

Intellectual Achievement in Pursuit of True Belief

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Abstract

The practice of inquiry, in which we seek and pursue true beliefs by forming justified beliefs, is important to us. This thesis will address two questions concerning the significance of this practice. These are the question of what explains our preference for this particular belief-forming practice, and whether this value can be explained by the value of true belief alone.

To answer these questions I will examine a variety of our intuitive commitments to particular values, assuming their general accuracy. I will use an inference from the goal of a practice to the value of a practice, an inference based on the assumption that when we pursue something it is valuable. I will discuss our intuitive commitments to the value of justification. I will also rely on the implications of the presence of pride and admiration in relation to the outcome of an inquiry (especially in situations where a belief is difficult to form).

By using this methodology, I will argue for three sources of value that explain the unique significance of the value of inquiry. The first is the value of its unique role in our being able to form reliably true beliefs. Second, I will argue for Wayne D. Riggs' account of epistemic credit; Riggs defends the value of our being responsible for true beliefs, they are our achievements. Third, I will argue for an additional the value of delivering a skilful epistemic performance, another kind of achievement. I will show that although the value of true belief plays a role in explaining some of the values, the third value for inquiry is independent of the value of true belief. This means that there are intellectual rewards, which can be gained from this practice, that extend beyond the value of true belief.

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Introduction

There is a unique belief-forming practice that consists of forming justified beliefs with the goal of forming true beliefs. For example I may want to have a true belief about the time and so acquire justifying evidence to form this belief or I might want to check that my belief that God exists is true and so check whether that belief is justified. These are examples what I will call the practice of inquiry: the practice of justifying beliefs with the goal of forming true beliefs. The practice of inquiry has a unique and important place in our lives. We spend a lot of time justifying beliefs through practices like testimony, investigation and research (all forms of inquiry). Academia is just one context in which we engage in inquiry. It is a practice to which we devote a lot of time and effort. One thing we want from this practice is true beliefs. However there are other practices, like self-deception, that can yield true belief. I can accept a belief for pragmatic reasons and accidentally land up with a true belief. And yet, in most contexts, we prefer the practice of inquiry over and above these other belief-forming practices. This raises the question of what we find uniquely significant and important about this practice. It may be asked what explains its importance over and above other methods?

At first glance, the answer to this question is that inquiry yields states that other practices cannot, like justified belief or justified true belief. The practice of inquiry involves observance to epistemic norms and so can result in justified believing. However, this answer raises the further question of what the sources are from which the states that are unique to inquiry derive their value. If these states are valuable in such a way that they can explain the unique significance of inquiry, then they must derive from sources of value that are unique to the practice.

In this thesis, I will be arguing for three sources of value that are unique to the practice of inquiry and thus for the values that can explain the importance of the belief-forming practice of inquiry. These are the sources from which any state that can only arise out of an inquiry can derive value. I will be looking at what we want from inquiry and the way that we evaluate inquiries in order to determine what the possible sources of value are.

The three sources of value that I will argue are unique to inquiry are the value of reliably true beliefs, epistemic credit and epistemic performance credit. Unlike

other belief-forming practices, inquiry promotes true believing by resulting in beliefs that are likely to be true for the inquirer herself or for agents for which the inquirer is an informant. I will argue for the value of epistemic credit. This is the value of being responsible for valuable beliefs that can be produced by inquiry, as argued for by Wayne D. Riggs in what I will call the “Achievement of Truth Account”.¹ Finally I will argue for the value of achieving a skilful performance of an inquiry, another kind of credit that we get from inquiry alone, epistemic performance credit. This is what I will call the “Achievement of a Skilful Epistemic Performance Account”².

I will argue for two claims with regard to each of these sources of value. I will argue both that they are valuable and that this value is exclusively available to us via inquiry.

One way of characterising a source of value for an activity is by the relationship it has to the primary goal of the same activity. The constitutive goal of inquiry is true belief and the method of inquiry is justifying beliefs. It may be, for this reason, tempting to argue that the value of this practice is derived entirely from the value of true belief. The constitutive goal may be taken as the only goal, giving reason to infer that true belief is the only value for inquiry. The value of reliably true believing, I will show, can be accounted for solely by appealing to the value of true belief.

