addition, for Pritchard, when it comes to a radical skeptical scenario, being in possession of

reflectively accessible factive rational support suffices to dismiss the *merely raised* BIV error-possibility since such an error-possibility lacks any empirical grounds. However, Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not clearly address what the non-empirical basis is for one's favoring evidence and how one can come to know by reflection alone that one has such evidence. Therefore, his position does not adequately resolve the distinguishability problem in order to provide the anti-skeptical results his position aims to provide.

According to McDowell, the evidential basis for distinguishing a seeing that p state from a seeming to see that p state is that the former provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and the latter does not. McDowell's notion of seeing that p does not clearly explain how such a perceptual state provides an indefeasible warrant for believing that p and does not clearly explain what a non-defective capacity is a capacity to do, indicating a problem in how it can clearly distinguish a good case from a bad case.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to show that McDowell's notion of indefeasibility is problematic. In addition, I aimed to show that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position could be viewed as an improvement upon McDowell's epistemological disjunctivist position. Finally, I hope I have shown that Pritchard's position does not generate the anti-skeptical results he aims to provide since his position faces another epistemological problem—the regress problem.

In the following chapter, I would like to turn my focus on whether metaphysical disjunctivism grounds epistemological disjunctivism. In doing so, I will take a look at MNRD to see if his position does support metaphysical disjunctivism. Even if metaphysical

disjunctivism holds, I will develop the argument that McDowell's position does not provide the necessary epistemological distinction needed for the subject to know whether she is in a good case or a bad case. In addition, in the next chapter, I will discuss how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position makes no controversial commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism. Although Pritchard's position does not imply metaphysical disjunctivism, I will argue that Pritchard's view does not adequately provide a *distinct* disjunctivist position. In light of these concerns, I will defend the claim that we do not have to privilege disjunctivism as opposed to other non-disjunctivist positions.

Chapter 4:

Epistemological Disjunctivism: With and Without Metaphysical Disjunctivism

Introduction

In this chapter I will argue that McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (MNRD) is a metaphysical disjunctivist position.⁴⁵ I will contrast MNRD with a traditional naïve realist account.⁴⁶ I indicate that MNRD can avoid some of the problems of phenomenal indistinguishability that the traditional naïve realist faces. Nevertheless, I argue that even though MNRD entails epistemological disjunctivism, it does not uphold the necessary epistemic distinction needed for the subject to know whether she is in a good case or a bad case. In addition, I discuss how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position makes no controversial commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism. However, I argue that Pritchard's view does not adequately provide a *distinct* disjunctivist position since his disjunctivist view can be 'translated' into a version of a non-disjunctivist undefeated justified true belief (UJTB) view (I will discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 5).⁴⁷ Both Pritchard and McDowell characterize a distinction between epistemic statuses for veridical cases and non-

⁴⁵ An important point to note is that Byrne and Logue (2008) propose a distinct use of 'metaphysical disjunctivism.' They argue that metaphysical disjunctivism implies a fundamental distinction between veridical states and non-veridical states and there is no common mental component between a veridical perception and a hallucination. In addition, Byrne and Logue (2008 and 2009) argue that epistemological disjunctivism (specifically McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism) does not commit McDowell to metaphysical disjunctivism. I argue that McDowell's position is a metaphysical disjunctivist position. If I am right, it indicates a problem for Byrne's and Logue's interpretation of McDowell's position. See Brogaard (2011), Gomes (2011), Langsam (2014) for a defense of McDowell's commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism.

⁴⁶ Martin (2004) argues that the reason to endorse disjunctivism is Naïve Realism. According to Martin, in a veridical experience, a mind-independent object is a constituent of one's experience and there is an awareness of a genuine relation to a mind-independent object. In this chapter, I will refer to Martin's view as the traditional naïve realist view.

⁴⁷ The only difference would be that Pritchard incorporates the notion of 'hinge propositions' in order to understand how the BIV error-possibility is merely raised. See Chapter 3, footnote 40.

veridical cases—calling it a disjunctivist position, but it is not clear why one cannot uphold other non-disjunctivist positions that can help *describe* epistemological distinctions at that level without necessarily holding a disjunctivist position. In light of these concerns, I defend the claim there is no advantage in privileging disjunctivism as opposed to other non-disjunctivist positions.

In Section II, I will discuss whether metaphysical disjunctivism can help ground epistemological disjunctivism. The basic idea is to understand how the epistemological distinction between good cases and bad cases, while phenomenally indistinguishable, might be grounded in a genuine mental difference. Metaphysical disjunctivism requires an understanding of how mental states are type-individuated. A metaphysical disjunctivist holds that in good cases, the perceptual experiences are different in *kind* from perceptual experiences in bad cases. Take for example the perceptual experience, seeing *x*: Seeing *x* is a state or event of seeing any particular object *x* (barn, cat, table, mat, lemon) in good conditions (good lighting, perceptual faculties are functioning properly, etc.). A metaphysical disjunctivist will argue that in the good case, this perceptual state is specifically and fundamentally different from the perceptual state in a bad case. The concern for this section is to understand the role *seeing x*, as a metaphysically distinct state, plays in grounding the epistemic differences between good cases and bad cases.

In addition, I discuss MNRD and how it is a metaphysical disjunctivist position. As discussed in chapter one, according to MNRD, a *seeing* experience is a distinct kind of experience in which case a mind-independent object is genuinely present to mind and what is relevantly constitutive of the experience's 'subjective character' is that it brings the object into view for its subject (2013a, 147). More importantly, MNRD entails that the two

experiential states are epistemically distinct. For McDowell, the obtaining of the fact contributes to the subject's epistemic standing that is not "blankly external" to her subjectivity (1982, 474). And, since a *seeing* experience is a distinct kind of experience that brings the object in view for the subject, we have grounds for believing that what is present in a *seeing* state is different than what is present in a *seeming to see* state.⁴⁸

An important point to note for McDowell's position is that he seems to discuss mental states in two different ways.⁴⁹ In one sense, he emphasizes S's experience in terms of a perceptual state, *seeing x*. In another sense, he emphasizes S's experience in terms of the epistemic-perceptual state, *seeing that p*. Seeing *x* is a less demanding state because it's not sufficient as a propositional justifier. More specifically, in section II, I investigate seeing *x*,

⁴⁸ See Brogaard (2011). Brogaard argues that McDowell's position is a metaphysical disjunctivist position. She claims:

In fact, it is clear that McDowell does not take the fact-made-manifest thesis to be a purely epistemological position. He thinks that the fact-made-manifest thesis entails epistemological disjunctivism but conceives of it as distinct from epistemological disjunctivism. Here is McDowell:

One can hardly countenance the idea of having a fact made manifest without supposing that would make knowledge of the fact available to one (1982, 26)

The fact-made-manifest thesis entails epistemological disjunctivism but the two theses are not equivalent. One can 'hardly countenance' metaphysical disjunctivism without epistemological disjunctivism but the two positions are distinct. McDowell's version of disjunctivism is most clearly a kind of metaphysical disjunctivism, and as it is commonly understood the position exemplifies a version of disjunctivism which treats illusions as bad cases (2011, 54).

Brogaard argues for a better form of McDowell's disjunctivism which explains the difference between good and bad cases. According to Brogaard, the "fact-made-manifest" in McDowell's position must satisfy some epistemic constraints in order to preserve McDowell's thesis. I agree with Brogaard that McDowell's position is a metaphysical disjunctivist position, but it is not clear if such states are primitive knowledge states as Brogaard argues (2011).

⁴⁹ On my reading of McDowell, the two distinct perceptual states for McDowell are mental states. For a related discussion of this point, see Ranalli (2018). He discusses the distinction between seeing states and seeing that *p* states. He claims that the naïve realist view regarding seeing states, what he calls, "objectual perceptual states," are mental states and if one is an epistemological disjunctivist that is committed to reflective access, then it is difficult for one to not be committed to seeing that *p* as a mental state also (2018, 9-10).

the core of MNRD's metaphysical underpinning for epistemological disjunctivism.⁵⁰ Also, as previously discussed in chapter one, for McDowell, a seeing state is not simply a veridical perception (seeing x in good objective conditions). A seeing state is individuated by the experience "bringing the environmental reality into view for the subject" and this state

⁵⁰ As mentioned, for the purposes of the chapter, I will discuss McDowell's notion of mental states in terms of seeing x . Yet, McDowell does discuss both seeing x and seeing that p as mental states. He states:

What is meant by saying experiences have content?

In the most familiar form of the idea, experiential content is propositional. Wilfrid Sellars puts this by describing experiences as so to speak making claims. On this version of the idea, if an experience enables someone to know there is something red and rectangular in front of her, in the most straightforward way, that is because it is an experience of seeing that, in Sellars's metaphor, so to speak claims that there is something red and rectangular in front of its subject. And—here I diverge from Sellars—it makes that knowledge available by making present to the subject a *state of affairs* consisting in there being something red and rectangular in front of her. That there is something red and rectangular in front of the subject is both the relevant aspect of the experience's content and what it enables the subject to know.

On another version of the idea, experiential content is less than propositional; it is related to the content of claims as noun phrases that apply to things claims are about are related to sentences uttered in making those claims. This form of the idea can also be found in Sellars.

On this version of the idea—again, here I diverge from Sellars—an experience that enables someone to know there is something red and rectangular in front of her, again in the most straightforward way, makes present to her not a state of affairs, but an *object*: something presented in the experience as red and rectangular and in front of her. On this version we cannot connect the experience's content so directly with what it enables its subject to know. But the connection is still obvious: if an experience presents someone with an object as red and rectangular and in front of her, it enables her to know there is something red and rectangular in front of her. For my purposes, it will make no difference which version we work with. I have illustrated the idea of experiential content in terms of formulations of content that can only be partial. Even if one has nothing else in view but a red rectangular surface, there will be more specificity in the content of one's experience than is captured by "red" and "rectangular" and "in front of me". That will not matter for my purposes (2013a, 144-145).

French (2016) argues for a version of epistemological disjunctivism that discusses the perceptual states as seeing x states, but without taking on the metaphysical commitments that go with seeing x states that are propositional, representational states. He argues that a 'thing seeing' specification can meet the factivity challenge regarding an epistemological disjunctivist position by simply looking at the structure of seeing states. Seeing requires an existence condition. The work is done by the fact that "seeing an $F x$ requires the existence of an $F x$ " (2016, 101). Although this seems to meet the necessary condition for understanding what makes seeing states distinct from seeming to see states, I am not sure if this point can meet the reflective access criteria that epistemological disjunctivism requires.

requires *more* than veridically perceiving an object in good conditions (2013a, 147).⁵¹

Regardless of how McDowell's position seems to individuate mental states, it is not clear how it can help ground his epistemological position. More specifically, even if a seeing experience is a metaphysically distinct kind of state, by simply being in such a state, one does not have any epistemological advantage since one cannot know by reflection alone the distinction between a veridical case and a non-veridical case.

In Section III, I discuss how Pritchard's epistemological position does not invoke the support of metaphysical disjunctivism. On Pritchard's view, seeing *x* is a necessary condition for seeing that *p*, but the epistemological distinction between seeing that *p* and seeming to see that *p* does not entail that the two states are metaphysically distinct perceptual states.⁵² Unlike McDowell, Pritchard's notion of seeing *x* does not require *more* than a veridical perception. According to Pritchard, seeing *x* is simply a veridical perception in which *S* "stands in the right kind of relationship to [*x*]" (2012a, 26). Seeing that *p*, for Pritchard, is a veridical perception in good objective conditions (for example: the environment is normal and there are no fake barns around), and seeing that *p* is "a more (epistemically) demanding relation to be in" (2012a, 26) than seeing *x*.⁵³ In a good case, seeing that *p* provides a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing *p*. The difference between seeing that *p* and seeming to see that *p* is that seeing that *p* provides *better* evidential

⁵¹ This was discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1. See Soteriou (2016, chapter 5) for a discussion that McDowell's position is not a straightforward naïve realist view.

⁵² Pritchard claims that epistemological disjunctivism does not itself entail that there is no common metaphysical essence to the experiences in good and bad cases (2012a, 24).

⁵³ As we have discussed in the previous chapter, 'seeing that *p*' for Pritchard provides a weaker, independent ground for believing that *p*. A key difference is that for McDowell, unlike Pritchard, the non-defective exercising of one's perceptual capacity requires there be no undefeated defeaters present.

support for believing that p than seeming to see that p. Also, as we have seen in the previous chapter, for Pritchard's position, seeing that p provides a *weaker, independent* ground for believing that p than does the corresponding state on McDowell's view.

I will argue that although Pritchard characterizes a distinction in the epistemic statuses between a good case and a bad case, as stated earlier, Pritchard's epistemological account does not adequately provide a *distinct* disjunctivist position.⁵⁴ It seems that epistemological distinctions at this level can be described by other non-disjunctivist positions as well.

Overall, what I aim to show in this chapter is that even if metaphysical disjunctivism is a substantive philosophical thesis and it may partially ground epistemological disjunctivism, it does not contribute to achieving the anti-skeptical goals of epistemological disjunctivism since subjects cannot distinguish seeing *x* states from seeming to see *x* states. Metaphysical disjunctivism relies on a controversial metaphysics of mind. It is not clear how such states are type-individuated. In addition, though there is plausibly a metaphysical difference between McDowell's *seeing that p* and *seeming to see that p* states, this is ultimately grounded in the quality of one's reasons, hence the epistemic position grounds the metaphysical difference, not vice versa. This will be my main reason for shifting focus, later in this chapter, to epistemological disjunctivism without metaphysical disjunctivism. The real anti-skeptical heavy-lifting in epistemological disjunctivism is done by the enhanced

⁵⁴ John Greco discusses how Pritchard's view is not a radical departure from current epistemological theories. As noted in the previous chapter, Greco claims that on Pritchard's view, "To say that *S* has reflective access to her rational support is to say that *S* can know that the support obtains, *without further empirical investigation*" (2014, 119) and that the notion of 'S sees that p' for Pritchard's view "sits easily with several extant positions in epistemology, including process reliabilism, agent reliabilism, safety theories, and proper function theories" (2014, 119-120).

epistemic position one enjoys in a good+ case, either through objective conditions being good, through the non-existence of defeaters, or through being able to defeat the defeaters. But, given this enhanced epistemic position, epistemological disjunctivism starts to look like a simple no-defeaters epistemology (more specifically a traditional undefeated justified true belief view), leaving one to wonder whether epistemological disjunctivism offers a better position than a more traditional view. Both Pritchard and McDowell characterize a distinction between epistemic statuses for veridical cases and non-veridical cases, but there are other non-disjunctivist positions that capture the relevant epistemological distinctions at that level. In light of these concerns, I defend the claim that there is no reason to privilege epistemological disjunctivism over other non-disjunctivist positions.

