Factivity and Evidence
PATRICK RYSIEW

1. Introduction
The factive turn is, among other things, a repudiation of epistemological theorizing geared towards answering scepticism, such that nothing is assumed that the sceptic wouldn't allow (Williamson 2000). On the latter, more traditional approach to doing epistemology, "explanatory priority [is given] to conditions that are neutral between success and failure" (Williamson 2011, 208). Thus, for example, we arrive at a conception of evidence that involves no essential connection to the truth, truth being that in terms of which epistemic success is understood -- one's evidence, perhaps, consists solely of one's non-factive mental states. By contrast, the factive turn involves "giv[ing] explanatory priority to success" (*ibid.*),[1] and so to understanding things like evidence in terms of truth. On the latter approach, options include regarding evidence as consisting of facts (or true propositions; e.g., Dancy 2002, Littlejohn 2013), of known facts (e.g., Williamson 2000), or of veridical mental states (e.g., Mitova 2015).

The present paper offers a way of thinking about evidence that, like the views just mentioned, includes an important factive element. Unlike the latter theories, however, on the view to be presented here factivity is not built directly into an account of what things can count as evidence. Instead, it enters at one step remove, via a particular functional account of evidence – a particular account of what evidence *does*. Specifically, we begin with the idea that evidence is what makes things evident, where evidentness, or something's being manifestly true, is taken to be a factive notion. It is a further question what sort(s) of things serve this role. But a second salient difference between the present view and those mentioned above is that while the former yields a unified theory of evidence it also encourages ontological pluralism: fundamentally different sorts of things (beliefs, experiences, objectual properties, etc.), some of which are not themselves even truth apt, can function as evidence. This result comports with our ordinary epistemic practices. In addition, the view comfortably accommodates all of the various roles that evidence has been thought to play, even though the apparent tension between them has led some to doubt that single concept of evidence can fit them all (Kelly 2014).

Given that the view in question occupies a kind of middle ground between certain other positions on evidence, it's not surprising that it has come in for criticism from both sides. Thus, Conee and Feldman, who themselves take one's evidence to be comprised solely of various non-factive mental states, have argued that because the account includes truth in something's being evident it cannot accommodate the existence of justified false beliefs. Meanwhile, Mitova has argued that pluralism about evidence might have some rather unappealing consequences – specifically, that it threatens to drive "an insuperable wedge between the *good* reasons there are for believing something and *my* reasons for believing it" (2015, 1125). Whereas, she argues, 'truthy psychologism' – the monistic view that

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[1] Williamson is speaking here of 'knowledge first' epistemology in particular, one notable exemplar of the factive turn.

evidence is propositional, psychological, and factive – has no such result, and does at least as well in accommodating the various roles evidence is thought to play.

The present paper responds to these worries and argues that taking evidentness to be the relevant root notion remains a live and attractive option among current theories of evidence, including those that make other use of factive concepts. The structure is as follows: Section 2 argues that some central arguments for specific forms of monism, including some that take evidence itself to be factive, are not compelling; Section 3 explains how an equally natural way of thinking about the nature or function of evidence, while allowing for ontological pluralism, both incorporates a factive element and yields theoretical unity; Section 4 addresses the objections just described, making it clear that they rest on misunderstandings of the view on offer; Section 5 concludes.

2. Evidence: Varieties, Theories, Roles

As many have noted, on its face ordinary epistemic practice is liberal as to what sorts of things constitute evidence: we speak of beliefs, facts, propositions, experiences, and worldly objects, events, and properties as evidence for various things. Thus: the deceased's wounds provide evidence that the killer was left-handed; my dizziness is evidence that my blood-sugar is low; the look on your face is evidence that you're upset; shadows on the moon are evidence of irregularities in its surface; that your argument appears to me to be sound is evidence that its conclusion is true, which is in turn evidence against your opponent's theory; etc. Apparently, if there is a pretheoretical, default view as to the ontology of evidence, it's pluralism.

But of course it's the job of theorists to find order among seemingly disparate phenomena. And, amongst philosophers interested in evidence, the common response to the variety just noted is that, our apparent pretheoretic commitments notwithstanding, one or another general theoretical consideration shows that some version of monism is in fact correct.

Thus, for example, Williamson argues: "evidence is the kind of thing which hypotheses explain. But the kind of thing which hypotheses explain is propositional. Therefore evidence is propositional" (2000, 195; cf. Dougherty 2011). As Conee and Feldman reply, however, while explanation (of course) typically takes the form of presenting various propositional items, one need not "identify either the explained things, or the explaining things, with the propositions that assert them" (2011, 322; cf. Pryor 2014, 214, and Dougherty and Rysiew 2014, 20).[2]

Another common thought is that only things with propositional content can serve as evidence, since only they can stand in logical and/or probabilistic relations to, and so