However, I will also show that the other two sources for which I am arguing undermine this exclusive approach to explaining the value of inquiry, and thus that appealing to the value of true belief alone can only partially account for the value of the practice. This is because, in the case of epistemic credit, the value of true belief is necessary for the value, but not sufficient. Thus there is a source of value that goes beyond the value of true belief. In addition, epistemic performance credit, I will argue, is independent of the value of true belief. It is a source of value for inquiry for which true belief is not even a condition. By arguing for this third source of value, I will show that there is a source of value that can stand alone, separate from the value of true belief.

This last point is especially significant because of a common understanding of the value of true belief. In this thesis I am not committed to a particular account of the

¹ I have drawn this account from two of Riggs’s papers, “Beyond Truth and Falsehood: The Real Value of Knowing that p” and “Reliability and the Value of Knowledge” (Riggs 2002a and Riggs 2002b).

² This title is based on Sosa’s discussion of another kind of value, performance value, which I will discuss later in this thesis (Sosa 2003).

value of true belief, but I recognise that some instrumental accounts are common and plausible. These are accounts that see true belief as purely instrumentally valuable with regard to the success of our actions. True beliefs are valuable because they allow me to acquire other kinds of value in the realm of action. As a result, our intellectual lives are given a subsidiary value in relation to action. True believing is taken to be a condition of successful action and so derives value from the success of these actions. This means that our intellectual lives are valuable only in relation to our lives as agents, the practice of forming true beliefs is to serve further ends in the realm of action. I will show that there is a source of value for our intellectual practices that is independent of the value of true belief and so any role in action it might have. I will show that there is a source of value for inquiry that gives value to this intellectual practice, in its own right, and not out of any relation to the value of true belief. Even if true belief is taken to have intrinsic value, the source of value of epistemic performance credit is an additional reason to suggest that our intellectual practices have value that is removed from the value of action.

I will not be giving a full account of the values for which I will be arguing; instead I hope to show that they cannot be accounted for by the value of true belief, as they are not derived from the value of true belief.

In summary, there are two major claims for which I will argue in this thesis. I will argue for these claims simultaneously. Firstly I want to establish three sources of value that are unique to inquiry, and secondly I want to argue that the importance of inquiry cannot be explained by the value of true belief alone.

As mentioned above I have limited my discussion to the sources of value only available to us via inquiry. This is because it is these sources of value that will explain why inquiry is, at least in most contexts more valuable than other belief-forming practices. This limitation is also significant for two other reasons. First, it means that I can ignore the multiple pragmatic values that a belief might have and instead provide an account of intellectual value (as opposed to pragmatic value).

Beliefs can be valuable in a variety of ways. One way of classifying this is by distinguishing beliefs with intellectual value and beliefs with pragmatic value. Sometimes a belief is taken to be valuable in a way that is obviously not intellectual. For example, I may have a belief that by correspondence with the beliefs of others puts me in a valuable social or political position. For example, sharing similar beliefs as your boss at work might win you favour and advance your career. Or I may have a

belief that makes me happy, regardless of whether it is true or not. This is like the belief that boyfriend is not cheating on me. Believing this will make me happy even if he really is cheating on me. These kinds of beliefs are considered to have pragmatic and not intellectual value.

For these beliefs it is only that I have the belief that is important not the way it is formed. Beliefs with this value can be formed by practices, like self-deception, that do not aim at true belief; they can be formed by practices other than inquiry. This kind of value is therefore not my concern in this thesis. I am concerned with intellectual value only where "intellectual" is defined in opposition to pragmatic.

Second it means that these sources of value have direct relevance for a more focussed discussion in epistemology, the discussion of the value of knowledge.