Metaphysical Disjunctivism and MNRD

When discussing disjunctivism, metaphysical disjunctivism is often distinguished from epistemological disjunctivism. Some have argued that one can hold an epistemological disjunctivist position without any commitments to metaphysical disjunctivism.⁵⁵

Metaphysical disjunctivism requires an understanding of how mental states, specifically, perceptual states, are type-individuated. In a good case when a subject's perceptual faculties are functioning normally and the environment is non-deceptive, it can be said that one's perceptual experience grounds one's knowledge of one's environment. A metaphysical disjunctivist holds that in such good cases one's perceptual experiences are different in *kind* from perceptual experiences in bad cases (when a subject's perceptual faculties are not functioning properly or the environment is deceptive). Again, take for example the perceptual experience, seeing *x*: Seeing *x* is a state or event of seeing any particular object *x* (a mind-

⁵⁵ See Byrne and Logue (2008) and Pritchard (2012a).

independent entity in her environment) in good conditions (good lighting, perceptual faculties are functioning properly, etc.). When a subject sees *x*, she stands in a relation of awareness to *x*.⁵⁶ A metaphysical disjunctivist will argue that in the good case, this perceptual state is specifically and fundamentally different from the perceptual state in a bad case. One motivation for metaphysical disjunctivism is naïve realism. There are various formulations of naïve realism, but minimally, a basic formulation, which I refer to as the traditional naïve realist position, states that the perceptual experience a subject has when she genuinely perceives an object in the world is that she bears a perceptual *relation* to the object.⁵⁷

The question a metaphysical disjunctivist faces is that veridical experiences and nonveridical experiences are *phenomenally* indistinguishable and so how are they fundamentally distinct experiences? Perceptual experiences are vulnerable to error. There is always the possibility that what seems to be a veridical (accurate) perceptual experience is actually an illusion or hallucination, and so it can seem to one that one is in a good case when one is not. The traditional naïve realist defends a position that the metaphysical nature of the perceptual state in the good case is constituted by the relation of awareness to a mind-independent object. In a hallucination case, there is no object in which there is a relation of awareness. According to Martin (2004), a hallucination has no metaphysical property of its

⁵⁶ See Cunningham (2016) for a further discussion of this type of metaphysical disjunctivism.

⁵⁷ Again, I refer to Martin's view (2004) as a traditional naïve realist position. See Logue (2011, 2012), Soteriou (2016) for a discussion on the various accounts of naïve realism. Logue claims that it is not clear whether McDowell endorses metaphysical disjunctivism and, in turn, it is not clear whether he endorses naïve realism (2011, footnotes 10 and 14). According to Soteriou, it is also not exactly clear if McDowell is committed to naïve realism and metaphysical disjunctivism, but he does suggest that there are strands in McDowell that commit him to both naïve realism and metaphysical disjunctivism (See 2016, chapter 5). Without getting too caught up in McDowell exegesis, according to my interpretation, McDowell commits to a type of naïve realist disjunctivism.

own that has any explanatory power and so the only way to explain a hallucination is by contrast with a veridical experience.⁵⁸ He states:

... any veridical perception of a tree is indiscriminable from itself, so the property of being indiscriminable from a veridical perception of a tree will be common to a case of veridical perception of a tree and a perfectly matching hallucination of the same. The indiscriminability property is, therefore, a common property across the situations with the potential to explain common consequences, while the property of being a veridical perception is unique to the one case (2004, 69).

The indiscriminability property of the veridical perception does not take away the explanatory power of the veridical perception since it is the veridical perception that is relational and any explanation of a hallucination case is dependent on it. Martin states:

...there is a reason to think that the property of being indiscriminable from an *F* has an explanatory potential which is dependent on the explanatory potential of being an *F* (2004, 70).

Martin argues it would be redundant to try and explain why a veridical perception and a corresponding hallucination is distinct while being phenomenally indistinguishable due to some metaphysical property the bad case has, since that same property can be used to explain the good case as well.⁵⁹ Rather, Martin argues that the only explanation for a hallucination case is to acknowledge that it is a state that cannot be known by reflection alone to be distinct from a good case state.⁶⁰ Martin's position avoids providing an account for *why* the two cases are phenomenally indistinguishable, since according to Martin, the naïve realist does not

⁵⁸ See Ranalli (2018) for a clear discussion of this point.

⁵⁹ What Martin is worried about is that if there is a fundamental metaphysical property shared between a good case and a bad case, then it will "screen off the purely perceptual kind of event from giving us an explanation" (2004, 62).

⁶⁰ Martin argues, "...the disjunctivist really has no option other than to claim that such experiences have no positive mental characteristics other than their epistemological properties of not being knowably different from some veridical perception" (2004, 82). In order to understand how a good state is indiscriminable from a bad state, Martin states, "...the relevant conception of what it is for one thing to be indiscriminable from another is that of not possibly knowing it to be distinct from the other" (2006, 363). Again see Ranalli (2018) for a clear discussion of Martin's position.

refer to any substantive metaphysical properties, for instance, any phenomenal properties, for explaining hallucinations in order to argue that the metaphysical nature of the two experiences are different. It is only in virtue of the metaphysical nature of the veridical experience that it is the kind of experience it is that makes it fundamentally distinct. The bad case can be accounted for epistemically, by the fact that when one is hallucinating, one does not know by reflection alone that one is not veridically experiencing.

Even if the hallucination case can be explained epistemically—that it is state that cannot be known by reflection alone that it is not a veridical perception, Martin's position does not seem to provide a clear account of how one can know by reflection alone that one is veridically perceiving when one has a veridical experience. As Siegel states:

...some disjunctivists, including Martin, motivate disjunctivism on the grounds that its treatment of veridical experience best accords with the way introspection presents those experiences as being. They thus seem to treat introspection as a source of knowledge, or at least justified belief, about the nature of experience. This claim seems weakened if it turns out that there are simply no answers to the question of what introspection is such that it provides such knowledge, or what in the nature of experience enables us to know about it introspectively (2008, 221-222).

For the purposes of this chapter, I will not attempt to clarify whether Martin's position can explain how introspection provides knowledge of one's experience, but it does seem that if a traditional naïve realist wants to argue that one can know that one is veridically perceiving when one has a veridical experience, then the traditional naïve realist needs a clear account of introspection and how it can be consistent with an epistemological disjunctivist position, since according to an epistemological disjunctivist, even if the two states are phenomenally indistinguishable, in a good case, one can know by reflection alone that one sees that p.⁶¹

⁶¹ Ranalli (2018) claims that Martin's position, which he calls phenomenal character disjunctivism preserves naïve realism, but this position he argues is inconsistent with epistemological disjunctivism.

In addition, the traditional naïve realist position is unsatisfactory since there can be no account for *why* the two experiences are phenomenally indistinguishable.⁶² Naïve realism is often contrasted with a non-relational, representational view. A non-relational, representational position states that when one genuinely perceives an object or state of affairs and when one hallucinates an object or state of affairs, the two experiences are the same mental state or at least share a common mental element since the two experiences share their *representational* content.⁶³ If the phenomenal character of an experience supervenes on its representational content, then the representational position can at least explain why the two experiences are phenomenally indistinguishable since the position does not type identify mental states by distal causes (mind-independent objects), and so veridical and non-veridical perceptions can be type-identical. This highlights that metaphysical disjunctivism relies on a controversial metaphysics of mind. Although MNRD is not a non-relational, representational position, but rather a *type* of naïve realist position, in the following section, I will show how MNRD avoids some of the problems of phenomenal indistinguishability the traditional naïve realist faces. In addition, I will show how MNRD entails epistemological disjunctivism.

⁶² See Logue (2013) for a naïve realist position that preserves a *positive account* of explaining hallucinations. Her view is compatible with holding commonalities between good and bad cases that are not fundamental. In regard to her position, she states, “The result [is] a view compatible with all sorts of commonalities across the good and bad cases—even reasonably specific experiential commonalities, and even “substantive” ones (e.g. not just my having a perceptual experience as of a yellow, crescent-shaped banana, but also my perceptually representing my environment as being a certain way). What’s crucial for the Naïve Realist is that reasonably specific experiential commonalities are not fundamental; that in the good case, any reasonably specific experiential feature the good case has in common with the bad one obtains in virtue of my bearing the perceptual relation to the banana” (2013, 131). In addition, see Siegel (2008) for objections to Martin’s position.

⁶³ There are various forms of representationalism and often can be contrasted with *phenomenalism* or *idealism*. I will not be discussing these other positions (See Crane and French, 2015). See Soteriou (2016) for a discussion regarding representational content and perception.

MNRD vs. Traditional Naïve Realism

Recall that an epistemological disjunctivist claims that in good cases, one's rational support is different in kind from one's rational support in bad cases. One way to support an epistemological disjunctivist position is to understand how the metaphysically distinct perceptual state, seeing *x*, can help ground the epistemic differences between good cases and bad cases. I will discuss how MNRD motivates the connection between metaphysical disjunctivism and epistemological disjunctivism. In doing so, I will briefly review MNRD.

As discussed in greater detail in chapter one, McDowell argues for a position in which perceptual experiences are both relational and contentful (2013a). This makes McDowell's position a *type* of naïve realist position. McDowell states:

Perception makes knowledge about things available by placing them in view for us. But it is precisely by virtue of having content as they do that perceptual experiences put us in such relations to things (2013a, 144).

MNRD aims to make sense of mental states that are directly open to reality in order to address skeptical concerns. McDowell supports his position with a *transcendental argument*, which he claims, “starts from the fact that perceptual experience at least purports to be of objective reality” and concludes, “we must be able to make sense of the idea of perceptual experience that is actually of objective reality” (2008, 382). In doing so, the transcendental argument maintains a type of *asymmetry* in regard to perceptual states. In order for our experiences to purport to be of objective reality, there must be states that are actually about objects in the world. McDowell argues that even if the two types of perceptual states—good and bad—are subjectively indistinguishable, what the disjunctivist position does is “remove the prop on which sceptical doubt depends” (2008, 385). As he states:

The prop is the thought that the warrant for a perceptual claim provided by an experience can never be that the experience reveals how things are. The disjunctive conception dislodges that thought, and a sceptical doubt that depends on it falls to the ground (2008, 385).

According to McDowell, experience has a distinct cognitive role since experience places one in a *cognitively* significant relation to one's environment. He states:

On a relational conception, experience enables us to know things about the environment by placing us in cognitively significant relations to environmental realities. And in spelling out the idea that experiences have content, I presupposed something on those lines. I sketched an account in which the content of an experience of seeing enables it to make present to its subject a certain environmental reality, a state of affairs or an object, thereby putting her in a position to have associated knowledge about her environment (2013a, 145).

If we accept seeing is a distinct kind of perceptual experience that places one in a cognitively significant relation to one's environment, then how can we account for this distinction? What exactly is it about S's *seeing experience* that makes it a distinct state? According to McDowell, *seeing* is an experience that represents by having content in a certain way, thus making such experiences distinct in kind. He states:

If an experience is a seeing, we can say the representing it does is its *revealing* or *disclosing* a certain environmental reality: that is, its bringing that environmental reality into view for the subject. Experiential representing, the representing by experiences that consists in their having content in the way they do, comes in two kinds: bringing environmental realities into view and merely seeming to do that. If an experience's representing is of the first kind, what is relevantly constitutive of its subjective character is that it brings a certain environmental reality into view for its subject (2013a, 147).

In other words, for McDowell, a seeing experience is a representational experience, but the way the content is *had* is what makes it metaphysically distinct. More importantly, MNRD entails that the two experiential states are epistemically distinct. He claims:

On the content conception, the epistemic significance of an experience consists in its having content *in the way it does*. An experience that is a seeing can be like an experience that merely appears to put its subject in touch with a corresponding

environmental reality in respect of *what* content it has. But a seeing is unlike a mere appearing in *how* it has its content. Seeings have their content in a way that is characteristic of seeings; they make environmental realities present to their subject. Thereby, on either version of the idea of experiential content, they put the subject in a position that leaves open no possibility of things not being as they would be believed to be in suitably related beliefs (2013a, 147).

The above passages indicate two important aspects of MNRD. First, McDowell's position does not individuate mental states based on what content it has since both seeing and merely appearing can be *alike* in respect to what content it has. And, unlike a traditional naïve realist position, McDowell's position can give an account of why seeing *x* and seeming to see *x* are phenomenally indistinguishable since the two experiences can be alike in terms of their content.

However, one may ask: How can McDowell hold that the two experiences are phenomenally indistinguishable or even have the same content without this commonality between the two experiences being fundamental? If the commonality is fundamental, then it seems that McDowell's position is not necessarily a metaphysical disjunctivist position. But, for McDowell, that does not necessarily follow. McDowell argues for a 'capacities-driven' view of *how* seeing has its content that makes it a distinct state. How it has its content is either due to a defective or non-defective exercise of one's perceptual capacity. This supports the case that one's perceptual capacity is *fallible* since a subject can take an experience that is a mere appearance to be one that makes knowledge available when it does not.⁶⁴ However,

⁶⁴ In order to understand fallibility, McDowell (2008) discusses Dretske's zebra case (1970). In this scenario, a subject cannot distinguish a zebra from a cleverly disguised mule and so when she is at the zoo, she believes she is looking at a zebra when in actuality she is looking at a cleverly disguised mule. Therefore, one can argue that the agent does not have the *warrant* that she thinks she has when she believes she is looking at a zebra. The subject's ability to recognize zebras is fallible. This case indicates that 'external' matters do play a role in whether we have justification for believing a perceptual claim. What makes McDowell's position different is that in the case of veridical experiences when we "obtain" the fact that, "there is a zebra in front of me", it is not purely an external matter that determines whether we have warrant for a perceptual belief. Rather, it is our "obtaining" of the fact on suitable occasions that enables us to recognize the fact that we are veridically

when it is exercised non-defectively, then the fact that p is made manifest in one's veridical experience.⁶⁵ In addition, McDowell claims that one's experience is epistemically significant because the warrant for knowledge it provides is distinctive of *rational* subjects. He states:

...if an experience warrants one in knowledge of the sort that is an act of rationality, the warrant-constituting status of the experience must be part of the content of an at least implicit self-consciousness that belongs to one's cognitive state in knowing what one does. In the terms I have been using, the experience's epistemic significance must be part of its subjective character (2013a, 149).

This indicates that what is metaphysically fundamental for McDowell's position is that the way the content is *had* in one's experience not only includes a relation of mind-independent object, but it puts one in a position to know that "that is how it is with one and thus to recognize that one is conclusively warranted in believing" that there is an object in front of one (2013a, 151). The warrant-constituting status does not seem to be contingent on whether one can phenomenally distinguish a seeing state and a seeming to see state, but rather it seems to depend on one's *rational* capacity to put one in a position to know that one sees that p and has a conclusive warrant in believing that p. Nevertheless, that leads us to ask a further question: If the warrant-constituting status is determined by one's rational capacity, then what role does the actual *phenomenology* of an experience play for McDowell's position?

perceiving. McDowell states that fallibility is a "property that attaches to capacities," specifically it is an "imperfection in cognitive capacities" (2010, 245). This is a response to Burge (2005) who argues that fallibility can *intelligibly* cover *exercises* of capacities. McDowell thinks it is a mistake to think that fallibility is an attribute of the exercises of perceptual capacities.

⁶⁵ We already saw in chapter one, that it is not clear exactly what a perceptual capacity is a 'capacity to do' for McDowell which causes some concern for his position. Recall that for McDowell, although experience is relational, experience must also include an absence of defeaters and/or reasons that overcome defeaters, implying that experience is broader than a mere perceptual state. However, McDowell claims that a non-defective exercise of one's capacity, in a good case, does not require having background reasons to overcome defeaters to put one in a position to know. This makes it unclear exactly what a non-defective exercise of a perceptual capacity is for McDowell.

