

1. The internalism-externalism distinction(s)

1.1. Greco's version

Epistemology deals with *normative* and *evaluative* concepts: knowledge, justification, rationality, reasonableness, and responsibly held beliefs are all *better* than their opposites.

Internalism holds that the epistemically normative status of a belief is determined *entirely* by factors that are “*internal*” to the believer’s perspective. There are two dominant notions of “*internal*”:

- *Access internalism*: A factor *F* is internal to *S*’s perspective iff *S* has some privileged access to whether or not *F* obtains.
 - Privileged access typically means that *S* can know whether or not *F* obtains through reflection alone, without any empirical inquiry.
 - *Mentalism*: A factor *F* is internal to *S*’s perspective iff *F* constitutes part of *S*’s mental life.
- Frequently, access internalists are mentalists, since it is widely held that our mental life is the only thing we can know through reflection alone. Many mentalists are not access internalists, however.

Some epistemically normative statuses clearly have an external component, e.g. knowledge requires truth, and truth is not internal. Similarly, when we ask about “objective” epistemic statuses (e.g. accuracy, reliability, objective probability), we are asking about external statuses.

For this reason, Greco characterizes internalism as follows:

(GI) Whether a belief *b* is subjectively appropriate for a person *S* is entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*’s perspective.

- “Generic internalists” hold that there is at least *some* kind of “subjective appropriateness” that satisfies GI and is: (a) interesting in its own right, even if (b) not necessary for knowledge.
- Alternatively, “internalists about justification” hold that a specific kind of subjective appropriateness—*epistemic justification*—satisfies GI but (\sim b) *is* necessary for knowledge, i.e.,

(IJ) Whether a belief *b* is *epistemically justified* for a person *S* is entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*’s perspective.

Externalism is (at least) a denial of EJ: subjective appropriateness/epistemic justification is *not entirely* a matter of factors internal to *S*’s perspective, i.e. it’s partly a matter of external factors.

1.2. Feldman's version

Ultimately, *Feldman's internalism* has three components:

F1. Knowledge requires having *good reasons*.

F2. *Mentalism*: A person’s reasons are her mental states.

F3. *Supervenience*: If two people differ with respect to justification, then they differ with respect to their mental states. (This is the sense in which the internal “determines” the epistemic.)¹

By F1 and F2, Feldman accepts internalism about justification (IJ)², though he thinks that at least three differences between true belief and knowledge are *external* to a person’s perspective:

- *The basing relation*: There is a difference between *having* good reasons for a belief, and *basing* one’s belief on those good reasons. For Feldman:
 - Having good reasons for *p* = justified in believing *p*;
 - Basing one’s belief that *p* on good reasons = having a well-founded belief that *p*.
 - Feldman assumes that well-foundedness is not a purely internal concept.
- *Gettier problems*: As we know, there is a fourth condition on knowledge: the anti-Gettier condition. There is unilateral agreement that this is an external factor.

¹ “Supervenience” claims shows up in a lot of other philosophical debates (e.g. philosophy of mind.) Roughly, A supervenes on B iff any difference in A entails a difference in B. Hence, Feldman claims that facts about justification supervene on facts about mental states.

² This is obscured by terminological differences between Greco and Feldman. Note that when Feldman uses the word “justification” he means “epistemic justification as construed by the internalist.” Hence, he sometimes writes as if externalists deny that knowledge requires justification. This is *merely* terminological.

- *Defeaters*: If a defeater is beyond my perspective (e.g. I'm unaware of it), then it may undercut my *knowledge* in an external way, but I'm still *justified* in believing what I do.

2. Internalism & epistemic responsibility

2.1. *An internalist argument*

- R1. A belief *b* is epistemically justified for a person *S* iff *S*'s believing that *b* is epistemically responsible.
- R2. Epistemic responsibility is entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective.
- IJ. ∴ Whether a belief *b* is epistemically justified for a person *S* is entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective. (R1, R2)
- Greco attacks R2. He also thinks that this suffices to rebut the "like believers" objection (sometimes called the new evil demon problem; also Feldman's supervenience claim, F3.)

2.2. *Greco's 1st Objection*

1. If *S*'s believing *b* is epistemically responsible, then *S* can be blamed or praised for believing *b*.
 2. Blame and praise depend on prior behavior.
 3. Prior behavior (especially negligence) is not entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective.
- ~R2. ∴ Epistemic responsibility is not entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective. (1-3)

2.3. *Greco's 2nd Objection*

1. If *S*'s believing *b* is epistemically responsible, then *S* believes *b* for good reasons.
 2. If *S* believes *b* for good reasons, then those good reasons play a causal role in *S*'s believing that *b*.
 3. The causal role of a reason is not entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective.
- ~R2. ∴ Epistemic responsibility is not entirely a matter of factors that are internal to *S*'s perspective. (1-3)

3. Forgotten evidence

3.1. *Greco's argument*

- G1. Maria (once) knew, in the past, that she was unjustified in believing that Dean Martin is Italian.
- G2. Maria subsequently forms an apparent memory that Dean Martin is Italian.
- G3. If *S* was unjustified in the past in believing that *p*, and subsequently forms an apparent memory that *p*, then *S* is unjustified in the present in believing that *p*.
- G4. Maria is unjustified in the present in believing that Dean Martin is an Italian. (G1-G3)
- G5. If internalism (IJ) is true, then Maria is justified in believing that Dean Martin is an Italian.
- G6. ∴ Internalism (IJ) is false (G4, G5)

3.2. *Feldman's 1st reply*

1. It is reasonable for Maria to take *some* attitude (belief, disbelief, or suspension of belief) toward this proposition (that Dean Martin is Italian).
 2. Maria seems to remember clearly that Dean Martin is Italian, and has no reason to doubt this apparent memory.
 3. If *S* has an apparent memory that *p*, and no reason to doubt that memory, then the only reasonable attitude for *S* to take towards *p* is the belief that *p*.
 4. The only reasonable attitude for Maria = the belief that Dean Martin is Italian. (1-3)
 5. If the only reasonable attitude for *S* to have towards *p* is the belief that *p*, then *S* is justified in believing that *p*.
- ~G4. ∴ Maria *is* justified in the present in believing that Dean Martin is Italian. (4,5)
- G4 is a consequence of G1-G3, and G1 and G2 are uncontroversial. So what's wrong with G3?