The value of knowledge is an important issue in to epistemology. Although I touch on this debate my account is broader than this issue. I will provide an account of the sources of value for states that arise uniquely out of inquiry. Knowledge is one state that is unique to inquiry, and so my account will have implications for this debate. It may be that the sources of value for which I am arguing are not all relevant to the particular state of knowledge and this would mean that there are states other than knowledge that have value that is being overlooked by contemporary epistemology. This is in fact a direct implication of the value of skilful epistemic performances. However, the focus of this thesis is the sources of value available to inquiry. I will mention the value of some particular states, such as knowledge or justified belief, but this is only to support my broader claim concerning sources of value. Further discussion of the implications of my account for debates surrounding specific epistemic states is beyond the focus of this thesis.

Part One: Inquiry and the Value of True Belief

In this part of the thesis, I will examine the role that the value of true belief has in explaining the value that we associate with the practice of inquiry. This discussion is limited to the value of inquiry that is explained by appealing solely to the value of true belief, for which the value of true belief is sufficient. The goal of inquiry is true belief and I will argue that it can be inferred from this that true belief is a source of value for the practice. This is a straightforward inference from the goal of a practice to the value of that practice. This inference will play an important part in my methodology throughout this thesis, as I will argue that all three sources of value can be seen to be goals of inquiry in different contexts. In this part, I will focus on the constitutive goal of true belief, but in doing so I will defend the plausibility of this inference, the “inference from goal to value”, in general.

I will then go on to show that, although true belief is available to us through other belief-forming practices, there is a unique relationship between inquiry and the value of true belief. The traditional understanding of the value of inquiry can be formulated in terms of reliability. I agree that this is a source of value of inquiry and I will argue that although other belief-forming practices can get us true belief, they are not likely to do so, while inquiry is a reliable means to true belief. There are two ways of seeing how inquiry can reliably yield true beliefs and I will present two of these examples as an argument for the first source of value that is unique to inquiry. This is the value of believing in such a way that the belief is reliably true. I will show that this is uniquely available to inquiry because only inquiry can yield these kinds of beliefs and because previous inquiry plays an important role in testimony (a form of inquiry) that we use to get true beliefs.

Chapter One

The Inference from Goal to Value

An obvious starting point in the search for the sources of value for a particular practice is its goals. For example, the practice of following a low-fat recipe has the goal of cooking low-fat meal and so the value of low-fat meals can confer value on the practice of following a low-fat recipe. The constitutive goal of inquiry is true belief³, as stipulated in the introduction. Therefore it seems that a discussion of the sources of the value for the practice of inquiry must refer to this goal.

There are a variety of accounts of the value of true belief and the complementary value of avoiding error (the absence of false believing). For example, one can account for this value by appealing to the role it plays in guiding action or by arguing that it has intrinsic value. I do not wish to commit myself to a particular account of the value of true belief, although I will argue that it is valuable.

Whatever the account of the value of true belief, one argument that suggests that it is valuable is that it is a goal of the practice of inquiry (a practice to which we devote a lot of time and effort). Goal-orientated practices like inquiry are aimed at something that we want, something that we take to have value. For example, I follow low-fat recipe because I want a low-fat meal. I want low-fat meals because I take these to be valuable for my health. An outsider might be able to study my behaviour and conclude from this that I value low-fat meals. I engage in practices that allow me to gain the health benefits of low fat meals. True belief is something that we in general desire and pursue, so we must take it to have value.

This understanding of goals and value can be taken even further because we can infer, not only that we take the goal to have value, but that it is in fact valuable. This is based on the assumption that for the most part we are well-informed about what is valuable, or that which we take to be valuable actually is.

That we see true belief as the goal of inquiry suggests that true belief is a source of value for inquiry. This claim is an inference from goal to value. It can be presented as follows:

1. x is the goal of practice y.
2. y is a practice in which we engage.

³ I take this general description of the goal to include slightly different goals, like the goal of avoiding error.

Therefore x is valuable and one of the practice's values.

This can be reformulated in terms of the practice and goal of inquiry as follows:

1. True belief is the goal of inquiry.
2. Inquiry is a practice in which we engage.

Therefore true belief is valuable and one of inquiry's values.