Langsam (2014) defends McDowell's disjunctivism as a response to skepticism by arguing that the phenomenology (or what he calls the phenomenal character of an experience) is important for McDowell's position. He argues that it is the phenomenal character that makes our belief in disjunctivism *rational* and therefore also makes it rational to accept the anti-skeptical belief that the world is as it appears to be (given there are no factors or reasons to believe otherwise) (2014, 43). Langsam states:

There *is* something about the phenomenal character of a perceptual experience that "suggests" that the content of the experience is true... We respond to all of our appearances in this way, both the veridical and the nonveridical ones, for there is something about all perceptual experiences that suggests that they are veridical. Nonveridical experiences...mislead us (2014, 54).

In addition, Langsam states:

... it is the nature of the phenomenal character itself that leads us to believe that it belongs to a veridical experience. In effect, the phenomenal character itself is evidence, albeit defeasible evidence, for the proposition that the experience that has such phenomenal character is veridical (2014, 55).

According to Langsam, if we take McDowell's disjunctive conception, then the veridical experience in which it appears that *p* includes the fact that *p*. So not only does a veridical and nonveridical experience suggest that it is veridical in terms of its content, but it suggests it is veridical in the sense that the appearance that *p* includes the fact that *p*. He states:

According to the disjunctive conception, a veridical experience in which it appears that *p* includes the external fact *p* as a constituent. So a perceptual experience can suggest the obtaining of external facts by suggesting that it includes those external facts as constituents. A perceptual experience can suggest that it is veridical by suggesting that it is a veridical experience as that is understood by the disjunctive conception, an experience which includes as constituents the external facts that would make the experience veridical (2014, 54).

Langsam argues that according to McDowell, the phenomenal character of an experience makes it *intelligible* to think that the experience is veridical and that such an experience can be a reason for believing that *p*.⁶⁶ He states:

An experience can be a *conclusive* reason for a belief that *p* insofar as it includes the fact that *p* as a constituent. In other words, it must be a veridical experience as that is construed by the disjunctive conception. But what makes an experience a reason at all? It is a reason insofar as the move from the experience to the belief that endorses the experience is a rational one. And this move is rational insofar as the phenomenal character of the experience makes it intelligible to think that the experience is veridical (as that is construed by the disjunctive conception). The phenomenal character of a perceptual experience makes it rational to think that the experience has a certain metaphysical nature, and if the experience then does have this metaphysical nature, the experience can qualify as a conclusive reason and as a source for knowledge (2014, 58).

Langsam's argument can provide us with a better understanding of how McDowell's position holds only if it is a metaphysical disjunctivist position that also takes into consideration the phenomenology of experience. If we accept Langsam's view as giving support to MNRD, then we can see how it avoids some of the problems the traditional naïve realist faces. On Langsam's interpretation, the phenomenal character is what makes it *rational* to think that an experience has the metaphysical nature it has.

Langsam claims that for McDowell's position, a conclusive warrant requires having an experience with a certain metaphysical nature—one's experience includes the fact that *p* as a constituent. However, he defends McDowell's position by claiming that any warrant requires that it is rational to think one's experience has that nature. Since a seeing experience and seeming to see experience has phenomenally indistinguishable content, one can explain how bad cases can mislead. However, if one has a conclusive warrant, then one's experience

⁶⁶ See Langsam (2014). He argues that the phenomenal experience is what makes it "intelligible to respond to the experience by believing that *p*" and that even if *p* is not the case, this does not "negate the intelligibility of responding to the experience by believing that *p* actually is the case" (2014, 57).

has a certain metaphysical nature—supporting McDowell’s disjunctivist position. However, when we take a closer look, we can see that Langsam’s defense of McDowell’s position introduces a similar problem discussed earlier. If it is *rational* to think a veridical or a nonveridical experience *is* veridical, then our rational ability must somehow include an ability to know that one is veridically perceiving when one has a veridical experience. It is not clear how this is possible. This is the same concern that was discussed earlier regarding Martin’s position. For instance, like Martin’s position, how does one know that one is veridically perceiving when one has a veridical experience? Is it through introspection? How exactly does introspection work so that one can know that one is veridically perceiving when one has a veridical experience? Langsam’s defense of McDowell’s position needs to provide a clear account of how our rational ability works and how one can know by reflection alone that one is in a good case (one’s experience includes the fact that p as a constituent), even if the two cases are phenomenally indistinguishable.

So overall, Langsam’s account of a *rational* ability must include an ability to know by reflection alone that one’s experience is a seeing that p experience and this provides a conclusive reason for believing that p. But, again, the problem is, how is that possible since on Langsam’s account, the phenomenal character makes it intelligible to think that a seeing that p experience *or* a seeming to see that p experience is a seeing that p experience? This would imply that one’s rational ability does not include the ability to reflectively distinguish a seeing that p experience from a seeming to see that p experience. So basically, in order for McDowell’s metaphysical disjunctivism to entail epistemological disjunctivism, Langsam’s account of a rational ability must include an ability to know by reflection alone that one sees that p *without* having the rational ability to reflectively distinguish a seeing that p experience

from a seeming to see that p experience. Of course, then, Langsam's account faces the same problem the traditional naïve realist faces. How can one explain that in the good case, one can know by reflection that one sees that p , while at the same time, accept that one cannot know by reflection alone that when one is in a bad state that one is not in a good state?

In addition to the above concern, there is one more problem regarding Langsam's defense of McDowell's position. Langsam's interpretation of McDowell's position does not clearly discuss how to classify a veridical experience as a veridical experience in the first place. To illustrate this point, we can return to the undefeated defeater case discussed in chapter one. Recall that for McDowell, in the undefeated defeater case, S sees x in good objective conditions, but since there is an undefeated defeater present, S is not in a position to know that p . According to MNRD, one's capacity must also include a capacity to defeat defeaters to classify one's experience as seeing that p experience. Now, in light of Langsam's interpretation, in such a case, it would be rational to take such an experience as having a certain metaphysical nature, but it isn't clear how Langsam's interpretation would work since such cases reveal that there is an inconsistency in understanding how one's rational capacity classifies veridical experiences as veridical experiences in the first place. Would the veridical appearance in good objective conditions be classified as a veridical experience or would the veridical appearance in which the fact that p comes into "full view" (once the defeater is defeated) be classified as a veridical experience? Again, on McDowell's account, S 's seeing that p experience in the undefeated defeater case would be *more* than seeing x in good objective conditions in order for the experience to put one in position to know that p . It would have to include background reasons to defeat the defeaters. Since Langsam's defense of McDowell's position classifies a veridical experience as one in which the fact that p is

constituent of one's experience, then his view would be compatible with McDowell's notion of a seeing that p experience which includes background reasons to defeat the defeaters, but Langsam's position needs to make this clear.

As we can see, Langsam's defense of McDowell's position faces the same problems discussed in Chapter 1. There are two sources for calling McDowell's position a metaphysical disjunctivist position. The first distinction is between seeing x and seeming to see x . But this metaphysical disjunctivist position does not help in distinguishing between the two states since one cannot phenomenally distinguish between the two cases. On the other hand, the source for calling McDowell's position a metaphysical disjunctivist position is that in a good epistemic position, one sees that p . However, as we have seen, this is not distinctively metaphysical (except for being in an overall mental state with some background reasons to defeat defeaters and not having bad objective conditions). This metaphysical disjunctivist position still does not help one to distinguish between seeing x and seeming to see x , it is just that in good epistemic position, one sees that p and one can know by reflection that one sees that p , while at the same time, accept that one cannot know by reflection alone that when one seems to see that p that one is not seeing that p .

Now, let's consider again how McDowell's position differs from a traditional naïve realist position. Recall that a traditional naïve realist claims that when a subject sees x , her experience is fundamentally different in kind than when she hallucinates x . The genuine perception includes a perceptual *relation* to the mind-independent object. As we have seen, in the undefeated defeater case, according to McDowell, for it to be classified as a veridical experience, this relation requires more than seeing x in good objective conditions. So, in this sense, McDowell's metaphysical disjunctivism differs from the metaphysical disjunctivist

position that is entailed by a traditional naïve realist position. In cases with undefeated defeaters present, a traditional naïve realist would not deny that when one sees x and bears a perceptual relation to the object, she is in a metaphysically distinct *seeing* state. Yet, for McDowell, in cases that include undefeated defeaters, such states are not the kind of states that put one in a position to know, so it is not exactly clear how MNRD would individuate such veridical perceptual state types. On the other hand, MNRD does avoid the problem of phenomenal indistinguishability the traditional naïve realist faces. Since MNRD is concerned with how the content of experience is had and not what the content is, the content of veridical and non-veridical experiences can be alike. This helps with understanding *why* the two experiences are phenomenally indistinguishable, even if it entails they are epistemically distinct. In addition, MNRD has us consider that our perceptual capacity is really a *rational, cognitive* capacity and only when it is exercised non-defectively, can one be in a *seeing state* that puts one in a position to know.⁶⁷

So, to recap, in a good case, MNRD individuates mental states by how the mental state acquires the content it does by the exercise of a rational capacity. Such a capacity individuates perceptual states as veridical by some kind of object- or fact-dependent mental states. Langsam's defense of McDowell's metaphysical disjunctivism helps us understand how the phenomenology of experience plays a role in his position. The phenomenal character is what makes it rational to think that it has the metaphysical nature it has. But, in order for

⁶⁷ McDowell states, "Distinctively rational capacities are operative only in our making something of what experience anyway brings into view for us. Our ability to make something of what we see is special to us as rational animals, but in isolating what experience does for us we have to abstract from that ability. So our capacity to have things in view, considered by itself, is indistinguishable from the capacity to have things in view possessed by animals that are not capable of that distinctive kind of knowledge. The special character of knowledge that is an act of its possessor's rationality does not extend into all the capacities that are operative in acquiring it" (2013a, 157).

it to entail epistemological disjunctivism, in a good case, one's rational capacity must include an ability to know by reflection that one sees that p without being able to know that in a bad case one is not in a good case. That implies that MNRD ultimately faces the same problem as the traditional naïve realist. One can know by reflection that one sees that p but one cannot know by reflection a seeing that p experience from a seeming to see that p experience. Moreover, when it comes to undefeated defeater cases, we find that one's rational capacity must also be able to defeat defeaters for a veridical experience to be classified as a veridical experience in which one is aware of the fact the p and is in position to know that p. Ultimately, when we consider how McDowell's position can explain the epistemic distinction between good case perceptual states and bad case perceptual states, it is no longer clear what epistemic work the basic metaphysical distinction between fact- or object-dependent states and mere seeming to see that p states is doing any more. The actual epistemic work in good cases is due to a difference in rational standings. In a good case, one has rational resources (which includes the ability to defeat defeaters) that go beyond what one normally thinks of as a seeing that p state. The more basic perceptual states are indistinguishable from each other. So even though MNRD entails epistemological disjunctivism, I argue that it does not uphold the necessary epistemic distinction needed for the subject to know by reflection alone whether she is in a good case or a bad case. Now, nothing I've said so far is meant to show that MNRD is false or unmotivated. But it should be clear that McDowell's early commitment to a metaphysical distinction between fact-dependent perceptual states and other seeming to see that p states are no longer doing much work to provide an epistemic distinction. Again, the distinction between good and bad cases that does the epistemic heavy lifting is not a metaphysical one but, roughly, a difference in

rational standing. Since Pritchard's view makes this clear, I will turn attention to it. The added benefit is that we will no longer have to wade through the many complications in McDowell's views as they develop over time.

Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism without Metaphysical Disjunctivism

Duncan Pritchard (2012a) argues that one can characterize a distinction between the epistemic status of veridical cases and non-veridical cases without committing to metaphysical disjunctivism. He states:

It is reasonably clear that epistemological disjunctivism does not in itself entail metaphysical disjunctivism. For that the rational standing available to the agent in normal veridical perceptual experiences and corresponding (introspectively indistinguishable) cases of illusion and hallucination are radically different does not in itself entail that there is no common metaphysical essence to the experience of the agent in both cases... If that is right, then in defending epistemological disjunctivism one is not thereby committed to defending metaphysical disjunctivism as well (2012a, 24).

As noted, Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism makes no controversial commitment to metaphysical disjunctivism.⁶⁸ In a good+ case (a paradigmatic case of knowledge), one's rational support for believing that p is different in kind from one's rational support in a bad case (one does not know that p). In order to better understand Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, I will briefly state some factors in his position to help understand how in a good+ case, seeing that p provides a reflectively accessible reason for believing that p:

1. There must be a veridical experience. Pritchard's notion of a veridical experience is simply a case in which S "stands in the right kind of relationship to [x]" (2012a, 26).

⁶⁸ This is debatable. French (2016) argues that Pritchard's notion, along with McDowell's notion of 'seeing that p' takes on "substantive commitments in the metaphysics of perception" (2016, 99-100). He states, "...they are committed to the view that there are some states of perception—that is, those involved in paradigmatic perceptual knowledge—which constitutively involve propositional representational content. The perceptual states in question are a species of representational state" (2016, 100). It is not clear if French's interpretation is correct regarding Pritchard's position. It seems that Pritchard is not committed to this 'constitutive' claim.

2. Seeing that p requires veridically experiencing in good objective conditions.
3. A veridical experience is a necessary condition for seeing that p, but the epistemological distinction between seeing that p and seeming to see that p does not entail that the perceptual states in good and bad cases are metaphysically distinct states.
4. As we have seen in the previous chapter, for Pritchard's position, seeing that p provides a *weaker, independent* ground for believing that p. Recall that according to Pritchard, if one veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions, but there is a defeater present, S does see that p, so unlike McDowell, seeing that p is consistent with having defeaters present. S gains a position to know that p even though S does not have adequate grounds for believing that p and does not know that p. In this sense, Pritchard captures the 'standard' notion of seeing that p—it provides a basic warrant for belief but does not include independent resources for defeating defeaters.

In this section, I aim to show how Pritchard characterizes a distinction between the epistemic status of good+ cases and other cases. In addition, I aim to show that Pritchard's epistemological account does not adequately provide a clear *distinction* between a good+ case and other cases that would indicate why one ought to privilege an epistemological disjunctivist position over any other non-disjunctivist position. More specifically, if it is just a matter of explaining that in a good+ case, the subject has all the resources necessary to know that p and in the other case, one does not, then why can't a non-disjunctivist account explain that too?

Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position holds that the evidential support that one possesses in a good+ case is different in kind from the evidential support that one possesses in a phenomenally indistinguishable deceptive case (illusion or hallucination) (2012a, 16). More specifically he states:

In paradigmatic cases of perceptual knowledge an agent, S, has perceptual knowledge that ϕ in virtue of being in possession of rational support, R, for her belief that ϕ which is both factive (i.e., R's obtaining entails ϕ) and reflectively accessible to S (2012a, 13).

The rational support in such cases is provided by factive states, such as seeing that p.

According to Pritchard, the factive perceptual state, seeing that p, is a veridical experience in *good objective conditions*. To capture the idea of objectively good cases, he states:

... [they are] scenarios where the agent's relevant cognitive abilities are functioning normally, and where the environment is conducive for the formation of the salient range of true beliefs... (2012a, 29).

In addition, he states,

In essence, the thinking behind our characterization of an objectively epistemically good scenario is that the agent is reliably forming her perceptual beliefs in such a manner that they will inevitably be true in environments which are suitably conducive to this belief-forming process, and that the agent is in just such an environment (2012a, 29-30).