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[2] Conee and Feldman (2008, 101-2) say similar things about both probabilistic reasoning and selection among hypotheses, to which Williamson also appeals (2000, 196-7). Pryor (2007) argues, along similar lines, that 'that'-clauses used in stating someone's reason(s) for belief should be understood as serving to *specify* the subject's reason(s), not as designating something that *is* the latter.

justify, a belief in the way that evidence is supposed to do.[3] This assumes that evidential or justificatory support is essentially logical/probabilistic. Such an *argumentational* view of the evidential (/justificatory) relation, whereby it requires support by (propositional) *reasons*,[4] has advocates among traditional epistemologists (e.g., Bonjour 1980, Chisholm 1964, Lehrer 2000). But it's also rather contentious. For, in addition to general concerns about the gap between logical and normative relations (Harman 1986; Rysiew 2008; Conee and Feldman 2008, 94-5), there is the worry that the argumentational view privileges just one kind of epistemic good among others. In evidential terms, it attempts to reduce all forms of evidence to a single type – roughly, that attaching to beliefs formed via a particular kind of inference ('good reasoning'). But why accept that?

> "The claim that reason or justification is the only sort of epistemic warrant can be seen as a stipulative restriction on what 'warrant' is to mean. But if it is a substantive claim, it hyper-intellectualizes epistemology. It focuses entirely on a kind of epistemic good that derives from the more intellectual aspects of the more intellectual representational systems. In so doing it deprives epistemology of resources to account for more primitive, but nearly ubiquitous epistemic goods." (Burge 2003, 528)

Conspicuous among the latter are the epistemic goods that flow from perception, for instance. And, as Burge implies, views on which evidence is propositional struggle to account for perceptual warrant. For even if (as is controversial) perceptual experiences have propositional content, the question of *their* justificatory backing looms.[5,6] Whereas, in addition to comporting with ordinary practice, taking perceptual experiences *per se* (e.g.) to constitute evidence – viz., "the evidence of the senses" (Audi 2011, 28; Plantinga 1993, 98) – is seen by many as affording a plausible end to the justificatory regress (e.g., Conee and Feldman 2008, 91-2; 2011, 292; Audi 2003; van Cleve 1985; Huemer 2001,

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[3] Cf. Kelly (2008, 941). This idea has its contemporary roots in Sellars (1956). Davidson (1983, 141ff.) is another prominent source. Littlejohn (forthcoming) endorses "Davidson's logical argument", though he takes it to support the view that only propositions or facts, and not (as Davidson thinks) beliefs, can be reasons.

[4] Many move freely between 'evidence' and 'reason(s)', but I won't do so here, in part because the latter much more naturally invites propositionalism and the argumentational view. As to 'justification', I'll use it to denote the sort of positive epistemic status that's the familiar subject of epistemological theory, though some others (e.g., Burge or Graham – see below) might prefer 'warrant' or 'entitlement'.

[5] For general worries along these lines, see Kornblith (2015, 229-30), Sosa (1991, 253-5), Turri (2009, 497-9), Pollock and Cruz (1999, 84-7), and Kelly (2014, §2). For criticism of Williamson's account of perceptual knowledge, one influential view on which evidence is propositional, see e.g. Brueckner (2009), Conee and Feldman (2008: 103-4) and Kvanvig (2009: 158-9).

[6] Kornblith (2015, 230-1) argues that essentially the same difficulties confront attempts to account for the warrant of beliefs formed *a priori* in terms of reasons (understood, again, as propositional). It's no accident that those who see perceptual experience as ultimately grounding perceptual beliefs typically think that other types of experience ground beliefs formed via introspection, memory, and so on: see, e.g., Audi (2003), Conee and Feldman (2008), Dougherty and Rysiew (2014).

175-81).

Some, indeed, have claimed that *all* evidence consists of various types of experiences, or other mental states of the subject. Feldman, for instance, argues for 'internalism' -- or 'mentalism', as he and Conee (Conee and Feldman 2004) elsewhere call it -- as follows:

> "While we might ordinarily say that your reason for thinking that the tree is a maple is that its leaves are a particular shape, the fact that the leaves are that shape is not part of your evidence. What you are going on in judging the tree to be a maple is your belief that it has leaves of a particular shape, and perhaps ultimately you are going on how the tree looks to you (your perceptual experience). These are internal, mental states you are in." (Feldman 2014, 340)[7]

Grant that the shape of the leaf can and should make a difference to what you believe only insofar as you are aware of it; grant too (for the sake of argument) that, absent an awareness of *it*, the sheer reliability of the cause of a belief is justificatorily impotent (Conee 2004, 49). It doesn't follow that the needed state of awareness *is* the evidence, as opposed to a condition on its being evidence that one possesses.[8] Similarly, grant that experiences of various sorts constitute one's 'ultimate evidence' (Firth 1956; Conee and Feldman 2008; Dougherty and Rysiew 2014). It does not follow that experiential evidence is the *only* evidence: even if the justificatory regress grounds out on one or another type of experiential state (see n. 6), this is compatible with other, non-experiential items being evidence in the full and proper sense too.[9,10] So, while Conee and Feldman may be correct that Williamson-style arguments, for example, don't establish that ordinary talk of experiential evidence shouldn't be taken at face value (2011, 322), the same might be said of their attempts to show that all evidence is mental.[11]

Of course, the issues addressed thus far are complex, and the considerations presented hardly decisive. But the very complexity of the issues, and the difficulty of adjudicating among the relevant theories, themselves suggest that, at this point, it's not clear that we

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[7] In arguing for their view, Conee and Feldman also rely on paired cases wherein there is some intuitive difference between the justifiedness of the subjects' beliefs, though there appears to be only a mental difference between them (2004, 58-61). For a response, see Rysiew (2011, 221).

