JUSTIFICATION AND THE TRUTH-CONNECTION

The internalism–externalism debate is one of the oldest debates in epistemology. Internalists assert that the justification of our beliefs can only depend on facts internal to us, while externalists insist that justification can depend on additional, for example environmental, factors. In this book Clayton Littlejohn proposes and defends a new strategy for resolving this debate. Focusing on the connections between practical and theoretical reason, he explores the question of whether the priority of the good to the right (in ethics) might be used to defend an epistemological version of consequentialism, and proceeds to formulate a new “deontological externalist” view. His discussion is rich with insights and will be valuable for a wide range of readers in epistemology, ethics, and practical reason.

Clayton Littlejohn is Lecturer in Philosophy at King’s College London. He has published a number of articles in epistemology and ethical theory in journals including Journal of Philosophy and American Philosophical Quarterly.
Contents

Acknowledgments page vi

1 Introduction 1
2 Epistemic value 62
3 Reasons for belief (I) 89
4 Reasons for belief (II) 121
5 Assertion 157
6 Action 191
7 Justification 223

References 254
Index 265
Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

Ralph Wedgwood, Alistair Welchman, Matt Weiner, Dennis Whitcomb, Daniel Whiting, Eric Wiland, Sarah Wright, and Becky Zavada. Two anonymous referees offered generous amounts of wonderful feedback. Thanks to Larry Lacy and Pat Shade for introducing me to philosophy and encouraging me to pursue graduate work. I am especially grateful to Howard Hewitt, Robert Howell, and Mark van Roojen for philosophical discussion and for their friendship. I would like to thank my editor Hilary Gaskin for her encouragement and guidance. I have (I believe) benefited tremendously from the work of Jonathan Dancy, John Gardner, Judith Thomson, and Timothy Williamson, and it seems appropriate to express my appreciation here.

I would like to thank audiences at Boston University, King’s College London, Southern Methodist University, the University of Edinburgh, and the University of Texas at San Antonio, as well as those who attended my talks at the 2010 Episteme Conference at the University of Edinburgh, the 2010 Royal Ethics Conference at the University of Texas at Austin, the 2010 Pacific Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, the 2010 Central Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, the 2009 Eastern Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, the 2009 Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress at the University of Colorado, the 2008 Eastern Division Meetings of the American Philosophical Association, the 2007 Northwest Philosophy Conference, and the 2006 Conference for the Central States Philosophical Association for helpful feedback.

Sigurdur Gudmundsson has generously agreed to let me use his Study for Horizon for the cover. I cannot think of a more fitting image for a book on epistemic normativity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family (Brianna, Jaimie, Taylor, Roger, Lorraine, and now Sherri, John, Melissa, and Scott) for their love and unflagging support. To Amy, I dedicate this work to you. You are a wonderful mother to our beloved dog Agnes and the best friend I could ever hope to have. Every day I am reminded how incredibly fortunate I am to spend my time with you.