According to Pritchard, seeing that p requires veridically experiencing an object in an environment in which one's reliable belief-forming process produces beliefs that will inevitably be true. If S sees that p, then S is in a position to *gain* knowledge that p. If S hallucinates an object, then S does not see that p. In such a scenario, S seems to see that p and according to the epistemological disjunctivist, this is not the same kind of rational support as seeing that p. In order to understand Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position, we must examine his account of what makes good+ cases and other cases genuinely

distinct cases in terms of their rational standing. Does Pritchard's position explain the epistemic distinction between the two cases by providing a distinction between seeing that p states or seeming to see that p states? Or is the distinction due to whether the subject is in a position to know that p or not in a position to know that p? Or is the distinction due to what counts as good+ case or not?

As stated, according to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, veridically experiencing an object is a necessary condition for seeing that p, but his position does not require that seeing that p states and seeming to see that p states are phenomenally discriminable. In other words, the difference in rational standing between the two cases does not require explaining the phenomenal difference between seeing that p and seeming to see that p states. Yet, the two cases do differ in their rational standing. If S hallucinates an object, then S only seems to see that p but does not see that p. The justificatory status between the two cases differs. In the good+ case, one's reason for believing that p provides *better* evidential support than one's reason for believing that p in the hallucination case. Now, of course, one may argue that the two states provide the same evidential support for believing that p and the justificatory status is equal between the two cases.⁶⁹ Let's take a look at Pritchard's account of the New Evil Genius Thesis to illustrate this point. According to the New Evil Genius Thesis:

S's internalist epistemic support for believing that ϕ is constituted solely by properties that S has in common with her recently envatted physical duplicate (2012a, 38).

⁶⁹ See Madison (2014) for why the two states provide the same justification for believing that p since in the bad case, as in the good case, the "subject is believing rationally, reasonably, and as he ought, given how things seem to him" (2014, 69).

This case is meant to illustrate that in a good+ case and a recently envatted case, the epistemic support is the same. There are two ways to understand the above thesis. One way is to claim that the *reasons* that are reflectively available to the subject in the good+ case are the same as the reasons that are available to the subject in the bad case. The other way to understand this thesis is to claim that the *mental states* in a good+ case and the bad case are essentially the same (for example the mental states could be individuated based on their representational content). If the justificatory status supervenes on one's mental state, then the justificatory status between the two cases are the same.⁷⁰ Now of course *mentalism* requires an understanding of how mental states are individuated. If the mental states are not individuated by an essential mental property, but rather are individuated by having a factive reason available (the fact that p is available), then in a good+ case, the state would be a seeing that p state and would be a distinct mental state from the envatted case. The justificatory status between the two cases would differ since one state would be seeing that p state and the other would be a seeming to see that p state. According to Pritchard, the New Evil Genius thesis does not hold since in a good+ case, the reason (one sees that p) is reflectively accessible to the subject and no such reason is available in the envatted case. Now, does that mean that Pritchard's position supports the case the two states are individuated according to whether the factive reason is available or not? In other words, is seeing that p a mental state in its own right? It is not quite clear. On the one hand, Pritchard claims that epistemological disjunctivism is compatible with mentalism. He states:

Whether epistemological disjunctivism is committed to mentalism depends on whether you count an agent's seeing that p as a mental state. If you do..., then it will follow that paradigm cases of perceptual knowledge two agents who are identical in

⁷⁰ See Conee and Feldman (2001)

their mental states will on the epistemological disjunctivist view also be identical in the internalist epistemic support they have for their beliefs, in line with mentalism. In both cases, they will be in the mental state of seeing that p and so will possess an identical degree of rational support as a result (2012a, 38).

By acknowledging that seeing that p can be a mental state in its own right, Pritchard indicates that this may require the epistemological disjunctivist to endorse metaphysical disjunctivism (2012a, 38). On the other hand, whether epistemological disjunctivism is compatible with mentalism is not quite clear. To illustrate this, we can turn to the distinction Pritchard makes between good+ cases and *merely* good cases.⁷¹ Recall that for Pritchard, in a merely good case, the subject veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions, but there is an undefeated defeater present. In this case, according to Pritchard, the subject sees that p and is in position to know that p, but since there is a defeater present and the subject is unable to defeat the defeater, the factive reason (seeing that p) is not reflectively accessible to the subject and so the subject does not know that p. So, according to Pritchard, the justificatory status between a good+ case and a merely good case differs not because the mental states differ, but because in the good+ case, seeing that p is reflectively accessible to the subject and in a merely good case, seeing that p is not reflectively accessible. This scenario illustrates that the epistemic difference between good+ cases and merely good cases cannot be due to being in position to know that p since in both cases the subject is in a position to know that p. But rather, one has to have reflective access to one's factive reason in order to know that p. So, this scenario rules out determining the distinction between good+ cases and

⁷¹ Pritchard recognizes this point. He states, "...if seeing that p can come apart from knowing that p,...then there is the potential for there to be a clash between epistemological disjunctivism and mentalism" (2012a, 58, footnote 33).

other cases as based on being in a position to know that *p*. That leaves us with our final question: Is the epistemic distinction due to what counts as a good+ case or not?

So, what exactly is a good+ case for Pritchard?⁷² For one, in a good+ case, as noted from the case above, there are no undefeated defeaters present. In a good+ case, the subject veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions. The subject believes that *p* and the belief is true. In a good+ case, the subject knows that *p*. Now if we accept that seeing that *p* is a mental state in its own right, as Pritchard is open to accepting, then if a subject is in such mental state, then the subject would know that *p*. But of course, this does not hold for Pritchard, because a good+ case also requires that one's reason has to be reflectively accessible.⁷³ So what role does the reflective accessibility condition have on determining the distinction between good+ cases and other cases. According to Greco (2014), Pritchard's notion of 'knowing by reflection' alone entails that one can know that one sees that *p* without any *further empirical evidence*. However, I will show how the reflective accessibility condition on seeing that *p* is problematic. One way to understand how it is problematic is to take a look at the distinction between a good+ case and a *merely* bad case (2012a, 32-33). For instance, in a merely bad scenario, *S* genuinely sees a barn in fake barn county, however the objective conditions are bad. In addition, in a merely bad case, *S*'s subjective conditions are good (*S* is not aware of any undefeated defeaters). In a merely bad case, since the objective conditions are bad, *S* does not see that *p* because she is not in a situation that puts her in

⁷² I illustrate Pritchard's good+ case in same manner as Kelp and Ghijzen (2016). They state: "A "good+ case" is defined as a case with the following five characteristics: (i) The agent's environment is epistemically hospitable and the relevant faculties producing the belief that *p* are functioning properly (the case is "objectively epistemically good"). (ii) The agent has no defeaters for *p* (the case is "subjectively epistemically good"). (iii) The agent has a veridical experience and a true belief that *p*. (iv) The agent sees that *p*. (v) The agent knows that *p*... these cases qualify as paradigm cases of perceptual knowledge" (2016, 7-8).

⁷³ Again see Kelp and Ghijzen for this point (2016, 7).

position to know that p. In a merely bad case, S lacks the rational support of seeing that p for believing that p. S's reason for believing that p would be that she *seems* to see that p. Now, we can ask whether Pritchard's notion of 'knowable by reflection alone' can help here. It seems not. In a merely bad case, S cannot know by reflection alone whether she seems to see that p or she sees that p. In other words, S is not in a position to 'know by reflection alone' that she does not see that p. So, Pritchard's notion of 'knowable by reflection alone' does not help. And, since the epistemological disjunctivist accepts that such cases are phenomenally indistinguishable, one cannot know that one sees that p or seems to see that p by any discriminating evidence.

Now, to see how the accessibility condition *is* relevant to Pritchard's position, we can return to the distinction between good+ cases and merely good cases. Recall in the merely good case, S sees a barn in good objective conditions, but later is informed by a reliable informant that what she sees is not a barn. According to Pritchard, even if S sees that p, since she is aware of an undefeated defeater, she does not have reflective access to seeing that p. To see how the accessibility condition is relevant here, we must recall that for Pritchard, in such a case, for S to know that p, S must have reflective access to additional factive, favoring evidence to dismiss the defeater. If S does not have such evidence, then S does not know that p. If S dismisses the defeater with factive, favoring evidence, then she can reflectively distinguish between the good+ case and the merely good case. Seeing that p provides rational support for believing that p, but it only does so if we also include a reflective access condition on additional evidential support that can potentially dismiss defeaters.⁷⁴ But, as we

⁷⁴ This is important to consider because for Pritchard, seeing that p puts one in a position to know that p but it does not entail that one has reflective access to one's factive reason. If there is a defeater present, then one does not have reflective access to seeing that p.

saw in the previous chapter, having reflective access to one's factive (non-empirical) favoring evidence leads to other problems, for example, the regress problem. The problem is that even if one has reflective access to one's factive, favoring evidence to support that one sees that p, it seems that one must also have to have access to a *reason* for believing that her favoring evidence is factive and a *reason* for believing that evidence, etc. (indicating the regress problem).

If epistemological disjunctivism is a *distinct* disjunctivist position in which the rational standing in good+ cases and other cases differs, then the notion of reflective accessibility should not be limited to playing a significant role only when it comes to good+ cases and merely good cases. Or to put it another way, in order for the epistemological disjunctivist to maintain a *distinct* disjunctivist position, she must acknowledge the importance of the accessibility condition for good+ cases and other cases as well. As we have seen, when it comes to good+ cases and merely bad cases, the accessibility condition is not helpful in providing the distinction between seeing that p cases and seeming to see that p cases since in the merely bad case, one cannot know by reflection alone that one is not in a good case.

Ultimately, Pritchard maintains his epistemological disjunctivism by claiming that the rational standings between good+ cases and other cases differ in kind. However, when we take a closer look, we find that it is not really clear how the rational standing in a good+ case is distinct in *kind*. Yes, according to Pritchard, it is only in a good+ case that seeing that p provides a reflectively accessible reason for believing that p, but since the accessibility condition is problematic, can't we simply accept that seeing that p is a mental state in its own right without positing an accessibility condition? As previously discussed, such an

accessibility condition does not help when it comes to distinguishing between good+ cases and merely bad cases. Also, even if the importance of the accessibility condition is highlighted when it comes to good+ cases and merely good cases in terms of having access to one's factive, favoring evidence, having such reflective access to additional non-empirical favoring evidence leads to other problems like the regress problem.

Maybe Pritchard can maintain an epistemic distinction between the good+ cases and other cases by removing the accessibility condition. The epistemic difference would simply be that either one has all the resources to know that p or one does not have such resources. If one does not have such resources, then one does not know that p. But then the question becomes, "why can't any other non-disjunctivist theory support that claim?" If a subject is in a seeing that p state, the subject would believe that p and know that p without the accessibility requirement. In addition, one may have additional resources to defeat defeaters if needed. And again, one can hold this position without holding Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position. There could be other non-disjunctivist epistemological theories that can explain the difference in epistemic statuses.⁷⁵ For the purposes of this chapter, I will not present other alternatives to a disjunctivist position here, but rather just point to the fact that one does not have to privilege Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position in order to understand the different epistemic statuses.

⁷⁵ It seems that our ordinary experiences do open us directly to the world in which we *phenomenally experience* the objects in our world, but in doing so, we do not have to privilege disjunctivism, as opposed to other non-disjunctivist positions. Our openness to the world can include phenomenal experiences that are indistinguishable (veridical and non-veridical) but yet these experiences can share the same representational content. For example, there are non-disjunctivist, representationalist positions which suggest that veridical and non-veridical perceptions share a common *perceptual state-kind* that includes a fundamental common element (See Burge 2005). These states can help support epistemological accounts in which one can have beliefs that are not supported by evidence that is available to the subject, but yet the subject is still *entitled* to maintain such beliefs (See Altschl 2011). Entitlement is a type of externalist epistemic *warrant*. A subject's being entitled is often determined by facts that are independent of one's reasoning capacity (Again see Altschl 2011).

Conclusion

In this chapter, my aim was to discuss some problems in McDowell's and Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivisms. Both Pritchard and McDowell characterize a distinction between epistemic statuses for veridical cases and non-veridical cases. Regarding McDowell's account, I show that McDowell's naïve realist disjunctivism (MNRD) can be viewed as a metaphysical disjunctivist position. The distinct metaphysical kinds imply distinct epistemological positions, but the problem with MNRD is, it is not clear how it helps his anti-skeptical goals. Ultimately, when we consider McDowell's position and how it explains the epistemic distinction between good case perceptual states and bad case perceptual states, we find that it is not clear what epistemic work the basic metaphysical distinction between fact- or object-dependent states and mere seeming to see that p states is doing. The actual epistemic work in good cases includes having the rational ability to dismiss defeaters while the basic perceptual states remain phenomenally and reflectively indistinguishable from each other. So even though MNRD entails epistemological disjunctivism, McDowell's position does not uphold the necessary epistemic distinction needed for the subject to know by reflection alone whether she is in a good case or a bad case.

Since MNRD does not clearly uphold the differences in epistemic statuses, I turn to Pritchard's position, since Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not imply metaphysical disjunctivism. I show that Pritchard's characterization of the epistemic status between good and bad cases is also problematic. Pritchard claims that the rational standing between a good+ case and other cases differs in kind. As we have seen, his position indicates that there is problem with the accessibility requirement of 'knowing by reflection' when it

comes to perceptual knowledge. This leads one to ask whether the accessibility condition is a requirement for perceptual knowledge. One can take seeing that *p* as a mental state in its own right without positing an accessibility condition. In addition, it seems there are other non-disjunctivist positions that can help *explain* epistemological distinctions without necessarily holding Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism which includes a problematic accessibility condition.

Overall, as we have seen, epistemological disjunctivism claims to be an anti-skeptical position by enhancing the epistemic position one enjoys in a good+ case. In a good+ case, the objective conditions are good, there are no subjective defeaters, and/or one has factive, favoring evidence to defeat any defeaters. In the next chapter, I will develop how epistemological disjunctivism is simply a no-defeaters epistemological position. More specifically, I will show that the requirements for knowledge that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism holds are the same requirements for knowledge that an Undefeated Justified True Belief (UJTB) position holds. In doing so, I aim to show that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than the traditional, non-disjunctivist undefeated justified true belief view in accounting for perceptual knowledge.

Chapter 5:

Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism and Undefeated Justified True Belief

Introduction

Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism characterizes the difference in epistemic statuses between a good+ case and other cases by claiming that the rational standing between the cases differs in kind. Only in a good+ case can one know by reflection alone that one sees that *p* and believes that *p*. In a corresponding bad case, *S* does not have access to a *factive* reason for believing that *p*. According to Pritchard, in cases that a subject does not have access to a *factive* reason, the subject only seems to see that *p* and *blamelessly* believes that *p* (2012a, 42). Pritchard's notion of blamelessness is supposed to offer us a way to distinguish the justificatory status between good+ cases and bad cases. In this chapter, I will show that Pritchard's standard for justification (one's reason must be *factive*) is too high and cannot be met consistently with his accessibility requirement. If we remove Pritchard's high standard of justification, we see that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism is a version of a traditional undefeated justified true belief view (UJTB). More specifically, I will show that the requirements for knowledge that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism holds are the same requirements for knowledge that an UJTB position holds. In doing so, I argue that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than the traditional, non-disjunctivist justified true belief view in accounting for perceptual knowledge.

