

Goldman, "What Is Justified Belief?"

1.

Internalism and Externalism about Justification

Internalism: the view about justification according to which all of the factors required for justified belief must be cognitively accessible to—already known or experienced by—the subject and thus internal to her mind.

Externalism: the view about justification according to which some of the factors required for justified belief may be external to the perceiver's cognitive perspective.

2.

Goldman's Externalism: Reliabilism

According to internalism, if you were justified in believing *p*, then all your internal epistemic duplicates would be justified in believing *p*, too. The externalist about justification says that you and your internal epistemic duplicates can differ with respect to what you're justified in believing.

Process Reliabilism: a version of externalism according to which *S* is believing that *p* iff *S*'s belief that *p* is linked to the fact that *p* by a reliable process.

In virtue of what is a process reliable?

A process is reliable insofar as it tends to produce true beliefs.

Examples of reliable processes: perception, remembering, good reasoning, introspection.

Examples of unreliable processes: confused reasoning, wishful thinking, reliance on emotional attachment, mere hunches or guesswork, hasty generalizations.

S does not have to know how her belief is produced.

S does not have to possess evidence that the process leading to her belief is a reliable one.

S is justified in believing that *p* only if her belief was in fact produced by a reliable process.

Individuating processes: We might individuate a process broadly or narrowly. (Can you think of an example?)

How we individuate a process will determine how reliable it is. If we identify a process too narrowly, then it might turn out to be trivially reliable (or unreliable). If we identify it too broadly, reliabilism will be unable to distinguish between justified and unjustified beliefs.

This is known as the generality problem.

3.

An Externalist Account of Justification: Take One

Goldman's initial account of justification goes as follows:

1. All beliefs produced by reliable processes (of the sort that require no beliefs as input) are justified.
2. All beliefs produced by conditionally reliable processes that received beliefs as input which were themselves *justified* are justified.
3. No other beliefs are justified.

Objection: Suppose that *S* enjoys the power of perfectly reliable clairvoyance with respect to the truth of *p*. At any given moment, she can tell whether *p* is currently true. Suppose that *S* has convincing but misleading evidence to the effect that she does not possess

the power and that such a power is impossible. When S comes to believe that p, on the basis of her clairvoyance, intuitively she is not justified in believing p. The reason is that the misleading evidence defeats the reliability of S's clairvoyance as a source of justification. According to this version of reliabilism, however, S's belief that p would be justified because it is reliably produced. (Bernecker, 43)

This objection appeals to the defeasibility of S's belief in this circumstance. That is, S's belief that p is defeated by a further belief about the process that led to her belief that p—i.e., S's further belief about the unreliability of that process undermines her belief that p.

4.

An Externalist Account of Justification: Take Two

Say that a belief B of S's is "undermined" iff S believes that belief B was formed in an unreliable way. Then we have:

1. All beliefs produced by reliable processes (of the sort that require no beliefs as input) are justified, *unless they're undermined*.
2. All beliefs produced by conditionally reliable processes that received beliefs as input which were themselves justified are justified, *unless they're undermined*.
3. No other beliefs are justified.