[8] Compare Leite's (2013, 92-3) response to Turri's "master argument" for 'statism' (2009, 503-4).

[9] Though some (e.g., Goldman 2009, Littlejohn 2011) have denied that evidence can be the product of inference.

[10] There is also the concern that thinking of evidence as exclusively and wholly 'internal' threatens the essential connection between evidence and truth: see Kelly (2014, §2). I return to the matter of the truth connection below.

[11] Conee and Feldman grant the existence of "scientific evidence", understood as publicly available objects, events, or facts that reliably indicate states of the world, but they deny that it is *justifying* evidence: *e* may reliably indicate *P*, but unless one has reason to believe that it does, the occurrence of *e* alone won't justify one in believing that *P* obtains (2008, 84-5). Again, though, even granting the latter point, one needn't regard it as revealing something about what (justifying) evidence is, as opposed to how in certain cases it does its work. Conee and Feldman also say that since all ultimate evidence is experiential, beliefs for example are "only derivatively evidence" (*ibid.*, 87). This uncontroversially follows only if 'derivative' here simply means 'non-ultimate'.

have any reason to move away from our natural pluralism concerning the ontology of evidence.

But a different concern now arises: namely, that the variety that pluralism recommends frustrates theoretical unity -- that no general conception can unite the seemingly disparate things our ordinary practices treat as evidence. According to Kelly, this is suggested by the fact that the roles evidence has been tasked with playing stand in apparent mutual tension. In particular, evidence has been thought to be:

1) what justifies belief;
2) what rational thinkers respect;
3) a guide to truth – a sign, symptom, or mark; and
4) a neutral arbiter (objectivity, publicity, neutrality). (Kelly 2014)

Just on the face of it, a natural thought is that Roles 1 and 2 "tug in the direction of psychologism [or 'mentalism'], since they involve the believer's perspective", while 3 and 4 seem to require moving away from such a view, and towards thinking of evidence in a more objective, truth-linked manner (Mitova 2015, 1121). The result is that "it is far from obvious that any one thing could play all of the diverse roles that evidence has at various times been expected to play" (Kelly 2014, Intro.). In the next section, I sketch an approach to evidence found in Thomas Reid.[12] While ontologically pluralistic, and while not requiring that evidence *per se* be 'truthy',[13] this account both retains an important factive element and secures theoretical unity.

3. Evidence and Evidentness
It's natural to think that evidence gets its point from the fact that we very rarely, if ever, grasp truths in a completely direct, unmediated way (see Kelly 2014, §3). If we could just see the truth -- if things were just obvious or apparent -- we'd have no need of evidence. But we can't, so we do: "a central function of evidence is to make evident that which would not be so in its absence" (*ibid.*). Etymology confirms this suggestion: 'evidence' is *the quality or condition of being evident*, or *that which manifests or makes evident*.[14] The latter notion is hardly a technical one – the phenomenon is one with which we're all familiar, and one to which we advert when we speak, as we all sometimes do, of something's being obviously or clearly true. Such locutions are not just suasive devices; nor are they merely expressions of belief, however strong. They indicate something real and epistemically significant. It may prove difficult to spell out or theorize evidentness more fully.[15] But all we need for present purposes is the familiar, pretheoretic idea already described.

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[12] I've presented the account elsewhere (2005, 2011). Section 3 rehearses the central ideas.
[13] The term is Mitova's (2015), inspired by 'truthers', Littlejohn's label for those who think that "evidence consists of facts or true propositions" (2013, 145)
[14] These are the first two main entries for 'evidence' in the *OED*.
[15] Conee (1998) contains some very good discussion. Though the paper centers on cases of intrinsically obvious or 'self-evident' truths, many of the points and issues generalize.