Finally, as we saw in the previous chapter, Pritchard's accessibility condition does not help when it comes to reflectively distinguishing between good+ cases and other cases since one cannot know by reflection alone that when one is in a bad state that one is not in a good

state.⁷⁶ I consider how Pritchard's position could remove the problematic accessibility condition. For instance, we can simply accept seeing that p is a mental state in its own right without positing an accessibility condition.⁷⁷ If the accessibility condition is removed, Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism can be viewed to be more like a knowledge-first position. A knowledge-first position claims that 'knowledge' is 'unanalyzable' and knowledge is more basic than justified belief.⁷⁸ This would be unlike a UJT view, since in an UJT view, seeing that p is reason for believing that p and knowing that p. Although I will not elaborate on this view in this chapter, in the addendum, I discuss how the problem with Pritchard's position could motivate knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivism that may avoid some of the problems his position faces.

Pritchard's High Standard for Justification

According to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, only in a good+ case does one's rational standing include having reflective access to a factive reason (seeing that p) for believing that p. In other cases, one does not have access to a factive reason and therefore *blamelessly* believes that p. To illustrate his high standard of justification, we can turn to his account of the New Evil Demon Thesis (which is analogous to Cohen and Lehrer's (1983) and Cohen's (1984) new evil demon scenario):

⁷⁶ See also Smithies (2013). Smithies argues for a distinction between 'weak' and 'strong' accessibilism. He claims that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism is compatible with weak access but not strong. According to Smithies, weak accessibilism holds that if one has a reason for believing that p, then one is in position to know by reflection alone that one has a reason for believing that p. Strong accessibilism claims that if one lacks a reason for believing that p, then one is in a position to know by reflection alone that one lacks a reason for believing.

⁷⁷ See Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) that Pritchard's position can be viewed as a mental state in its own right if the accessibility condition is removed.

⁷⁸ See Williamson (2000). Williamson argues that 'knows' is not analyzable and knowledge has not been successfully factored into a mental state (belief) and a non-mental state (truth). Rather, knowledge can be viewed as conceptually basic and maybe even as a kind of mental state in its own right.

S's internalist epistemic support for believing that ϕ is constituted solely by properties that S has in common with her recently envatted physical duplicate (2012a, 38).

In such a case, traditionally, the internalist argues that the subject in the good case and the subject in the new evil demon case have the same justification for believing that p since they have access to the same reason for their belief that p. However, according to Pritchard, the New Evil Genius thesis does not hold since in a good+ case, the factive reason (one sees that p) is reflectively accessible to the subject and no such reason is available in the envatted case. So, for Pritchard, justification requires a high standard—that one's reason is factive (seeing that p entails that p is true). Pritchard appeals to blamelessness presumably to account for what internalists call justification where on his view the belief is not actually justified.

However, Pritchard's notion of blamelessness is problematic. Although his notion of blamelessness incorporates a level of rationality (meeting the demands of an internalist position), none of the levels of rationality that may be involved in blamelessness constitute his high standard of justification. Once we remove the high standard of justification, we can see how Pritchard's view is similar to an UJTb view.

In order to understand Pritchard's notion of justification we can briefly review his requirements of a good+ case. In a good+ case:⁷⁹

1. S veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions (one's cognitive faculties are functioning properly and the environmental conditions are non-deceptive).
2. There are no (subjective) undefeated defeaters present.
3. Seeing that p provides a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p.

⁷⁹ I am referring to how Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) break down Pritchard's good+ case.

4. S believes that p and the belief is true.
5. S knows that p.

To illustrate, let's say Mary walks into her room and she sees a vase on the table. Mary's experience is veridical and the environmental conditions are good. Also, Mary is not aware of any subjective defeaters that undermine her belief that there is a vase on table. Mary believes there is a vase on the table and Mary's belief is true. Her reason for believing is she sees that there is a vase on table and this reason is reflectively accessible to Mary. Mary knows that there is a vase on the table. Given the above requirements, this case is a good+ case. Mary has reflective access to a factive reason for believing that p—Pritchard's high standard of justification is met.

Now, let's take a look at some of the other cases—where one's rationality is incorporated but does not constitute justification. In these other cases, one's reason for believing that p would be that one seems to see that p and blamelessly believes that p. However, we will see that such cases illustrate that appeals to blamelessness are problematic.

For instance, let's take a look at a merely bad case according to Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism. In a merely bad scenario, a subject veridically experiences an object in bad objective conditions, but good subjective conditions. For example, a merely bad case would be one in which Mary sees a barn in an environment where there are fake barns around. Regarding merely bad cases, Pritchard states:

...any Gettier-style case involving perceptual belief would have sufficed as an illustration of a merely bad scenario, and thus it is not particularly important that a barn façade case is invoked. For example, the famous case offered by Chisholm (1977, 105) of the farmer who truly believes that there is a sheep in the field because he sees a sheep-shaped object (which is a not a sheep) would also fit this template. The only difference is that in Chisholm's example the agent does not even see a

sheep, while the agent in the barn façade case does at least see a barn (even while failing to see that there is a barn) (2012a, 57, footnote 25).

Given the above passage, Pritchard would categorize the fake barn case as being similar to Chisholm's sheep case. However, when we take a closer look at the two cases, we see that they are different. In the fake barn case, S truly believes that there is a barn because she sees a barn in the field. But, since the objective conditions are bad, Mary does not see that there is a barn in the field. To understand the difference between this case and Chisholm's sheep case, let's contrast the merely bad scenario with one more of Pritchard's cases, the bad++ case (2012a, 33). The bad++ case is like the merely bad case in that the subject is in fake barn country, but in addition, the subject does not veridically experience a barn. Similarly, in Chisholm's sheep case, the subject also does not veridically experience a sheep and the environmental conditions are bad since there is sheep look-alike around. Now, the question that arises is that, given the conditions of a bad++ case, why would Pritchard not categorize Chisholm's sheep case as a bad++ case? Maybe for Pritchard, in Chisholm's sheep case, since S's belief is true, it is more like a merely bad case. However, in this case, S does not veridically experience the sheep. This leads us to ask a further question: what role does the subject's perceptual *experience* actually play for Pritchard's position in order for him to categorize Chisholm's sheep case as a merely bad case as opposed to a bad++ case?

Pritchard claims that Chisholm's sheep case could be viewed analogously to the case of seeing a barn in fake barn country. However, as mentioned, in Chisholm's sheep case, S does not veridically experience a sheep and in the fake barn case, S veridically experiences a barn. So, this seems to entail that the perceptual experience (veridical or non-veridical) does not play the significant role in categorizing a merely bad case in which S does not see that p. The

type of experience is not the *relevant* difference in the two cases. Rather, the relevant difference is that in both cases, the environmental conditions are bad. Since the environmental conditions are bad, S is not in a position to know that p and does not see that p. If the type of perceptual experience is not relevant in this case, could it still be that S's *cognitive* functions are working properly in the sense that they are reliably forming true beliefs? One way to understand this difference, in light of Pritchard's position, would be to claim that the subject's cognitive faculties would be working properly in both cases and the subject would be reliably forming her perceptual beliefs, but since the environment would not be "suitably conducive to this belief-forming process" (2012a, 30), the agent would not see that p. So here's Pritchard's potential response to Chisholm's sheep case:

1. S believes that there is a sheep in the field.
2. S's belief is true.
3. S is *blameless* in believing that there is sheep in the field. S does not see that p—S does not have a factive reason for believing that p and does not know that p.

According to Pritchard, the rational support that is reflectively accessible for the agent in a merely bad case is different in kind from the good+ case.

Regarding the bad case, he states:

In the second case [bad case], the agent is in a situation which is experientially introspectively indistinguishable from the first [good+ case], and hence which blamelessly prompts her to form a belief in the same proposition with as much conviction as in the first case. Crucially, however, her belief is formed in highly sub-optimal conditions...Moreover, notice that however we understand the rational support in the second case, it is not merely a 'stunted' version of the rational support in the first case, as if the latter were just the former supplemented in some way with additional rational support. Rather, the two rational standings are radically different in kind...(2012a, 15-16).

A merely bad case is one of the cases he is referring to in this passage and so again, Pritchard would argue that the rational standing in the good+ case and merely bad case differs. In merely bad cases, one's rationality is incorporated, but does not constitute justification.

However, there is another alternative in understanding the difference between a fake barn case and Chisholm's sheep case. One can argue that Chisholm's sheep case should be categorized as a bad++ case. One could claim that even if the subject's cognitive faculties are working properly in the fake barn case, the subject's cognitive faculties would not be working properly in the bad++ case. For instance, in what sense would S's blamelessly believing that p count as *reasonable* in the bad++ case? Couldn't one argue that S's cognitive capacities in the bad++ case are functioning *improperly* since they include forming a true belief that involves a non-veridical experience in bad objective conditions? If S is blameless in this situation, then it seems to be a different type of blamelessness than in a merely bad case where one sees a barn in fake barn country and forms a true belief that p.

Maybe Pritchard could argue that the subjects in the fake barn case and Chisholm's sheep case are equally blameless. 'Blamelessness' for Pritchard could be a type of *positive* epistemic status and would simply depend on how things appear to the subject. But, then, one can ask why wouldn't justification also just depend on how things appear to the subject? If blamelessness covers different cases, all of which the subject's believing that p is blameless due to how things appear, then Pritchard's distinction between justification and blamelessness seems to be arbitrarily drawn. This concern indicates a problem in understanding what notion of 'blamelessness' Pritchard is working with.

To further illustrate this concern, Madison (2014) provides several scenarios that shed light on why Pritchard's notion of blamelessness is problematic. Madison discusses this point

in regard to the *demon problem*, mentioned earlier. In light of Pritchard's position, Madison states that suppose:

the subject in the demon world is not justified, or at least is less justified in believing what his normal world counterpart believes. Is it plausible to suggest that mere blamelessness is what the internalist confuses for justification in the demon world, as Pritchard suggests? By comparing several subjects, we can see that this explanation is not compelling. Suppose Al believes that a ship is in harbour because he seems to see one; Al*, his recently envatted counterpart, also believes that a ship is in harbour because he seems to see one, although he is hallucinating. Compare these two subjects with Bert who also believes that a ship is in harbour, but he believes this as the result of brainwashing. Lastly, compare these subjects with Carl who also believes that a ship is in harbour, but he believes this as the result of an as yet unnoticed cognitive malfunction: due to a recent brain injury, whenever he seems to smell freshly cut grass, he believes that there is a ship in harbour. In the four cases above, the subjects all believe the same proposition, namely, that there is a ship in harbour. Further, all are blameless in believing as they do: the first two believe what their evidence supports; Bert, in turn, cannot be faulted for being the victim of brainwashing, nor can Carl be reproached for suffering an accident that results in non-standard belief-forming processes. While all are blameless in believing as they do, surely Al and Al* have better rational support for their beliefs than Bert and Carl do: they hold their belief on the basis of evidence which they take to support the truth of what is believed, whereas Bert and Carl do not (2014, 8).

The cases discussed in the above passages indicate that there are various levels of rationality incorporated in Pritchard's notion of blamelessness, but none of them constitute justification.⁸⁰ Now, maybe this is not really a concern for Pritchard's position. For it seems fair to say there are various levels of rationality at play when one blamelessly believes that p, but they do not count as justification. Pritchard's distinction between justification and blamelessness can potentially be supported by Littlejohn's (forthcoming b) work discussing a

⁸⁰ We can contrast Pritchard's position with MNRD when it comes to notion of blamelessness. We can see that MNRD can be viewed as potentially providing some account of why S may be blameless in bad cases. In bad cases, S is exercising her rational capacity in some way that is 'reasonable'. The problem of course is that, in bad cases, one's capacity is exercised defectively according to McDowell and S's experience is not a seeing that p experience. So, it is not exactly clear how MNRD can hold that S's blamelessly believing that p is 'reasonable,' but yet the exercise itself is defective. Moreover, even if one can potentially explain why S blamelessly believes in such a case, it is still not clear why S's belief is not justified according to some internalist accounts pertaining to the new evil demon argument (See Cohen (1984), since in the new evil demon argument, S's belief in the bad case would be justified.

Strawsonian “trichotomous scheme” (Strawson, 1962) in understanding the difference between *justification, excuses, and exemptions*.⁸¹ Littlejohn states:

To show that something is justified, we have to show that no wrong was committed or that it was done for adequate reason. To show that a subject should be exempted, we’d identify global exculpatory conditions that would preclude us from holding the subject accountable generally. To show that something should be excused (rather than exempted) we’d have to show that there’s some exculpatory factor that removes responsibility even though the subject has the rational capacities that would allow us to hold her responsible for her actions and attitudes (10).

Now going back to Chisholm’s sheep case, if it is categorized as a merely bad case, then S’s cognitive functions would be working appropriately, allowing us to hold the subject responsible for believing that p, but since the objective conditions are bad, there is some factor that would hold the subject less responsible and S’s belief that p would be considered excusable, but not justified according to the above distinction. If Chisholm’s sheep case is categorized as a bad++case, then it is not clear whether S’s belief would really be *excused* considering that S’s cognitive capacities are functioning *improperly* since she forms a true belief involving a non-veridical experience in bad objective conditions. However, setting this concern aside, let’s just assume for the sake of argument that S’s belief in Chisholm’s sheep case is excused. Littlejohn (forthcoming b) states:

What excuses are supposed to do is show that while an agent's response might well have involved a failure to respond to some reason, the subject shouldn't be blamed. It has to do this even though we're acknowledging that her rational capacities were intact and operative. This last part is crucial. The excuse highlights features of the case that show that this subject's response doesn't show an insufficient concern for the reasons that apply to her but it presupposes that her response was something she could be held accountable for (11).

In light of Littlejohn’s position, S’s response to believing that there is a sheep in the field is that she has a reason to believe that there is sheep in the field. In other words, she is not

⁸¹ See Boulton (2017) for a further analysis of this point.

failing to *respond* to a reason for believing that p, but rather, her belief is not justified because it does not meet the norms of belief. Littlejohn (forthcoming b) claims:

...I shall argue that the excellent use of rational capacities is not a guarantee that a subject will meet the standards that apply to her. It doesn't really matter whether the standards that apply to her have internal application conditions or external ones, the subject's excellent use of her rational capacities simply cannot guarantee norm conformity. In the cases where the capacities are used excellently, it would be perverse of us to blame, so we need to offer some sort of defense. Because a norm we recognize as a norm has been violated, we'd have to be muddled to offer a justification. It seems we'll need some non-justificatory defense that affirms the subject's rational capacities and that just is an excuse (16).

So again, in light of Littlejohn's position, one can argue that even if S was exercising her rational capacity correctly in forming the belief that there is a sheep in the field, because her belief did not conform to the norms of belief (it was not exercised in good environmental conditions, S's belief was not justified. Now of course, this is not to say that even if some norms are external, that *this* norm of belief is one of them. I only discuss this to highlight that justification does not simply require exercising one's rational capacity correctly but requires an additional, *externalist condition* (conforming to the norms of belief). Littlejohn's position includes a really high norm of belief similar to the high standard Pritchard sets for justification. Such high standards are of course controversial, given that traditionally, for the internalist, the objective of the New Evil Demon problem is to show that no norms were violated. I discuss this below. As mentioned, Pritchard may be open to the position Littlejohn discusses. It could be that for Pritchard, the difference in rational standing is not only due to exercising one's rational capacity correctly, but also due to an additional, externalist condition in order to meet the requirements for justification. However, the problem as Boulton (2017) argues is that it is still not clear how the subject satisfies such norms of belief. Below

is a passage discussing the brain-in-a-vat (BIV) scenario to show how Pritchard's position faces this problem. Boulton states:

If Pritchard wants to go down the route of Littlejohn and others and claim that justified belief requires compliance with the norm of belief, it seems Pritchard faces another dilemma. On one hand, he can endorse an internalist norm of belief. But in that case it seems unclear why the BIV does not meet the additional criteria for justified belief over excused belief. On the other hand, he can endorse an externalist norm of belief (for example, a norm cashed out in terms of knowledge, or factive reasons). That this latter option is an unpalatable one for [epistemological disjunctivism] ED, however, hardly needs explaining at this point. An externalist norm is traditionally a norm with which agents are not necessarily in a position to know they comply. That is just a standard way of putting the notion of "external" (2017, 11).