The inference may be seen to be problematic as it assumes that, if we desire something or see something as valuable, it is valuable. However what is valuable seems to include what we should value and not just what we do in fact value. We can, out of ignorance, participate in practices with goals that are in fact not as valuable as we perceive them to be. In these practices we cannot infer that the goal has value. In "Value Monism in Epistemology"⁴ Michael DePaul recognises this problem for the inference from goal (or desire) to value. He argues that we cannot look to our desires to measure what is really valuable because we often want the wrong thing (things that are not valuable). We desire things that are not valuable because we are unaware of the conflict between what we desire and what is valuable or because we do not have all the information about what is valuable and so cannot form desires based on this information.

Although I accept that there are cases where the inference from desire to value will be unfitting, I do not think it undermines the inference in general. The fact that we can go wrong, and desire the wrong thing, means that we must be careful when making the inference, yet the general appropriateness of our desires has not been undermined. We want and pursue things because we take them to be valuable, and where these goals are sufficiently wide-spread, it seems that it needs to be shown that we have gone wrong before this inference can be abandoned. The onus of proof rests on the claim that our desires are misinformed and not on showing that they are not. This claim will be given up if it can be shown that we, in this context, desire the wrong thing.

The inference will play a large part in other parts of this thesis as I will argue that inquiry may have multiple goals and thus multiple sources of value. I do not think that in any of these cases there is reason to think that our desires or goals are misinformed. Even if this is open to debate, and it needs to be shown that it is, the goals of a practice at least tell us what we take to be valuable about that practice and

⁴ DePaul 2001: 176.

so can explain what we take to be significant about that practice in our lives. It may be that my claim is only limited to what we take to be significant about the practice of inquiry. Yet, even if this is the case, the claim is worthwhile, not only in explaining the role of inquiry, but also to open the debate as to whether it is in fact is as valuable as we take it to be.

For the purposes of this thesis I will assume that our intellectual goals and desires are not misinformed.

It may also be argued, against the inference from goal to value, that sometimes our goals exceed the value that they possess.⁵ For example, I may need to jump a certain distance and yet aim to jump a longer distance as a means to the goal. If this is the case, then it could mean that we require less than true belief which is the goal of inquiry. However, true belief can still be seen to be a source of value, as it is sufficient for the actual source of value. Meeting the conditions of the goal of true belief will be sufficient for the source of value that may require less than true belief.

That true belief is valuable can be inferred from the goal of inquiry, but this inference cannot tell us why it is valuable. Without an account of the value of true belief itself it is impossible to tell whether true belief is our goal because it is instrumental in acquiring other valuable beliefs (by being sufficient for these beliefs) or whether true belief is what is of actual value. The kind of argument I am using throughout this thesis is limited in this sense. I will be arguing for particular sources of value for inquiry but, as mentioned before, I will not provide an account of their value. For my purposes it is sufficient to conclude that true belief is in some sense valuable.

⁵ A similar point is made by J. David Velleman with regard to the aim of believing (not inquiry) in his paper in *The Possibility of Practical Reason* (Velleman 2000: 279).

Chapter Two

The Value of a Reliable Belief-Forming Practice

Although, as argued above, true belief is a source of value for inquiry, it is not an adequate answer for the topic of this thesis. This is because it is not a source of value available uniquely to the outcome of an inquiry. I could hold a true belief for pragmatic reasons or deceive myself out of a false belief to form a true one. Still it seems that inquiry must have a special relationship with its goal since it is the preferred practice when seeking true belief. This is because there is a source of value that is unique to the outcome of an inquiry that derives value from true belief. It is this relationship that sets inquiry apart from other means to true belief and can in part explain the significance of the practice in our lives.

I will now provide an account of two ways in which an inquiry can result in the likelihood of true belief to show how this source of value is unique to the practice of inquiry. These are all values of the property of justification. Justification is something that we value and this value must be related to the value of inquiry. As the only means to justified believing, inquiry is our exclusive means to the sources of value that explain the value of justification.