Reid notes, as we did above, that "[t]he common occasions of life lead us to distinguish evidence into different kinds" -- that of sense, memory, consciousness, axioms, reasoning, and so on (*EIP* 2.20, 229).[16] Reid considers the monistic urge "to find some common nature wherein they all agree, and thereby to reduce them all to one" (*ibid.*), but is himself a pluralist, insisting that the different types of evidence really are "distinct and original kinds" (*IHM* 2.5, 32), and not merely different sources of single type of thing. Various kinds of experience (perceptual, mnemonic, introspective), arguments, testimony, the judgment of recognized authorities, the marks or signs by which we distinguish between kinds of things, a person's past actions, various 'signs' of another's mind and/or character (gestures, facial expression, etc.), observed connections in the world – all of these different types of things are evidence for Reid.[17]

Reid stresses the belief-evoking tendency of evidence. In some cases, evidence prompts belief due merely to some 'natural principle' of our constitution -- e.g., the 'original perception' whereby a given sensation serves as a "sign" or indication of hardness (*IHM* 6.20, 167ff.; *EIP* 2.21, 234ff.). In others, it requires the right kind of experience -- e.g., in 'acquired perception', the original sensation or something perceived comes to serve as a sign of something else; we come to hear *a coach passing*, or to see *the sphericity of a ball* (*ibid.*). So too, and moving away from perception, in some cases evidence prompts belief only given the right kind of training and/or specialized knowledge -- as when, to use an example of Kelly's, one infers from the presence of Koplik spots that the patient has measles. What do all of these things have in common?

> "They seem to me to agree only in this, that they are all fitted by Nature to produce belief in the human mind, some of them in the highest degree, which we call certainty, others in various degrees according to circumstances." (*EIP* 2.20, 229)

As this passage suggests, a conspicuous feature of Reid's thinking here is the deliberate mixing of psychological and normative notions. He says, for example, that "[w]e give the name of evidence to whatever is the ground of belief" (*EIP* 2.20, 228). On one reading, this is a normative claim – he means *proper* ground; and Reid does freely mix talk of evidence with talk of 'just', 'good', and 'reasonable' bases of belief (e.g., *EIP* 2.20, 229-30). On the other hand, Reid clearly thinks of grounds in partly psychological terms: the various forms of evidence are all "fitted by Nature to produce belief in the human mind" (*EIP* 2.20, 229); "when we see evidence, it is impossible not to judge" (*EIP* 6.1, 410); and, "such is the constitution of the human mind, that evidence discerned by us, forces a corresponding degree of assent" (*EIP* 6.5, 481). Putting these points together, 'ground' is a mixed notion for Reid: a ground of belief is a proper cause thereof. This is a feature of Reid's views on evidence and evidentness themselves. The latter too are mixed – they involve both causal and normative ideas; and the factive notion of evidentness incorporates both the subject's perspective and the way things actually are.

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[16] Reid citations are from his *Inquiry into the Human Mind* (*IHM*) and *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* (*EIP*).
[17] Key passages include: *EIP* 2.20, 226ff.; 6.5, 467ff.; and 7.3, 555ff.

To begin, evidentness, and so evidence, is a psychological notion in at least two crucial respects. First, insofar as one has a sound understanding and comprehends some matter clearly and without prejudice (*EIP* 7.3, 557), evidence produces belief to whatever degree is fitting.[18] Second, evidentness incorporates an important perspectival element. This is not merely because evidentness is always *indexed to a subject* ('evident' always means 'evident-to-*S*'), but because of *what it is* for something to be evident to someone. Specifically, evidentness introduces considerations of how things appear to the subject, including how things appear *vis-à-vis* the relation of evidentness itself. As Lehrer puts it (1989, 114), evidence not only causes belief but assures the believer of its truth: in the properly functioning mind that's free of 'prejudice', to the degree that something is made evident, the evidentness is itself apparent. Thus, whereas the reliability *per se* of a belief's source need not be something to which the subject has access, at least in the case of things that are evident to some very high degree, such evidentness does disclose itself:[19]

> "Perhaps evidence, as in many other respects it resembles light, so in this also – that, as light, which is the discoverer of all visible objects, discovers itself at the same time, evidence, which is the voucher for all truth, vouches for itself at the same time." (*EIP* 6.5, 481)

Second, there is obvious normative content to the notion of evidentness: saying that something is evident, like saying that it's obvious, implies that it's something that similarly situated and informed[20] others ought to recognize and accept as well. Similarly, when Reid says that the different kinds of evidence "are all fitted by nature to produce belief in the human mind" (*EIP* 2.20, 229), he clearly means the *sound* human mind. So, just as it's a contingent matter that our judgments of evidentness track relations of objective likelihood of truth, it's contingent that "evidence discerned by us forces a corresponding degree of assent" (*EIP* 6.5, 481; cf. 7.3, 557). Again, in some cases the latter depends upon our having had the appropriate experiences, or on our possessing the requisite knowledge or expertise. More fundamentally, though, it depends on our possessing both those principles that connect various experiences, e.g., with a conception and belief of what they 'suggest' (e.g., *IHM* 5.3, 60-1; 6.24, 190-2; *EIP* 2.21, 237-8), and *common sense* – that degree of judgment "which is common to men with whom we can converse and transact business" (*EIP* 6.2, 424).