The above passage highlights the problem Pritchard's position faces. If Pritchard accepts that the rational standing differs in kind between good+ and bad cases because of an externalist condition, then it is not exactly clear how the subject would have reflective access to the *externalist norm* that plays a role in determining whether the subject's reason is factive or not. Pritchard's standard for justification (one's reason must be *factive*) is too high and cannot be met consistently with his accessibility requirement.

It would seem that Pritchard would have to give up the accessibility condition to accept this account of justification since one would not have access to such norms. However, as noted, Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism requires an accessibility condition. One must have reflective access to one's reasons for believing. If one accepts the internalist conditions for the norm of belief, as mentioned by Boulton, it is not clear why the subject would not be justified in believing that p in both good and bad cases since in both cases, it can be argued that the subject would be exercising her rational capacity correctly and responding to a reason for believing that p.

Since Pritchard's position cannot hold onto externalism together with his accessibility requirement, then it seems we should remove Pritchard's high standard of justification. In the following section, I will show that if we remove Pritchard's high standard of justification, we can see that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism is a version of a traditional undefeated justified true belief view (UJT_B). I will show that the requirements for knowledge that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism holds are the same requirements for knowledge that an UJT_B position holds. More specifically, I will discuss Lehrer and Paxson's requirements on knowledge regarding basic and nonbasic knowledge (an UJT_B position). In doing so, I aim to show that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than the traditional, non-disjunctivist justified true belief view in accounting for perceptual knowledge.

Pritchard's Requirements for Knowledge and Lehrer and Paxson's Requirements for Knowledge

Pritchard's Requirements for Knowledge

In order to understand Pritchard's requirements for knowledge, I will restate Pritchard's notion of a good+ case. In a good+ case:⁸²

1. S veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions (one's cognitive faculties are functioning properly and the environmental conditions are non-deceptive).
2. There are no (subjective) undefeated defeaters present.
3. Seeing that p provides a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p.
4. S believes that p and the belief is true.

⁸² Again I am referring to how Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) break down Pritchard's good+ case.

5. S knows that p.

In a good+ case, a subject has reflective access to a factive reason for believing that p. S's belief is true and S knows that p.

Lehrer and Paxson's Requirements for Basic Knowledge and Nonbasic Knowledge

A. Basic Knowledge

I will first discuss Lehrer and Paxson's conditions for *basic* knowledge. Lehrer and Paxson state that the necessary and sufficient conditions for basic knowledge that *h* are: "(i) *h* is true, (ii) S believes that *h*, (iii) S is completely justified in believing that *h*, and (iv) the satisfaction of condition (iii) does not depend on any evidence *p* justifying S in believing that *h*" (1969, 225). According to Lehrer and Paxson, one can know that *h* even if there is no statement or belief that constitutes a reason or evidence that justifies believing it. In this sense, perception can form the basis for believing without providing a reason (a justifying statement) for believing. They state:

It is consistent with our analysis of knowledge to admit that a man knows something even though no statement constitutes evidence that completely justifies his believing it. Philosophers have suggested that certain memory and perceptual beliefs are completely justified in the absence of such evidential statements. We choose to be agnostic with respect to any claim of this sort, but such proposals are not excluded by our analysis (1969, 226)

We can illustrate this by taking a case in which S is looking at a tree and her perceptual faculties are working properly. In such a case, S believes that a tree is present. S's belief is true and S is justified in believing that p on the basis of experiencing the tree. S knows that p. This would meet the requirements for basic knowledge without the need for any justifying statement.

However, I will discuss Lehrer and Paxson's hologram case (1969) to illustrate a tension in their position regarding the requirements for basic knowledge. Lehrer and Paxson originally discuss the hologram case to illustrate that it does not meet the requirements for nonbasic knowledge (discussed in the next sub-section below). But, I discuss this case to illustrate that it seems to meet the requirements for basic knowledge. Hence, illustrating the tension in their position.

Hologram Case: Mr. Promoter has designed a device that can project a hologram of a vase. The device also includes a real vase. Mr. Promoter has made the device so that, when he turns the knob, a hologram of the vase is projected and the real vase is left unseen. Now, let's say Mary walks in the room and supposedly sees the vase, but actually sees the hologram. Mary believes that there is a vase in the box. Mary's belief that there is a vase in the box is justified by perception and her belief is true. Mary has a justified true belief, yet Mary does not know that there is a vase in the box.

So, in this case, Mary believes that there is vase. The belief is true. Mary is completely justified in believing that there is a vase in the box. The justification for Mary's believing that p is provided by perception. The justification at this point can be considered as being independent of any justifying statement. Since Mary cannot phenomenally distinguish between veridically experiencing and non-veridically experience a vase, both a seeing experience or seeming experience provides the basis for believing that p (there is a vase in the box). Experience provides a *basic* grounding condition. In this case, a *particular* perceptual experience provides the basis for believing a *general* (existential) statement that is true. Moreover, according to Lehrer and Paxson, it is not at all by accident that Mary will believe correctly that there is vase in the box since Mr. Promoter has created such a device to induce her belief to do exactly that (1969, 235). Whatever perceptual state the subject is in, it is classified as a state that forms the basis for believing that p. Also, in the hologram case, the

real vase is unseen, so it seems a veridical, perceptual relation between the subject (S) and the real vase is not required for S to be justified by perception in believing that there is vase in the box. So, again, since S cannot phenomenally distinguish between seeing a vase and seeing a hologram, *any justification* S has for believing that there is vase would be the same whether S sees a vase or sees a hologram. Overall though, it seems that all the requirements for basic knowledge that Lehrer and Paxson put forward are met. However, as mentioned, Lehrer and Paxson argue that the hologram case illustrates that the requirements for nonbasic knowledge (discussed below) are not met. If the hologram case can be viewed as a basic knowledge case, then how is it inconsistent with a nonbasic knowledge case? Maybe Lehrer and Paxson would claim that the hologram case does not meet the requirements for basic knowledge as well, but given how the case is presented, this is unclear.

B. *Nonbasic Knowledge*

Lehrer and Paxson discuss the necessary and sufficient conditions for nonbasic knowledge. They claim that, “S has nonbasic knowledge that *h* if and only if (i) *h* is true, (ii) S believes that *h*, and (iii) there is some statement *p* that completely justifies S in believing that *h* and no other statement defeats this justification” (1969, 227). In other words, according to Lehrer and Paxson, “Nonbasic knowledge is undefeated justified true belief” (1969, 225). In the hologram case, Mary does not know that there is a vase in the box since in this case, the requirements for nonbasic knowledge are not met. For one, Mary does not have *undefeated* justification for believing that there is a vase in the box. Lehrer and Paxson’s notion of a defeater is that a defeater is a true statement which when conjoined to the statement that justifies S in believing that *p*, no longer justifies S’s belief that *p*.⁸³ In this

⁸³ See Lehrer and Paxson (1969, 231) for a complete account of defeasibility.

case, the defeater is that Mary does not see a vase, but actually sees a hologram. If Mary were aware of this defeater, then Mary would not correctly infer that there is a vase in the box. Therefore, Mary does not have an undefeated justified true belief. Lehrer and Paxson claim that when it comes to nonbasic knowledge, there must be some statement that ‘completely justifies’ S in believing that there is a vase in the box. They state, “For any justification that I have for believing that there is vase in the box is defeated by the fact that I do not see a vase” (1969, 235). Lehrer and Paxson do not clearly indicate what statement completely justifies S in believing that there is a vase in the box, but for our purposes, we can propose that the justifier in this case could be something like, “I see a vase in the box.” If the defeater were joined with this statement, then S would not know that there is a vase in the box. We can see that S’s reason, “I see a vase in the box” is actually a fallible reason since it is compatible with the falsity of the belief (S’s belief is false given she sees a hologram). This point is analogous to Cohen and Lehrer’s (1983) and Cohen’s (1984) new evil demon scenario. In such a case, the subject in the good case and the subject in the new evil demon case have the same justification for believing that p since they have access to the same reason for their belief that p. If we interpret Lehrer and Paxson’s position this way, then their position differs from Pritchard’s position when it comes to what counts as justification. Again, Pritchard has a high standard for justification, and he would argue that in the new evil demon case, one does not have access to a factive reason for believing that p. Only in the good+ case, one has a factive reason, “I see that there is vase in the box.” In the bad case, the subject would have a non-factive reason and would be blameless, but not justified in believing that p. Although Pritchard and Lehrer and Paxson may disagree about what counts as justification, as discussed earlier, it seems that Pritchard’s distinction between justification

and blamelessness is not clearly determined. In light of that, Pritchard's view is not very different from Lehrer and Paxson's view. In the following section, I will show that they have a more basic agreement on the requirements for knowing. Lehrer and Paxson claim that S does not know that there is a vase in the box because S does not have an undefeated justified true belief. So overall, for nonbasic knowledge, S must have undefeated justification for believing that p, S must believe that p, and p must be true.

Below is a comparison of Pritchard's requirements for knowledge and Lehrer and Paxson's requirements for knowledge:

1. *Pritchard*: S sees that p—S veridically experiences an object in good objective conditions.

Lehrer and Paxson: Seeing that p is a justifying statement and there is no objective defeater that if the subject were aware of would defeat her justification.

2. *Pritchard*: Seeing that p provides a factive, reflectively accessible reason for believing that p.

Lehrer and Paxson: Seeing that p completely justifies S in believing that p.

3. *Pritchard*: There are no (subjective) undefeated defeaters present.

Lehrer and Paxson: There is no other statement that S is aware of that defeats her justification.

4. *Pritchard*: S believes that p and the belief is true.

Lehrer and Paxson: S believes that p and the belief is true.

5. *Pritchard*: S knows that p.

Lehrer and Paxson: S knows that p.

In the following section, I will illustrate by example how both Pritchard's view and Lehrer and Paxson's view says that knowledge is justified true belief with no defeaters. The only difference, as noted above, is the notational variant on what counts as a defeater and what constitutes as justification. For Pritchard, having no defeaters entails having good objective conditions and no subjective defeaters and justification requires a high standard.

Pritchard's Epistemological Disjunctivism and UJTB

As we have seen, Pritchard's standard for justification (one's reason must be *factive*) is too high and cannot be met consistently with his accessibility requirement. So, it is not clear how Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism can successfully combine internalist and externalist insights in order to make it the "holy grail in epistemology" (2012a, 1). When we give up the high standard for justification that Pritchard holds, we see that the requirements for knowledge for Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism are the same as the requirements for knowledge of a traditional, non-disjunctivist UJTB position. As mentioned, I will show that both Pritchard's view and Lehrer and Paxson's view says that knowledge is justified true belief with no defeaters. The only difference is the notational variant on what counts as a defeater and what counts as justification. This highlights that since his notion of justification needs a clear definition, that by removing his high standard notion of justification, his view is an UJTB view. And, for Pritchard, having no defeaters entails having good objective conditions and no subjective defeaters. I will illustrate this by giving some examples to show how the requirements for knowledge are the same for Pritchard's and Lehrer and Paxson's position. In light of this concern, I argue that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position than a traditional, non-disjunctivist UJTB position.

Let's consider Pritchard's good+ case and Lehrer and Paxson's nonbasic knowledge case. As mentioned, in a good+ case, S has access to the factive reason for believing that p. For Lehrer and Paxson, S has access to a "statement that completely justifies" S in believing that p and "no other statement defeats this justification" (1969, 227). Now, let's say Mary veridically experiences a lemon on the table in good environmental conditions. Mary's basis for believing that p is the factive reason (seeing that there is a lemon on the table). This reason is reflectively accessible to Mary. For Pritchard this would fulfill one of the requirements for knowledge. And for Lehrer and Paxson, this would also meet one of the requirements for nonbasic knowledge since Mary must have access to a "statement that completely justifies" her in believing that p. For example, such a statement could be "I see that there is a lemon on the table." And, for both Pritchard and Lehrer and Paxson, one more requirement needs to be met. For Pritchard, there must be no subjective defeaters present. Similarly, for Lehrer and Paxson, there must be "no other statement that defeats this justification." Now, we can include these requirements in our example. Let's say Mary veridically experiences a lemon on the table in good environmental conditions and there are no subjective defeaters present. Mary sees that p and this reason is reflectively accessible to Mary. Mary believes that p and Mary's belief is true. Now, our example seems to meet all the requirements for knowledge for Pritchard. And, our example meets all the requirements for a nonbasic knowledge according to Lehrer and Paxson since there is no other statement that defeats Mary's justification.

To further illustrate that the requirements for knowledge are the same, let's take a look at another example. Let's say Mary veridically experiences a lemon on the table in good environmental conditions, but a reliable informant tells Mary the lemon is a fake. Let's see

what requirements for knowledge are met according to Pritchard. In this case, the basic grounding condition (S veridically experiences a lemon on the table and sees that there is a lemon on the table) is met. But, there is a subjective defeater. So, this case does not meet all the requirements for knowledge. Since there is a subjective defeater, S does not have access to the factive reason—seeing that p. Would this case meet all the requirements for knowledge according to Lehrer and Paxson? No. Let's say for Lehrer and Paxson, S's reason for believing that p is the statement, "I see that there is a lemon on the table" (here 'see' is used non-factively). This reason is reflectively accessible. However, Lehrer and Paxson would argue that it does not meet all the requirements for nonbasic knowledge since there is a defeater present. In this case, the statement that defeats S's justification is that the lemon is a fake. Therefore, S does not have undefeated justification for believing that p.

Let's take a look at one final scenario. Let's say Mary hallucinates a lemon on the table but there also happens to be lemon on the table. Mary believes that there is lemon on the table. Mary's belief is true. This case is similar to Chisholm's sheep case. So, according to Pritchard, Mary would not see that there is lemon on the table in this case because the objective conditions are bad (and of course, as discussed earlier, similar to Chisholm's sheep case, it is not simply that the objective conditions are bad, but that Mary does not veridically perceive the lemon). Mary does not have access to a factive reason. Similarly, in light of Lehrer and Paxson's position, this case would not meet the requirements for nonbasic knowledge. Again, there is an "objective" defeater present. But also, she's not really seeing the lemon. The defeater would be that Mary does not see the lemon and if Mary were aware of this defeater, then Mary would not have an undefeated justified true belief. The only difference is that for Pritchard, the objective conditions are bad due to environmental

conditions being bad (and Mary not veridically perceiving the lemon), rather than Mary being aware of a subjective defeater (that Mary does not see the lemon). However, this is not a significant difference. Why? Well, if we take a closer look at the conditions for knowing, then one can argue that in light of Lehrer and Paxson's position, the "objective conditions" could also be considered bad in this case. How? Well, the defeater itself makes the conditions "objectively" bad—the defeater is an "objective" defeater—that *if* Mary were aware of would defeat her justification.

