

Epistemic normativity without epistemic teleology

According to a widely shared view, epistemic and practical reasons are subclasses of a more general class of reasons: the class of normative reasons. This *unity thesis* about practical and epistemic reasons entails *normativism about epistemic reasons*, the view that epistemic reasons are normative reasons. While I am sympathetic to normativism, this paper discusses a problem for it, and proposes a solution. The challenge for normativists is to account for a plausible connection between normative reasons and value, according to which conformity with normative reasons must be good in some respect and to some extent (the *reason/value* link, or RVL). Epistemic teleologists account for RVL by explaining epistemic reasons in terms of some independent value, such as the value of truth or knowledge. But I argue that this teleological account of RVL faces severe problems. Rejecting the view that epistemic reasons are based on value, I propose to account for RVL by appeal to the “deontic” or “perfectionist” value of conformity with normative reasons itself and argue that this avoids the problems for teleological accounts.