Section A — Inquiry is Reliable

One way in which inquiry is uniquely valuable is that it is a more reliable means to the end of true belief than other belief forming practices. In inquiry we seek out, and base our belief upon good reason in support of the belief. Just as following a low-fat recipe is more likely to result in a low-fat meal than cooking without a recipe, engaging in an inquiry is more likely to result in true belief than belief forming practices that do not consist in justifying beliefs. Justified beliefs are beliefs based upon good reason that suggest that a position is likely to be true. Justification functions to better our chances of having a true belief, this is something that we value and therefore part of the reason why the belief forming practice of inquiry is so important to us.

There are other means to a low-fat meal, such as eating at a health restaurant, but inquiry is the only means to justified belief and so the only means to this source of value for the state of reliably belief.

The difference between inquiry and other practices that might yield true belief is the likelihood of its success as a means to true belief. Even if we can never be guaranteed a true belief out the practice of inquiry, it seems to have a better likelihood of achieving this state than the other practices mentioned. It can be surprising to us when guessing or self-deception result in true belief. This is because it is unlikely that they will have this result.

Inquiry is set apart from these practices in relation to the value of true belief because it is a reliable means to the state of true belief (it is a means to justified believing) and we often expect the belief formed on the basis of this practice to be correct. The value of being comparatively likely to form a true belief is thus a value that is unique to the practice of inquiry, even if this derives from the value of true belief that might be accessible to us through other practices.

Section B — Inquirers are Reliable

The other way in which inquiry can be seen to be a reliable means to true belief is less direct. This is because it is based on the results of one inquiry being able to provide reliable means to true belief in another inquiry. This is possible because of the indicative function of justification and the role of testimony in inquiry. The indicative function of justification is its ability to tell us whether a belief is likely to be true. I am relying on the indicative account of justification argued for by Edward Craig.⁶ Justification is a means to true belief because it has a property that allows one to identify reliable informants. Knowing what a person's epistemic abilities are is important because this can tell one whether this person has a true belief. If a person has a justified belief I will trust them and so if their belief is true I will form the equivalent true belief. Thus justification is valuable as it allows me to get reliably true beliefs from other people.

This value is present in other practices that are reliable means to meeting their goal. If a friend invites me to dinner, but I only want to eat a low-fat meal, I can ask what recipe she is using and be able to tell whether I should accept the invitation or not. Meals prepared in accordance with a low-fat recipe are likely to be low-fat and also are indicative that the status of the meal is low-fat.

⁶ Craig 1990.

Ward Jones argues that Craig's account can be supplemented such that it is not only the justification of the beliefs of others that are valuable to an agent. Craig argues that we value the justification of the beliefs of others because we value true beliefs and the justified belief of another is a reliable means to true belief. Jones shows that this value applies to our own beliefs too.

This is because the indicative function of justification has a function for me in relation to my own beliefs. Justification can act as an indicator of a belief's truth value and so, if my beliefs are justified, I have a means to monitor and revise my beliefs, on the basis of the warrant afforded by their justification. My past beliefs are valuable evidence on which I can base future beliefs. Justification is thus valuable in that it allows me, on reflection, to retain true beliefs, or beliefs that are likely to be true. The value here is still derived from the value of true belief because it derives from the value of future true beliefs that I might have after reflection.

This is like reorganising a freezer packed with both high-fat and low-fat meals that I have prepared. I can keep the low-fat meals if I can tell that they are low-fat. Those that I have prepared by following a low-fat recipe will be recognisably valuable for a diet and so I can keep them and benefit from their value.

There is another way in which I can value myself as an informant and thus value the justification of my own beliefs that is overlooked by Craig and Jones. This is that I value myself as a reliable informant because I value the true belief of others, not just my own. I want to share my true beliefs with others because I value that their inquiries result in true beliefs. Justified belief allows me to be an informant in an inquiry and as I value my own inquiries because they are a means to justified belief. This is derived from the value of the true beliefs of others.

These are two possible ways that inquiry derives value uniquely from the value of true belief. The value of true belief is sufficient for the value of reliably true beliefs and it can explain all this value. It might be argued that this is all that is valuable about inquiry that it is reliably instrumental in getting true beliefs. In the remainder of this thesis I will show that this is wrong. That there are values available to us uniquely through inquiries that are not instrumentally related to the value of true belief and so that an appeal to true belief is not sufficient explain the value of inquiry.