Finally, evidence and evidentness are importantly truth-linked notions. Evidence, again, "is the voucher for all truth" (*EIP* 6.5, 481); it lends "the light of truth" (*EIP* 6.4, 452) to

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[18] These conditions are often not met. "That men often believe what there is no just ground to believe, and thereby are led into hurtful errors, is too evident to be denied" (*EIP* 2.20, 228).

[19] Which is not to say that we can't be wrong about whether something is evident (see next Section), or that one's evidence is always easily identified – it is "more easily felt than described," Reid says (*EIP* 2.20, 228).

[20] Intrinsically obvious propositions (e.g., *that everything is self-identical*) require only an adequate understanding of their content; extrinsically obvious propositions (such as, *that I feel warm*) require something more (e.g., the right kind of experience) (Conee 1998, 847, n.1); in Reidian terms, they borrow 'the light of truth' from something else.

that for which it is evidence; and evidentness *is* the vouching -- it is, so to speak, the face of truth. For something to be evident is for it to be manifestly true.[21,22] As explained below (Section 4), there can be misleading evidence; and we can be mistaken about both the degree to which something is evidentially supported and whether something *is* evident. However, given certain broad non-sceptical assumptions, the things that appear and are judged to be evident (hence, true) when "comprehended clearly and without prejudice" (*EIP* 7.3, 557) will generally be such. Still, unlike a straight reliabilist view of evidence,[23] it is not the bare fact of reliability that defines evidence. However, like such a reliabilist view, there is no restricting evidence to sentence-like entities -- perceptual experience, say, can vouch for the existence of some object.

Above, we noted the worry that no single kind of thing could play all of the diverse roles that evidence has been tasked with playing, but that pluralism about evidence threatens theoretical unity. However, ontological monism is just one way of securing the latter. Reid's account of evidence suggests a single root notion in getting a handle on evidence: evidence is what makes evident. While, Reid thinks, different types of things fall under its extension, the Reidian view has the resources to neatly accommodate the diverse and at times seemingly disparate roles evidence plays.[24]

Thus (Role 1), while Reid tends not to speak of 'justification', it's clear that evidence, as he understands it, is what confers the relevant sort of positive epistemic status upon beliefs. Evidence is the 'ground' -- i.e., the proper cause -- of belief. Thus, "the evidence of sense, when the proper circumstances concur, is *good* evidence, and a *just* ground of belief" (*EIP* 2.20, 229; emphases added). Similarly (Role 2), rational thinkers respect their evidence: "All good evidence is commonly called reasonable evidence, and very justly, because it ought to govern our belief as reasonable creatures" (*EIP* 2.20, 230).

Next (Role 3) is the idea that evidence is a guide to truth – a sign, symptom, or mark. As we noted above, this role seems to pull us away from the more psychological orientation the previous two invite, and towards thinking of evidence in a more objective, truth-linked manner. As we've seen, however, according to Reid evidence "guides" us by making things evident to varying degrees. The connection with truth is secured via the notion of evidentness: evidential support is not bare reliable indication, but a partly psychological matter wherein such indication ('vouching') is itself indicated – and reliably so, when things go right.

Finally, consider (Role 4) the idea that evidence can function as a neutral arbiter – hence, that it enjoys a certain degree of objectivity and publicity. The present account

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[21] Chisholm focuses on the notion of something's being 'evident <u>for *S*</u>' -- which is, he says, not factive (e.g., 1989, 11-2). According to Leite, an "objective" conception of evidence "is fundamental in our epistemic practice" (2013, 84).

[22] Note that what's made evident need not be propositional: my present perceptual experience makes evident the redness of the apple before me. Still, the redness can't be made evident if the apple isn't red. So there is a non-propositional veridicality requirement too.

[23] Such a view is suggested, and said to be Reid's, by Greco (2002, 562).

[24] What follows merely gestures in this direction. For fuller discussion, see Rysiew (2011).

accommodates this role too, plausibly construed. For while evidentness is a psychological phenomenon, evidence as such is not; it can be as publicly available as you please. (This is a seeming advantage of the present view over mentalism, for instance.) Not all evidence is like that, of course – the introspective evidence I have for my belief that I've got low blood sugar isn't publicly available.[25] But*,* as Kelly observes, examples like this just go to show that it's doubtful that *all* genuine evidence must be in principle accessible to multiple individuals (Kelly 2014, §4).

4. Misleading Evidence, Massive Deceit, and the Prospects for Pluralism

The view just sketched recommends that we approach evidence via the notion of evidentness: evidence is what serves to make things evident, where the latter is taken to be factive. Conee and Feldman (2011, 292-3, 328) have raised the concern that this approach precludes the possibility of justified false beliefs. For if evidence is what justifies belief, and if it does so by making things evident, then the factivity of evidentness means that nothing false can be justified. While Conee and Feldman are correct that this would be an unhappy result, I do not think that the present account has such a consequence, or that it's at odds with some other familiar features of evidence.