The above cases simply illustrate that the requirements for knowledge are the same for both Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism and Lehrer and Paxson's UJT view. The only difference is the notational variants on what counts as "bad objective conditions." Recall that Lehrer and Paxson's definition of a defeater is a true statement which when conjoined to the statement that justifies S in believing that p, no longer justifies S's belief that p. But, as we have seen, this definition is compatible with Pritchard's notion of bad objective conditions. The defeater could be considered as an "objective" defeater and if S were aware of it, S's belief that p would no longer be justified. S would not have undefeated justification for believing that p.

The above examples were given simply to illustrate that Pritchard's view and Lehrer and Paxson's view says that knowledge is justified true belief with no defeaters. The only difference is the notational variant on what counts as a defeater and again, for Pritchard, having no defeaters entails having good objective conditions and no subjective defeaters. For Lehrer and Paxson it is simply having an undefeated justified true belief.

In the last section, I will discuss a motivation for Pritchard to remove the accessibility condition. If Pritchard removes the accessibility requirement, then his position is open to

being considered a knowledge-first position. However, since a knowledge-first position says that belief is justified by knowledge and justification itself requires truth, this would be unlike the UJT position. Although I will not discuss this in greater detail in the last section, in the addendum chapter, I will discuss the motivation for knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivism.

Epistemological Disjunctivism and Knowledge-First Epistemology

As we saw, once we remove the high standard for justification, the requirements for knowledge for Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism and UJT position are the same. In this section, I briefly discuss a motivation for removing the accessibility condition. As discussed in the previous chapter, one problem with Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism is the accessibility condition (one can know one's reason for believing through reflection alone). For instance, we can simply accept seeing that *p* is a mental state in its own right without positing an accessibility condition. Also, as we have already seen, such an accessibility condition does not help when it comes to reflectively distinguishing between good+ cases and bad cases since one cannot know by reflection alone that when one is in a bad state that one is not in a good state.

In order to see how the accessibility condition is problematic, let's take a look at another example. Suppose Mary veridically experiences a yellow lemon on the table in good environmental conditions. Mary believes there is a lemon on the table on the basis of her experiencing a lemon on the table. The belief is true. In such a case, perception provides a basic grounding condition. In addition, let's say the subjective and objective conditions are good. Mary believes that *p* and Mary's belief is true. Let's call this case a *basic good case*. In a basic good case, the subject sees that *p*, but seeing that *p* could just be taken as a mental

state in its own right without an accessibility condition (there would be no need for having access to any reason for believing that p). Now, one can ask whether such a basic good case is the same as Pritchard's good+ case discussed earlier? Well, recall that for Pritchard, in a good+ case, one must have reflective access to a factive reason (one sees that p) for believing that p. Now, in a basic good case, one does see that p, but seeing that p again, would be taken as a mental state in its own right without an accessibility condition. If it were a good+ case, then seeing that p would be a reflectively accessible reason for believing that p, and so seeing that p would serve as a justifying statement and S would believe that she sees that p. In order to know that p, S would have to have reflective access to this reason. However, when comparing the two cases, there is no reason to think that a basic good case is not compatible with a good+ case. If seeing that p is taken to be a mental state in its own right, then it is not clear why an accessibility condition is needed.

So, suppose instead that Pritchard's position removes the accessibility requirement. If Pritchard gives up the accessibility condition, then the high norms for belief (the *externalist* norms of belief) would hold without requiring that the subject have access to them. Seeing that p could be considered as a way of knowing that p. Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism can be viewed to be more like a knowledge-first position.⁸⁴ For knowledge-firsters, knowledge is more basic than justified belief. A knowledge-first position claims that 'knowledge' is an 'unanalyzable' mental state and one can use this knowledge as a basis to justify a belief. Notice though that if we accept a knowledge-first version of epistemological

⁸⁴ See again Williamson (2000).

disjunctivism, then the view is arguably distinct from the UJT_B view, since in an UJT_B view, seeing that p is reason for believing that p and knowing that p.⁸⁵

In this chapter, my aim was to show that when taking a closer look at the requirements for knowledge for Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, we find that they are the same as a traditional non-disjunctivist UJT_B position. What this analysis indicates is that Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism does not provide a better position to account for perceptual knowledge than a traditional, non-disjunctivist UJT_B position. Pritchard's position does not successfully combine internalist and externalist insights in order to make it the "holy grail in epistemology."

Moreover, I briefly discuss a motivation for removing the accessibility condition in order to consider a knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivism. In recent literature, there has been a greater interest in understanding knowledge-first epistemology. More specifically, Millar (2010) has argued for a knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivist position. In the addendum, I explore the relative merits for knowledge-first epistemological disjunctivism and knowledge-first virtue epistemology position.

⁸⁵ See Williamson (2000) for how the accessibility condition is compatible with knowledge states similar to belief states. See Smith (2017) for reasons to deny that knowledge is like belief in terms of first-person accessibility.

Addendum and Final Reflections:

Knowledge-First Epistemological Disjunctivism vs. Knowledge-First Virtue

Epistemology

Introduction

In the last chapter, we saw that Pritchard's standard for justification (one's reason must be *factive*) is too high and cannot be met consistently with his accessibility requirement. Also, previously, we saw that Pritchard's accessibility condition does not help when it comes to reflectively distinguishing between good+ cases and other cases since one cannot know by reflection alone that when one is in a bad state that one is not in a good state. In light of these concerns, I recommended that Pritchard's position could remove the problematic accessibility condition. For instance, we can simply accept seeing that *p* is a mental state in its own right without positing an accessibility condition.⁸⁶ In a recent article, Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) motivate a turn to Millar's Knowledge-First Epistemological Disjunctivism (KFED) to resolve some of the problems Pritchard's position faces. Moreover, Kelp and Ghijzen discuss some problems that KFED also faces. Although Kelp and Ghijzen agree that we often justify our perceptual beliefs by appealing to *factive* reasons, they do not support a disjunctivist position. Rather, they argue for a Knowledge-First Virtue Epistemology (KFVE) position. In this addendum, I will briefly discuss Millar's KFED. Moreover, I will discuss Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE and focus on how KFVE offers a better account of justification than Millar's KFED. But, ultimately, I argue that Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE faces other potential problems when it comes to their notion of abilities and justification.

⁸⁶ See Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) that Pritchard's position can be viewed as a mental state in its own right if the accessibility condition is removed.

Millar's Knowledge-First Epistemological Disjunctivism (KFED)

Millar's KFED argues for a knowing capacity—a perceptual-recognitional ability (PRA). When a perceptual-recognitional ability is exercised, it gives one knowledge. One can use this knowledge as a basis to justify a belief. For knowledge-firsters, knowledge is more basic than justified belief. Millar's position builds on Williamson's claim that knowledge is evidence (K=E).⁸⁷ According to Millar, PRAs are ways of telling that things are so from their appearances. The appearances must be distinctive in the sense that in one's environment there could not have easily been something that has the same appearance but is not that thing. Therefore, such abilities are environment-dependent. According to Millar, to know that p, is to have “mastered” certain ways of telling. For example, here is Millar on what it is to know that there are tomatoes in the basket:

The answer...draws on the idea that to possess the recognitional abilities in question is to have mastered certain ways of telling. These ways of telling have to do with telling, which is coming to know, of certain things one sees, from the way they look, that they are of such-and-such a kind or have such-and-such properties. In this case I have a way of telling of the tomatoes that they are tomatoes and telling of certain other things that they are baskets, and telling of things in baskets that the former are in the latter. The upshot is that in exercising the relevant recognitional abilities I both see that there are tomatoes in the basket and thereby tell that there are and so know that there are. Indeed, seeing-that is just a mode of knowing-that (2011, 334).

For Millar, seeing that p is a way of knowing that p. As we have seen in the previous chapters, this is unlike Pritchard's position (2012a), since for Pritchard, one can see that p without believing that p. And, since knowing that p entails believing that p, seeing that p comes apart from knowing that p for Pritchard. However, in the last chapter, I suggested that if we remove the accessibility requirement, then Pritchard's position can be viewed to be

⁸⁷ Again see Williamson (2000). Williamson argues that 'knows' is not analyzable and knowledge has not been successfully factored into a mental state (belief) and a non-mental state (truth). Rather, knowledge can be viewed as conceptually basic and maybe even as a kind of mental state in its own right.

more like a knowledge-first position. For comparison, we can see if McDowell's position can be viewed as a knowledge-first position. Recall that in Chapter 1, we found that it is not clear if and how McDowell can hold the position that seeing that *p* can come apart from knowing that *p*. However, below is a passage that seems to indicate that for McDowell, they can come apart:

The difference between seeing that *P* and visually acquiring the belief that *P* can be brought out by noting that one can realize later that one was seeing that *P*, though one did not know it at the time and so did not at the time acquire the belief that *P*. "I thought I was looking at your sweater under a kind of illumination that makes it impossible to tell what colours things are, so I thought it merely looked brown to me, but I now realize I was actually seeing that it was brown." In saying something on these lines, one registers that one had, at the relevant past time, an entitlement that one did not then realize one had. One was in a position to acquire a bit of knowledge about the world, but because of a misapprehension about the circumstances, one did not avail oneself of the opportunity. One did not form the relevant belief, let alone get to know that that was how things were" (2003, 680-681).

Despite what McDowell claims in the above passage, in Chapter 1, we saw that according to McDowell's view, only a seeing experience puts one in a position to know that *p*. The above case is not such a seeing experience. So, in light of McDowell's actual commitments, what McDowell's view *should* be, is that, *S* is not in a position to know *at all* in the case above, since *S*'s experience is not a relevant seeing experience. I discuss this tension in McDowell's view only to contrast Millar's KFED with McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism.

Although this is a significant and important difference, maybe McDowell's position is open to a version of a knowledge-first position. However, I will not explore this in this addendum.

To illustrate how seeing that *p* is connected to knowing that *p* according to Millar, we can refer to environmental luck cases. Millar claims that in environmental luck cases, such as the case where *S* [Barney] sees a barn in fake barn country, *S* lacks the relevant perceptual-

recognitional ability to know that p. And, since S does not know that p, S does not see that p.

Regarding Millar's position (2010), Kelp and Ghijssen state:

Perceptual-recognitional abilities are thus environment-dependent. This accords with the intuition that Barney cannot know that there is a barn in front of him when he is looking at one of the few real barns in fake barn county. In such a scenario, there are too many fake look-a-likes around that make the appearance of the real barn no longer distinctive of a real barn. Millar even goes as far as to claim that Barney, when in fake barn county, does not just fail to exercise the requisite perceptual-recognitional ability, but even lacks this ability altogether (2016, 10).

In addition, as Kelp and Ghijssen indicate, according to Millar, the distinctive appearances of an object do not serve as “*evidence* on the basis of which one concludes that something is an F” (2016, 11). In this sense, seeing that p does not require an ability to recognize the precise features of an object in order to recognize the object as the object it is. In light of this point, they claim that Millar's position can help explain ‘animal knowledge,’ since one does not need to have reflective access to one's evidence—for instance, to have reflective access to reasons for stating what exact features of the object contributed to recognizing the object and determining how they have such knowledge.⁸⁸ Kelp and Ghijssen discuss the chicken-sexer case to show how Millar's PRA can account for animal knowledge. The chicken-sexer can recognize the sex of the chicken and know the sex of the chicken without knowing how he came to know. A subject is capable of perceptual knowledge without thinking in terms of appearances (2016, 12). So, as Kelp and Ghijssen point out, for Millar's position, animals, young humans, and chicken-sexers can have perceptual knowledge. What makes Millar's position an epistemological disjunctivist position is that, only in the good case, can a

⁸⁸ See Kelp and Ghijssen (2016) for a further explanation of how Millar's position compares with Pritchard's position when it comes to accounting for animal knowledge. See Sosa (2007) for an account for the distinction between animal knowledge and reflective knowledge. Animal knowledge is often contrasted with reflective knowledge, in that it is an externalist position in which one can have knowledge without having reflective access to reasons for their beliefs. Reflective knowledge requires some form of internalist requirement in that one must be able to have reflective access to one's reasons for believing.

cognitively sophisticated believer have *justification*, since justification has to do with having accessible reasons for one's belief. Therefore only cognitively sophisticated believers are capable of knowing that they see that p. In such cases, they have access to the factive reason, seeing that p, by exercising their higher-order recognitional capacities (2010, 181-2).

The Problem with KFED

If one's PRA is exercised successfully, then one knows that p—and since this does not require having access to reasons for believing, as stated earlier, Millar's position can account for animal knowledge. However, Millar's KFED faces a problem according to Kelp and Ghijzen (2016, 11-16). Recall that Millar's position is an epistemological disjunctivist position, but unlike Pritchard, Millar does not think that knowledge requires being in possession of a factive reason for believing that p. However, Millar would agree with Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivist position, that in epistemic good cases (good+ cases—according to Pritchard) one does have justification for believing that p based on having access to a factive reason. So like the epistemological disjunctivist, Millar's notion of justification consists in having reasons for believing that p and in a good case, such a reason is a factive reason (seeing that p). Millar claims that in a good case, one recognizes that one sees that p and knows that one sees that p because of the exercises of one's higher-order recognitional ability.

The problem with Millar's notion of justification is that since animals and other “unsophisticated believers” do not have access to reasons for believing, they are “never justified in their beliefs that p even if they do know that p” (2016, 14). As Kelp and Ghijzen point out, how can an animal, young human or the chicken-sexer have perceptual knowledge

that p without having “justification” for one’s visual perceptual beliefs? Kelp and Ghijsen state:

Although KFED can accommodate the possibility of animal knowledge, it cannot accommodate what one might call ‘animal justification’ for visual perceptual beliefs. Such justification requires that a subject be able to access the fact that he sees that p , which requires a higher-order recognitional ability (2016, 14).

But, given the above passage, couldn’t one just ask: Does animal knowledge really need justification? Well, to illustrate a potential concern, Kelp and Ghijsen discuss the chicken-sexer case again. They state:

Although the chicken-sexer knows, e.g., that the chick is female because of his perceptual-recognitional ability, he is not in a position to access the relevant factive reason for his belief, thanks to his false beliefs about how he knows. KFED would have the consequence that the chicken-sexer in this scenario knows that the chick is female even though he does not justifiably believe that the chick is female. And this certainly appears to be an odd result (2016, 14).

Now, maybe this example may not motivate one to accept that animal knowledge needs justification, but this scenario at least indicates a tension in Millar’s position.

In addition, Kelp and Ghijsen discuss that for Millar, in Gettier cases, one would have “weak justification” for believing that p . For instance, if Barney sees a barn in fake barn country, then Barney has weak justification for believing there is a barn and therefore Barney is “blameless” in his belief (2016, 16). The source of weak justification—a mere appearance—cannot be exercises of PRA, because genuine exercises of PRA are factive. Millar presents it as though there are two abilities, a PRA which always has successful exercises and some other ability that is like an ability to perceive but isn’t a PRA. However, Kelp and Ghijsen argue that Millar fails to capture an important distinction in his notion of weak justification. To illustrate this, Kelp and Ghijsen discuss a case in which a subject who belongs to an isolated community comes to have a superstitious belief (2016, 16). This belief

is a common belief shared by the community. Since it is shared by the community, it would be reasonable for the subject to have the belief and the subject would be blameless in his belief. In other words, the subject is not doing something wrong in having a superstitious belief, however, the subject's belief is not connected to truth. On the other hand, in the fake barn case, Barney is doing something *epistemically right* in believing that there is a barn (2016, 16). Therefore, there is a distinction in the two cases, yet both cases are equally characterized as weak justification according to Millar's position. Notice that this concern is similar to one discussed in the previous chapter that Pritchard faces. Recall that for Pritchard, justification requires a high standard and that his notion does not clearly determine the distinction between justification and blamelessness.