Part Two: Epistemic Credit

The second source of value for which I will be arguing is the focus of this part of the thesis. This is the value of epistemic credit, as argued for by Riggs in the Achievement of Truth Account. I will critically examine Riggs's account and arguments for the value of epistemic credit and then give my own independent argument in favour of this value as a source of value that is exclusively available to us through the practice of inquiry. The value of epistemic credit, I will argue, is unlike the value discussed in the previous chapter as it can not be fully accounted for by the value of having true beliefs; it is not a value for which having true beliefs is sufficient.

I will begin by introducing and giving an account of epistemic credit. To do this I will rely on Riggs's analogical account of the similar values that we get from other practices. In doing, so I will reveal how Riggs's account can be extended to include various forms of epistemic credit. I will then show why this value is exclusive to the practice of inquiry and explain how it undermines the value of true belief as the only value that might explain the importance of inquiry over other belief-forming practices. The notion of credit and responsibility with regard to belief raises the issue of epistemic agency. I will give a brief discussion of this problem and why it is not a threat to the Achievement of Truth Account. This discussion will rely on one of Riggs's arguments for the value of epistemic credit; this is an argument from presence of attitudes like pride and admiration.

I will then go on to consider one way of arguing for this credit that fails. This is the argument that only by appealing to epistemic credit are we able to provide an intuitively satisfying account of the value of knowledge. I will show that truth derived values can account for all the value of knowledge in a way that accounts for this objection. Finally I will present two independent arguments for the value of epistemic credit, based on our epistemic goals and the varying degrees of value we accord to justifying methods in specific contexts. The way we value justifying methods suggests that epistemic credit is a source of epistemic value. This is because, I will argue, the degree of value of a justifying method is proportional to the degree of credit it can yield. I finally will show that the inference from the goal of a practice to the sources of value for that practice can reveal epistemic credit as a source of value for the practice of inquiry.

Chapter One

The Achievement of Truth Account

In the first section of this chapter I will introduce the notion of epistemic credit by appealing to Riggs's Achievement of Truth Account. I will discuss the relationship between the value of epistemic credit and the value of true belief. I will also show how Riggs's account can be extended. In the second section I will give an exposition of Riggs's argument from the presence of pride and admiration for epistemic credit and show how this can be used to set aside the issue of epistemic agency that is raised by the notion of epistemic credit and responsibility.

Section A — Riggs's Account

Epistemic credit can be compared with the credit we get from other domains. We deserve credit in general when we are responsible for bringing about good states of affairs, when the existence of a good state of affairs is an achievement. Riggs argues that we deserve epistemic credit for bringing about an epistemically good state of affairs, such as true belief. This is an epistemic value that accrues to an agent. It is the agent that is deserving of credit for the belief. Riggs argues that a true belief is someone's achievement in so far as they are responsible for that belief (for which they deserve credit). The conditions for epistemic credit can be determined by looking at the conditions of credit in general. These are the conditions of responsibility. As the conditions of credit can be present in varying degrees, I can be more responsible for something than I am for something else. I deserve varying degrees of credit for x in proportion to the degree to which I am responsible for x .⁷

In "Reliability and the Value of Knowledge"⁸, Riggs illustrates the nature of epistemic credit by appealing to its non-epistemic analogical equivalents. He explains the value of epistemic credit by showing that it is analogous to moral credit (a value present in the moral domain).⁹

Riggs compares the realm of beliefs to the realm of actions (actions in general and moral actions in particular). He notes that a justified true belief is a true belief that

⁷ Riggs 2002b: 91.

⁸ Riggs 2002b.

⁹ Riggs 2002b: 88-95.

is not gained by luck.¹⁰ If I *guess* correctly the answer to a maths problem it seems that I am lucky to have a true belief (the truth of the belief is an accident). However, if I calculate the answer using reliable methods, I have good reason to believe my answer and it seems that this kind of luck has been eliminated. Justifying beliefs is, therefore, a way to eliminate luck from the process of forming true beliefs. This is the process of inquiry. I form beliefs on the basis of evidence so that I may have a justified true belief.