First, while 'evident' is naturally read as factive, and while truth is an all-or-nothing matter, like obviousness (Audi 1999, 214), evidentness comes in degrees.[26] Lesser degrees of evidentness are still factive, of course – the truth-indicating side of the evidentness relation is unaffected by something's exhibiting that quality to a lesser degree. But the latter can make for a difference on the psychological side: as we move away from the manifestly true – the 'apparent', in one sense of the term – it will be less clear whether the proposition in question *is* true, or merely apparently so, to what degree it is evidentially supported, and so on. About such matters, we are fallible. Indeed, Reid thinks we can disagree and make mistakes even about whether something is a "first principle[…] or self-evident truth" (*EIP* 6.4, 459-60).[27]

Still, what of the worry that evidentness (of whatever degree), and so justification, requires truth? Doesn't the view entail an implausible infallibilism? Only if we are thinking exclusively in terms of evidence-tokens – i.e., only if we think that a given item is evidence, and so can justify a belief, only if it makes evident the object of that belief, and so only if that belief is true. But the claim that evidence is what makes evident is a claim about the *sort* of thing that evidence is and does; it is a generic claim about the role of the type – specifically, about its typical effect upon a sound understanding, when comprehended clearly and without prejudice, in the right circumstances, assuming any

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[25] While experiences can't be literally shared, we commonly assume that we can share and compare qualitative aspects of our numerically distinct experiences and appeal to them in public contexts. See Dougherty and Rysiew (2014, 19), Rysiew (2011, 223).

[26] Again, this isn't true of Chisholm's 'evident for *S*' (1977, 12).

[27] Van Cleve suggests that Reid "has a fallibilist conception of evidence – [i.e., that he thinks] that a proposition can be evident (and even self-evident) without being true" (1999, 18). While I have flirted with the latter idea previously (2011, 214), here I am taking Reid to endorse a different form of fallibilism about evidence.

requisite experience and training, etc. As the latter qualifications suggest, a given evidence-token may, for a variety of reasons, fail to have the relevant effect. The evidence of sense, for example, "is good evidence, and a just ground of belief" only "when the proper circumstances concur" (*EIP* 2.20, 229). Thus, a given visual experience may lead me to believe that an object is red when it isn't. The former is still evidence, because it is the sort of thing that generally -- in the right circumstances, for the well-functioning and appropriately situated subject -- reliably indicates and makes evident the object's color; and, *qua* evidence, it can justify my false belief. It does so, note, not merely because it makes it seem true that the object is red, but because in the right circumstances (etc.) it would make that apparent (obvious, evident).

The present view, then, gives explanatory priority to success, as Williamson puts it, and this marks a point of significant disagreement with Conee and Feldman. (On which, more very shortly). For the moment, however, the important point is that there's nothing in the view to suggest that evidence exists only when it makes something evident, and so only when the belief is true – hence, that there's no such thing as misleading evidence. Nor, relatedly, does the view suggest that evidence can support a proposition only by making it evident to some very high degree, or that it cannot support a proposition while being outweighed by evidence against it (cf. Conee and Feldman 2011, 292-3). Reid takes it as obvious that both belief (*EIP* 2.20, 228) and (non-demonstrative) evidence (e.g., *EIP* 7.3, 557) come in degrees; and he says that "in most cases, we measure the degrees of evidence by the effect they have upon a sound understanding, when comprehended clearly and without prejudice" (*ibid.*). So the view appears to be that, *ceteris paribus*, a person is justified in believing some proposition (to whatever degree) to the extent that it is, on balance, evidentially supported; it is not that belief is warranted only when what's believed is (fully) evident and true.

Where the present view does clearly diverge from Conee and Feldman's is over the more general character of the relation between evidence -- hence, justification -- and truth. On the present view, evidence (the type) functions not merely to make things seem likely, but to make them apparent, to whatever degree is appropriate. The senses, for instance, are meant to give us "intelligence of the objects that surround us" (*EIP* 2.6, 101), and the evidence of sense is the means by which they do so. Whereas, for Conee and Feldman, evidence "has no essential connection to reliability" (2011, 293). To say that evidentially well-supported beliefs are likely to be true means, simply, that they are epistemically likely given the evidence (*ibid.*, 297), not that they are objectively so: "It is possible for someone to be in a conscious state that intuitively supports external world propositions while in an environment where those propositions are never true" (*ibid.*, 293).

The latter idea, of course, is the germ of a familiar line of argument against externalist epistemological theories generally;[28] it may pose a problem, but it poses no special problem for the present view in particular. Further, as Mitova notes in a similar context,

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[28] As a species of reliabilist view, the present approach is externalistic. Unlike typical externalist theories, however, it acknowledges (via the notion of evidentness) the importance of the subject's perspective -- but not, thanks to the factivity of evidentness, at the expense of an objective truth-connection.