Kelp and Ghijzen raise some important concerns regarding Millar's position. However, they do agree with the disjunctivist that we often justify our perceptual beliefs by appealing to factive reasons. In doing so, they do not hold a disjunctivist position, but rather, they argue for a Knowledge-First Virtue Epistemology (KFVE) position. In the following section, I will discuss Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE and focus on how KFVE offers a better account of justification than Millar's KFED. But, ultimately, I argue that Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE faces other potential problems when it comes to their notion of abilities and justification.

Kelp and Ghijzen's Knowledge-First Virtue Epistemology

Unlike Millar, Kelp and Ghijzen argue that animals and young children are *justified* in believing since they are exercising an ability to know. Kelp (2017) and Kelp and Ghijzen (2016) argue for KFVE in which knowledge implies an ability condition:

One knows that p only if one believes p via the exercise of an ability to know in favourable SI (2016, 21).

If they exercise this ability in favorable situational conditions (SI), then they know that p . In addition, they provide a distinction between (epistemic) e-justification and (discursive) d-justification. They state:

...e-justification is the kind necessary for knowledge and d-justification the kind required to be in a position to properly justify one's belief (2016, 17).

In regard to e-justification, they state:

...one e-justifiably believes that p if and only if one believes that p via the exercise of an ability to know. In other words, the idea is that knowledge requires belief from ability to know in favourable situational conditions and e-justified belief is belief from ability to know, no matter whether situational conditions are favourable or not (2016, 21).

So going back to the case of animals, young humans, and chicken-sexers, they argue that they would have knowledge that p by exercising an ability to know in favorable conditions. In addition, according to Kelp and Ghijssen, in the fake barn case, S exercises her *ability to know* and so S is e-justified in her belief that there is a barn, however, S does not know that there is a barn because the conditions are not favorable. This indicates two things: one, that for Kelp and Ghijssen, e-justification is due to exercising a perceptual-recognitional ability that is linked to an ability to know. Such abilities must be exercised in favorable conditions in order to have perceptual knowledge. Two, the *exercising* of one's ability to know is not a success notion. That means that one can still exercise one's ability to know even if the conditions are not favorable. This is what makes their position different from Millar's. For Millar, the exercise of a perceptual-recognitional ability entails that the exercise is successful. The basic difference is that Millar individuates one's perceptual-recognitional ability by success in favorable conditions and Kelp and Ghijssen individuate the ability without regard

to favorable conditions. I agree with Kelp and Ghijssen since their position does not require such a high standard when it comes to the individuation of perceptual-recognitional abilities. For example, their account provides a better explanation for understanding fake-barn cases in the literature and perceptual error that could be the result of external conditions changing. The exercise of perceptual-recognitional ability can fail to be successful. Although I will not discuss this concern in this addendum, it is important to determine how perceptual-recognitional capacities get individuated since they play a significant role for perceptual knowledge.

Kelp and Ghijssen claim that epistemological disjunctivism does not work as an account of e-justification since according to Millar's KFED and Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, justification requires having access to factive reasons for believing. I agree that Kelp and Ghijssen correctly identify that epistemological disjunctivism does not work with e-justification. As we have seen in the previous chapters and with Millar's KFED, the accessibility condition is problematic. Although Kelp and Ghijssen think d-justification is also a problem for the disjunctivist, they offer an alternative to understanding d-justification in which perceptual beliefs are d-justified by factive reasons of the form *I see that p*. In the following section, I will argue that the alternative solution Kelp and Ghijssen offer for justification is also problematic.

The Problem with Kelp and Ghijssen's Notion of d-justification

Kelp and Ghijssen state:

Suppose I see that *p* and consequently perceptually know that *p*. In order to have d-justification for *p*, I must be in a position to justify my belief that *p* and that, in turn, requires me to possess and be able to access a reason for *p*. The reason is of course the factive reason of seeing that *p* and access is analysed in terms of the exercise of an ability to know. More specifically, when called upon to justify my perceptual belief

that p , I exercise my higher-order recognitional ability and thus access a reason for believing that p , to wit, that I see that p . I am then free to justify my belief that p by appealing to my reason for p , viz. that I see that p (2016, 17).

Kelp and Ghijsen agree with Millar that in the good case, d-justification is not a problem.

According to Millar one can have d-justification if one knows that p . However, Kelp and Ghijsen claim that d-justification is a problem for Millar regarding cases where Barney sees a barn in fake barn country since in this case, it is highly plausible that Barney could be both e-justified and d-justified.

To resolve this point, Kelp and Ghijsen argue that exercising one's ability to know is not a success notion and so they provide a way in which one can accommodate d-justification for one's belief even if one's belief falls short of knowledge. They state:

Suppose I have an e-justified perceptual belief that p . To move straight to the problem cases, suppose my belief falls short of knowledge that p (because I am gettiered or else my belief is false). Suppose I am called upon to justify my belief. Just as in the good case, I exercise a higher-order recognitional ability, which outputs a belief that I see that p . Of course, since I do not know that p , my belief that I see that p is false and hence does not qualify as knowledge. Even so, I acquire it in exactly the same way in which, in more favourable SI, I come to know that I see that p . By the above account of exercises of abilities, I acquire my belief via the exercise of an ability to know. Moreover, since my belief that I see that p is produced via the exercise of an ability to know, by the above account of e-justified belief, my belief that I see that p is e-justified. Again, I am free to justify my belief that p by appealing to my reason for p , viz. that I see that p (2016, 22).

I think Kelp and Ghijsen seem to be equivocating the notion of what a higher-order ability is capable of doing in this case. Let me explain. Let's say Barney is e-justified in believing that there is a barn. Now what prevents Barney from knowing that there is a barn in this case is not that Barney's belief is false, but that Barney does not exercise his ability to know in favorable conditions. Favorable *external* conditions are necessary for Barney to perceptually know that there is a barn. Now, if Barney is asked to d-justify his belief that there is a barn,

he will exercise his higher-order recognitional ability. In exercising this ability, he has access to a reason for believing that there is a barn. In a good case, this reason would be the factive reason, seeing that p, and Barney would know that he sees that p since he has access to this factive reason. In the fake barn case, Barney does not know that he sees that p, but he does come to e-justifiably believe that he sees that p. *Since Barney does not know that p, Kelp and Ghijsen claim that his belief that he sees that p is false.* There are two concerns that I wanted to discuss:

1. Kelp and Ghijsen could accept Millar's notion that if Barney does not know that p, then Barney does not see that p. In this case, Barney would not exercise his PRA and therefore would lack the perceptual state, seeing that p, altogether. Since Barney lacks the perceptual state, seeing that p, then Kelp and Ghijsen are correct in stating that his belief that he sees that p is false. But, Barney does exercise his ability to know and would be in some kind of perceptual state since he e-justifiably believes that he sees that p. What kind of perceptual state would this be?

2. According to Kelp and Ghijsen's position, Barney is e-justified in believing that he sees that p even if his belief that he sees that p is false. But, maybe there is another way to understand this analysis. One could argue that Barney is e-justified in believing that he sees that p, but Barney does not know that he sees that p since the internal conditions are not favorable. So, here is what I argue is another option for their position. In exercising his higher-order ability, Barney does not know that he sees that there is barn because he is in a *seeing a barn state* and not in a *seeing that there is barn state*. So, yes, Barney's belief that he sees that there is barn is false (in light of the fact that their position is *close* to Millar's

position⁸⁹), but Barney does not know that he sees that there is barn because he exercises his higher-order ability in unfavorable internal conditions. Maybe one can claim that seeing a barn in unfavorable internal conditions could be considered a seeming to see that *p* state, but even so, the point is that Barney is unable to distinguish this seeming to see that *p* state (seeing a barn state) from a seeing that *p* state (hence the unfavorable internal conditions). Now if one actually sees that *p* (one sees a barn in good objective conditions), then according to Kelp and Ghijzen, one would know that one sees that *p* since one's higher-order ability would be exercised in internally favorable conditions. *So in light of their position, being in a seeing that p state would suffice for having internally favorable conditions.*

If we take into consideration the above option I argue for, then Kelp and Ghijzen's account of one's abilities is problematic—a problem when it comes to cases with subjective defeaters. According to Kelp and Ghijzen, Barney knows that there is barn if Barney believes that there is barn via the exercise of an ability to know in favorable conditions. If asked to justify his belief, Barney would exercise his higher-order ability in internally favorable conditions and know that he sees that there is barn. As mentioned above, being in a seeing that *p* state would suffice for having internally favorable conditions. Now let's say later, a reliable informant tells Barney that Barney is in fake barn country (yet this claim is false). Here I think is the problem. In responding to Pritchard's hyper-intellectualization concern, Kelp and Ghijzen state:

After all, it is plausible that even unsophisticated agents can and often do see that *p*. If so, it is also plausible that they can have perceptual knowledge that *p* in virtue of seeing that *p* (2016, 6).

⁸⁹ See Kelp and Ghijzen 2016, 19, footnote 12.

In addition they state:

Millar's KFED has some clear advantages over Pritchard's JTBED [Justified True Belief Epistemological Disjunctivism]. First of all, KFED does not face the problem of hyper-intellectualization with regard to perceptual knowledge. Animals and small children can also exercise perceptual-recognitional abilities in part because this does not involve basing on beliefs on reflective accessible reasons. This means that it is possible for cognitively unsophisticated believers to see that, and thereby know that, such-and-such is the case (2016, 13).

Animals and small children would not have access to subjective defeaters, so in order for them to be in a seeing that p state, they would only have to see a barn in good external conditions. For animals and small children, since they are not aware of subjective defeaters, seeing that p would suffice for internally favorable conditions. They would see that p and therefore know that p. The problem, I think, is that for a cognitively sophisticated believer, in the subjective defeater case above, since there are unfavorable internal conditions, one would not be in a seeing that p state. In this case, it would seem that Barney would no longer even be e-justified in believing that he sees that p since there is an undefeated defeater present. Moreover, Barney is not in a position to properly d-justify his belief. So, if there are defeaters present, the exercise of one's ability to know would have to include an ability to exclude potential defeaters or it would have to include an ability to distinguish between a seeing that p state and a seeming to see that p state in order to have an e-justified belief that one sees that p and properly d-justify one's belief that one sees that p. When taking these concerns into account, it is not clear what Kelp and Ghijzen's higher-order ability is an ability to do.

According to Kelp and Ghijzen, normally, an exercise of an ability to know in favorable external conditions is sufficient for seeing that p, which, in turn, as we saw, suffices for having internally favorable conditions. Yet, when there are defeaters present,

then a cognitively unsophisticated believer would know that *p*, since all that is needed is a *basic* exercise of one's ability to know. On the other hand, for cognitively sophisticated believers, the *basic* exercise of an ability to know is not sufficient for seeing that *p*. The concern that remains is whether Kelp and Ghijzen can consistently hold the view of what a *basic* exercise of an ability to know is and what this other exercise is, since what counts as a sufficient exercise for seeing that *p* in defeater cases requires more than a basic exercise of an ability to know. In order to maintain their position, either they would have to account for a difference in the *exercises* of an ability to know or indicate how having unfavorable internal conditions plays a role in the exercises of an ability to know for cognitively sophisticated believers and why the same conditions do not play a role for a basic exercise of an ability to know.

Conclusion

As shown above, Kelp and Ghijzen's KFVE runs into a problem when determining what is sufficient for an exercise of an ability to know. On the other hand, their position does resolve the problem of justification that the various epistemological disjunctivist positions face. In this addendum, I did not focus on some important similarities and differences between MNRD, Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism, Millar's KFED and the non-disjunctivist KFVE position. I think there is an opportunity for future research regarding these various positions in how best to account for perceptual knowledge. For instance one area could be to understand how KFVE does not face the same concerns as Millar's KFED and MNRD, since for both Millar and McDowell, individuating perceptual-recognitional abilities may require a high standard. Millar's KFED and MNRD of course differ in the structure of knowledge. McDowell argues that knowledge requires justifying reasons. One's

reason for believing that p is that one sees that p . Millar, on the other hand, argues that knowledge is basic and justifies (other) beliefs—for example, one sees and therefore knows that there's a tree in the quad, which justifies one's belief that at least one tree exists. But as we have seen, having a success notion incorporated in an exercise of a PRA is problematic since it does not account for e-justification. Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism also faces the problem of justification, but Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism differs from both MNRD and Millar's KFED since Pritchard does not argue for perceptual-recognitional abilities or successful exercises of them. Rather, Pritchard thinks that a good case is simply a veridical perception in good conditions with no subjective defeaters.

Final Reflections

When looking at the different versions of disjunctivism, we see the problems that arise. We saw that MNRD does not adequately support epistemological disjunctivism in order to distinguish good cases from bad cases. In his attempt to resolve the problem, McDowell includes additional requirements to account for good cases in which one has conclusive warrants for believing. However, including additional requirements still does not resolve the metaphysical concerns his position faces.

Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism gives a clearer look at the requirements for good cases without assuming metaphysical disjunctivism. But ultimately, his view doesn't seem distinctively disjunctivist. Pritchard's epistemological disjunctivism has similar requirements for knowledge as an UJT view. A good+ case is simply defined as a veridical experience, along with good subjective and objective conditions, and a belief that p . In addition, Pritchard's view has a problematic accessibility requirement and a high standard of justification.

KFED and KFVE seem to be better approaches. But, KFED runs into the problem of accounting for e-justification and KFVE runs into the problem of determining what counts as a sufficient exercise of an ability to know. Since the literature that supports epistemological disjunctivism is not clear on some key points, then it still leaves room to see if there are other non-disjunctivist positions that can account for perceptual knowledge that may not face the problems the various epistemological disjunctivist positions face.

Part of what seems to be going on throughout is that this area of epistemology is very traditional, arm-chair philosophy. It doesn't appear that these philosophers disagree much on what knowledge requires; instead, the disagreement is about how to map it conceptually. There are internalist and externalist requirements, which complicate the question of where one ought to locate the notion of justification and the various levels of rational standing. If one aims to make sense of, e.g. new evil demon problem, within a naïve realist, disjunctivist, or other stance with externalist commitments, one is forced to lower one's rational standing in deception cases and hold one merely blameless. But if one tries to say one has justification in such a case, or in fake barn cases, then one loses distinctive features of Naive Realism, Epistemological Disjunctivism, and externalism. The task, it would seem, with the danger of appearing to engage in hair-splitting minutia, is to create as many distinctions as is necessary to get everything right, especially in understanding the various rational and justificatory standings required to distinguish fake barns from superstition, justification from blamelessness, and various kinds of blamelessness. The purpose of this dissertation was to show that the state-of-the-art work in epistemology reveals conceptual tensions, but ultimately there is value in engaging in such work since it contributes to our aim—which is to obtain a conceptual understanding of the requirements for perceptual knowledge. I also

hope that by revealing conceptual tensions in epistemological disjunctivist positions, we can find motivation and inspiration for further research for alternative, non-disjunctivist views that are supported by psychologically- and empirically- oriented philosophical work in perception in order to account for perceptual knowledge.

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