Justification is also something that we value, as noted in the previous part of this thesis. We prefer justified beliefs over unjustified beliefs. As argued earlier, this is one reason why we value inquiry over other belief-forming practices. In order to explain this value, Riggs examines its ability to eliminate luck from the belief-forming process. In attempting to explain the value of this function (the value of the absence of luck), Riggs notes that the absence of luck has value in the realm of action and moral action. He then goes on to give an account of its value, to show that the realm of beliefs has an analogically equivalent value. This is a value that is different to the value of justification that I have already defended. Riggs argues that justification is valuable because it is a requirement of epistemic credit and not just because it is instrumental in forming true beliefs.

The value of the absence of luck in the realm of moral action seems to be because it is a condition of credit. It thus derives value from credit as it is a necessary condition of this valuable state. If I prevent a baby from drowning because I am standing where I happen to block its fall, I may find value in the survival of the baby. However if I prevent a baby from drowning by my own doing (by, perhaps, jumping to catch it before it falls into the water), I may find value in both the fact that the baby survived and that I am responsible for her survival. There are two sources of value here; one is derived from the fact that “the baby survived”, while the other is derived from the fact that “I saved the baby”. This second value is credit. The presence of this value is dependent on the absence of luck (the lack of accidentality in the action).

He shows then that this can be extended, by way of analogy, to epistemic states of affairs. I can value that I have true belief *x*, but I can also value that I am responsible for the truth of belief *x*. So, if I *guess* the answer to a maths problem correctly I will value that this answer is correct. However if I get it right by a

¹⁰ Riggs 2002b: 93.

calculation, I can also value that the truth of the belief is my achievement, something for which I deserve credit. This gives value to justification's ability to eliminate luck from belief-formation. Justification allows my true belief to be my achievement; this is the Achievement of Truth Account.

Although Riggs focuses on the states like justified true belief to which this value accrues, the point can be put in terms of practices too. When I gain a true belief by guessing or by some practice other than inquiry, I am lucky and so the valuable belief cannot be seen to be my achievement. He has pointed to another way in which the practice of inquiry relates uniquely to the value of true belief. It is only through inquiry that I am able to *achieve* true belief; the practice of inquiry can be the practice of acquiring epistemic credit for true believing and not just true belief. By performing an inquiry, I can eliminate luck from the belief-forming process (by justifying my beliefs) and, by eliminating luck, the outcome of the inquiry can be credited to me.

It could be argued that epistemic credit is unique to the practice of inquiry as I am unnecessarily individuating epistemic credit from a broader category of value that is credit in general. If credit is a general kind of value then it seems that I can get it from non-belief-forming processes and so it is not a unique source of value for inquiry.

However, I think the analogy may be misleading if it suggests that all kinds of credit have the same value. It seems correct to further individuate the types of credit and distinguish between moral and epistemic credit as two distinct values. This is because, if we do value epistemic credit and I will argue that we do, we value it separately from other kinds of credit. I take this claim to be for the most part intuitive. Getting moral credit is not sufficient for all the available credit value. The way we get credit affects the value that it has for us. We want all forms of credit, epistemic and others. In this sense it must be an individuated value. Acquiring credit for a belief is a distinct kind of value and cannot be collapsed into a general value like political value.

Inquiry is the only practice that can eliminate luck from the belief-forming process; it is the only practice in which we justify our beliefs. This claim is from the definition of inquiry. Inquiry refers to the practice of justifying beliefs, and as argued before justified beliefs are more likely to be true than unjustified beliefs. This is either because these beliefs are based upon good reason or, for the reliabilist, because they have a higher statistical likelihood of being true. Inquiry is therefore the only belief-

forming practice that can yield epistemic credit and so this particular kind of credit is uniquely a source of value for the practice of inquiry.

Here the value of true belief is necessary, but not sufficient for the value of epistemic credit. True believing is necessary for epistemic credit, because it is the epistemic good for which one is responsible. However, true belief is not sufficient as being responsible for the belief is equally necessary for this value and I will show that this added condition does derive from the value of true belief.