"the justificatory role for evidence is supposed to be *uncontroversial*, and so cannot assume a substantive account of justification" (2015, 1122). Whereas, as the existence of externalist epistemologies and the debate over such things as 'the new evil demon' problem show, the right thing to say about both justification and such examples is highly contested. Thus, granting that "[i]t is possible for someone to be in a conscious state that intuitively supports external world propositions while in an environment where those propositions are never true" (Conee and Feldman 2011, 293), do such states in the imagined scenario (the bad case) constitute evidence? Do they constitute evidence, but not "good" evidence? Are cases of massive deceit just generalized instances of *misleading* evidence? Is the philosophers' technical notion of justification rightly applied to such a subject's beliefs, or are they, or she, better granted some other positive epistemic status among the many available alternatives (e.g., Byrne 2014, 104-5; Graham 2012, 469-70; Leite 2013, 100-1)? People disagree.

Still, it's a mark in favor of the present view – and, perhaps, a relative advantage it enjoys over many other factive or otherwise externalistic views -- that it suggests a natural way of accommodating the intuitions that cases of massive deceit are meant to elicit. For, just as the present view doesn't require that evidence (and so justifiers) be truthy, and just as it does not conflict with the existence of justified false beliefs, it doesn't make evidence (and so justification) contingent upon *de facto* reliability, as opposed to reliability in the sort of environment for which the relevant faculties were designed, or in which they were selected.[29] We can thus say that, if the subject's beliefs in the bad case are justified, that is because in the sort of environment in which their belief-forming faculties arose, or for which those faculties are designed, what appeared evident to them would generally be such.

Conee and Feldman have countered that the subject(s) may lack the relevant history or design: the demon may have created his victims "for the purposes of deceiving them all along", yet we'd still count their beliefs as justified (2011, 293). Bergmann (2006, 150-1) suggests an answer: to the extent that the victims resemble us – to the extent that they're genuinely "humanoid" (Conee and Feldman 2011, 293) -- that fact can be used to explain the positive verdict; and to the extent that they don't…well, when we're told something about their actual, alien cognitive make-up, perhaps we won't have much of an inclination to attribute justified beliefs to them after all.[30] This response might leave Conee and Feldman (e.g.) dissatisfied. But if the externalistic character of the present view wasn't enough to disqualify it (in the present context) from consideration earlier, it surely shouldn't do so now.

A different challenge to the current view is offered by Mitova (2015). Like the present discussion, Mitova's features a consideration of the ability of a given account of evidence to accommodate the various roles it plays. Above it was suggested that Reid's account

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[29] On the proper functionalist character of Reid's epistemological views, see especially Bergmann 2008. For an etiological-functional account of epistemic entitlement in much the same vein, see Graham 2012.

[30] Compare Graham (2012, 468ff.) on the "second" and "third" versions of the massively deceived brain-in-a-vat scenario.

fares well on this score. According to Mitova, however, 'truthy psychologism' – the (monistic) view that evidence is propositional, psychological, and factive – does at least as well. In particular, "truthy psychologism…accommodate[s] roles (1) and (2) in virtue of its psychologism, and (3) and (4) in virtue of its truthiness" (2015, 1122). Thus, because evidence, on this view, is comprised of (certain) psychological states, it's no mystery how it can make a difference to the justificatory status of one's beliefs, or to what it is rational to believe (Roles 1 and 2). But evidence is *truthy* too, and the relevant facts are surely a good guide to truth if anything is (Role 3); and they, and the relevant factive states, are well-suited to serve as neutral arbiters (Role 4) (2015, 1121-4).[31]

In light of truthy psychologism's success in accommodating the various roles evidence is thought to play, Mitova says, "if the main motivation for pluralism is the failure of current accounts of evidence to accommodate all important roles the concept plays, we don't need to be pluralists" (2015, 1121). What's more, truthy psychologism is *superior* to pluralism. She writes:

> "Unlike pluralism, the very same thing -- a mental state -- plays each of the four roles. For sure, in some cases it plays it primarily in virtue of its psychological nature, and in others in virtue of its veridical nature, but it is still the same beast doing the work. The pluralist, by contrast, must accommodate some of the roles by appeal to one bunch of things that fall under the extension of 'evidence', and the rest of the roles by appeal to a different bunch of things. Thus, what would justify and rationalise my belief that I have measles, would be a belief about, or experience of, Koplik spots. But what would count as an indicator of measles, or as an arbiter in a dispute, will be the spots themselves. This story…drives an insuperable wedge between the *good* reasons there are for believing something and *my* reasons for believing it. Perhaps there are good reasons to be pluralists, which outweigh the costs of this wedge. But the inability of a single thing to play all evidence-roles is not one of them." (2015, 1124-5)

In response, note first that the ability of truthy psychologism to accommodate the relevant roles might be contested. For instance, as we saw above (Section 2), and as Mitova notes (2015, 1108), those who hold that at least some evidence is non-propositional emphasize its role in stopping the justificatory regress. To the extent that it's not clear what a good propositionalist solution to the regress might be (*ibid.*), it's not clear how convincingly the ability of evidence to justify beliefs (Role 1) has been explained. Further, insofar as it is motivated in part by its capacity to explain the fact that evidence can stand in logical and probabilistic relations to beliefs (see n. 32), truthy psychologism will face pressure from those truthers who think that *beliefs* can't really do that (see n. 3).