3.3. Feldman's 2nd reply

Feldman's Reply: internalists can deny G5: If internalism is true, then Maria, in the past, was unjustified in believing that Dean Martin is Italian. So G1 is internalist-friendly. Internalists needn't deny G`3, since both actual and apparent memories are mental states. So, internalists can accept that Maria is unjustified in the present in believing that Dean Martin is an Italian.

4. Is internalism interesting?

4.1. Greco's argument

1. Suppose that S has a belief b and evidence E . The following are external considerations: (a) whether E is true; (b) whether E is objectively probable; (c) whether E was reliably formed; (d) whether E was responsibly formed; (e) whether E leaves important information out; (f) whether E is a reliable indicator of b 's truth; (g) whether b is objectively probable on E ; and (h) whether S believes b because of E .
2. If a belief is subjectively appropriate but lacks (a)-(h), then it is uninteresting/unimportant.
3. \therefore If a belief b is subjectively appropriate for a person S , and that subjective appropriateness is interesting, then appropriateness is *not* entirely a matter of factors that are internal to S 's perspective. (1,2)
- This isn't quite a rejection of GI, but it's close.

4.2. Feldman's 1st counterexample: consistency

Whether a belief b is *consistent* for a person S is entirely a matter of S 's beliefs. Beliefs are mental states. Consistency is an interesting epistemic status of our beliefs. So, consistency is an interesting internalist epistemic status.

4.3. Feldman's 2nd counterexample: thinking of reasons

Whether a person S can *think* of good reasons to believe b is entirely a matter of what S can think of. Thinking (identifying reasons) is a mental process. The ability to think of good reasons is an interesting epistemic status. So, thinking of good reasons is an interesting internalist epistemic status.

4.4. Feldman's 3rd counterexample: high-grade knowledge

1. If internalism (F1/IJ?) is false, then having good reasons for believing that p is either unnecessary for knowing that p or it is uninteresting.
2. Having good reasons for believing that p is at least necessary for "discursive" or "reflective" or "high-grade" knowledge.
3. These kinds of knowledge are interesting.
4. \therefore Internalism (F1/IJ?) is not false. (1-3)

5. Reasons

5.1. An objection to internalism

- WF1. If S knows that p , then S 's belief that p is well-founded.
 WF2. Well-foundedness is an external epistemic criterion.
 WF3. If S knows that p , then externalism is true. (WF1, WF2)

5.2. Feldman's reply

1. Well-foundedness is a belief based on justifying reasons.
2. Justification is an internal epistemic criterion (remember his terminological choices)
3. So, even if WF1 is true, externalism (**the denial of F1, F2, or F3**) does not follow.

5.3. *Feldman's objection to externalist accounts of reasoning*

1. If externalism is true, then it is possible that: (a) S_1 and S_2 can be identical in their mental states, but (b) only S_1 has a good reason to believe that p because of (c) something beyond both S_1 and S_2 's mental states, e.g. the greater reliability of S_1 's cognitive processes.
2. One of the following must be true: (i) only S_1 is aware of S_1 's greater reliability; (ii) both are unaware; (iii) both are aware; or (iv) only S_2 is aware.
3. If S_1 's cognitive processes are more reliable than S_2 's, and (i) only S_1 is aware of this, then there is a difference in S_1 and S_2 's mental states, and (a) is false; ditto for case (iv).
4. If S_1 's cognitive processes are more reliable than S_2 's, and (ii) both S_1 and S_2 are unaware of this, then S_1 does not have a good reason to believe that p , and (b) is false; ditto for case (iv).
5. If S_1 's cognitive processes are more reliable than S_2 's, and (iii) both S_1 and S_2 are aware of S_1 's greater reliability, then only S_1 has a good reason to believe that p , but not because of something beyond her or S_2 's mental states. So (c) is false.
6. \therefore Externalism is false. (1-5)

6. Replying to skepticism

6.1. *Skepticism vs. externalism*

1. If externalism is true, then S can know that p (where p is about the external world) only if her belief that p is reliably formed—even if she doesn't know that p is reliably formed
 - a. Ex. S believes that the table is flat based on seeing that the table is flat. Her vision is reliable, though she doesn't know that her vision is reliable.
2. If skepticism is adequately refuted, then an epistemological theory must assume that S knows that p only if S knows that her belief that p is reliably formed.
3. \therefore If externalism is true, then skepticism is not adequately refuted. (1,2)

6.2. *Greco's reply*

1. If internalism is true, then S 's belief b is epistemically justified entirely by factors internal to S 's perspective. (IJ)
2. If S 's belief b is epistemically justified entirely by factors internal to S 's perspective, then S can never know whether b was reliably formed.
3. If S can never know whether b was reliably formed, then it is *impossible* for skepticism to be adequately refuted.
4. No adequate epistemological theory should entail that it is impossible for skepticism to be adequately refuted.
5. \therefore Internalism is not an adequate epistemological theory. (1-5)