Such points notwithstanding, it would be a mistake to think that pluralism springs primarily from the conviction that no monistic view can accommodate the relevant roles – as though pluralism is something we're driven to out of theoretical desperation. Rather, at least as presented here, a central motivation for pluralism is that it's our natural,

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[31] Mitova notes (2015, 1123-4), as we did above (Section 3, including n. 25), some reasons for thinking that Role 4 needs qualifying.

pretheoretical view as to the ontology of evidence: it's among our starting points in thinking about the subject. The question is then whether we have good reason to move away from it. Here, I've suggested that some central arguments for specific forms of monism are not compelling (Section 2), and that an equally natural way of thinking about the nature or function of evidence yields theoretical unity (Section 3).

Of course, if there were nonetheless significant costs to pluralism, that might provide good reason to seek an alternative. Among such potential costs, however, is not that it "drives an insuperable wedge between the *good* reasons there are for believing something and *my* reasons for believing it" (2015, 1125). As Mitova is thinking of it, pluralism recruits certain types of evidence to play some of the evidence-roles, and other kinds to play others. Thus, in her example, the seemingly more psychological roles (1 and 2) are satisfied by mental items (e.g., my belief about, or experience of, Koplik spots); while the more objective, interpersonal roles (3 and 4) are satisfied by facts, true propositions, or worldly objects and properties (the spots themselves). Whereas, again, truthy psychologism combines the different faces or aspects of evidence – the psychological, the objective – in a single type of thing.

Some pluralists may indeed think of things in this way, but it's not how they're being thought of here. On the contrary, as we've seen (Section 3), on the present approach evidence and evidentness are thought of as 'mixed' from the outset – e.g., evidence is a *ground* of belief, where 'ground' is both causal and normative; and the factive notion of evidentness incorporates both the subject's perspective and the way things actually are. Thus, in terms of Mitova's example, if I'm aware of the connection between Koplik spots and measles, the presence of the former will and should (*ceteris paribus*) make it clear (evident) to me, and prompt belief, that the patient has measles. The spots are my evidence, the cause and justifier of my belief. They are also the publicly available indicator and arbiter: similarly situated and informed others will and should (*ceteris paribus*) form the same belief themselves. Granted, the spots (suppose) won't prompt my belief unless I see them, and unless I'm aware that they're a sign of measles. But it doesn't follow that my evidence *is* that experience, that awareness, or the consequent belief in the spots' presence; that mentalizing argument was rejected early on (Section 2). Similarly, the experience of the spots may be what grounds my belief *that they are present*, and a terminus in the justificatory chain supporting my belief that the patient has measles. But, I've suggested, it's a mistake to think that regress-terminators ('ultimate evidence') are the only evidence. (And a mistake too to think that, because my belief that the patient has measles is propositional, it can be supported or favored only by other propositional items.)[32]

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[32] In addition to the roles discussed above, Mitova notes some other, partly overlapping ones: that evidence can stand in logical and probabilistic relations to beliefs; that evidence is a reason for a belief, and so something that speaks in favor of it; and that evidence is something we can appeal to in explaining why a belief is held (2015, 1106). Truthy psychologism, she argues, neatly accommodates these (2015, 1120). The present account does so as well: the connection with truth makes evidence genuinely favor belief; since evidence is understood in part in terms of its belief-producing tendency, it helps explain why people believe what do; and propositional evidence can enter into logical/probabilistic relations with other propositional items. Not all types of evidence

In short, pluralism of the sort being defended here says that not just one kind of thing plays the evidence-roles; it does not say that, in a given case, no one kind of thing does. While not identifying them, the present account weds the psychological and normative, the perspectival and the objective. In effect, the same integration of the subject's reasons and good reasons that Mitova sees truthy psychological states as affording is, on the present view, achieved via the specific functional account of evidence being recommended.

5. Conclusion
The aim here has been to articulate and defend a certain way of thinking about evidence, one that includes an important factive element without making factivity a requirement on something's being evidence, and that secures theoretical unity via a particular account of what evidence does. The concerns that the factive element in the account is incompatible with the existence of justified false beliefs, and that it takes an implausible view as to the connection between evidence and truth, have been addressed. I've also addressed the worry that the ontological pluralism that the view is conspicuous in allowing, and that is among our natural starting points in thinking about evidence, comes at the cost of driving a wedge between a person's reasons for belief and good reasons for belief. Other issues, no doubt, remain to be addressed. But for the moment, the view on offer remains a viable and attractive option among current theories of evidence.[33]

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can enter into such relations, of course – at least, not directly. However, for reasons given above (Section 2), it's unclear that this role, like the others, is one we should reasonably expect evidence always to play.

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