What is interesting about the relationship between epistemic credit and the value of true belief is that the presence of the value of epistemic credit means that not all the value of the practice of inquiry is tied up with true belief. The value of true belief is not all that is significant about inquiry; this practice can bring other value too.

The basic model of achievement that Riggs uses to explain epistemic credit and other kinds of credit also, is that achievement is responsibility for an independently valuable state of affairs. In the moral realm, my achievement is responsibility for a morally good state of affairs, while, Riggs argues, in the epistemic realm, it is the achievement of true belief. However, as argued earlier, there are other sources of value that are present as a result of inquiry; these are the indirect and direct values that an inquiry might have with regard to reliable believing. Riggs's account needs to be extended to include these other values. Establishing oneself as a reliable informant and believing reliably are achievements like being responsible for true belief. However, as the independently valuable states that account for the achievement are derived from the value of truth, these kinds of credit are equally dependent on the value of true belief as credit for true belief.

Another important kind of credit results from the fact that we do not only value our own true beliefs, but also the true beliefs of others. The value of the beliefs of others points to two different ways in which we can get credit. One way is from sharing true beliefs by testimony. This includes straightforward beliefs that we share with each other in our everyday lives, such as a belief about the time, or where the post office is, but it may be even more significant than this. It is intellectually satisfying to be able to share one's beliefs with an intellectual community. We often attempt to convince each other of our own beliefs (of which we are sure) despite the absence of the potential for any practical gain for either ourselves or others. This, I think, is analogically equivalent to composing a piece of music and it being heard by others. We want our beliefs to be experienced and accepted by others. This is because

if I can be deserving of credit for my true beliefs and as an informant, I can be deserving of credit for the true beliefs of others.

We also find value in teaching others to justify their own beliefs, so that they may have successful inquiries. Being a teacher involves responsibility for the success of a student's justifying methods in the future. This adds value to the practice of teaching, but a requirement of this practice is inquiry on behalf of the teachers. A teacher's inquiry will allow her to teach and help others achieve success in other inquiries. Therefore inquiry allows us to be in the position of gaining credit for the beliefs of others, even if it is not by direct - testimony.

There are multiple kinds of epistemic credit, but all appear to fit Riggs's basic model of achievement evident in the Achievement of Truth Account. The conditions of achievement or credit are responsibility for a good state of affairs and in the case of epistemic credit this seems to be responsibility for goods that are derived from the value of true belief.

I have supplemented the Achievement of Truth Account, but for the sake of convenience, I will refer to it by the same name and much of my discussion will be in terms of epistemic credit for true belief only. The details of the account are not important for the purposes in this thesis. What is important is that epistemic credit (for a variety of truth-derived values) is a unique source of value for the practice of inquiry that is not derived from the value of true belief and can explain some of the practice's significance in our lives.

In the next section I will give an account of one of Riggs's strongest arguments for the value of epistemic credit and use this to respond to a possible objection to the account.

Section B — Pride, Admiration and Epistemic Agency

As being deserving of credit relies on being responsible for something good or valuable, being recognised as being in this state is a positive evaluation. When credit is acknowledged, it is accompanied by positive attitudes like esteem, admiration and praise (towards others) or pride (toward oneself). I can admire someone for their positive effect on their community or be proud of myself for achieving my goals. Riggs takes the presence of the attitude to be an indicator of the presence of this value (as will I, later in this section). Although the good of deserving credit is not dependent on recognition (it is valuable to be deserving of credit, whether it is recognised or

not), these attitudes are often present when it is recognised. These attitudes are a reliable indicator of the presence of epistemic credit.

Riggs notes that we take these attitudes toward epistemic agents as a result of their beliefs.¹¹ I can be proud of my intellectual discoveries and we hold in esteem or admire knowledgeable people. Thus it seems that credit can be epistemic. I cannot be proud of true beliefs that are not reached by the practice of inquiry (those that are not justified). I do not admire someone for guessing correctly, nor do I admire someone for a true belief that they have adopted for pragmatic reasons only. True beliefs can, on the condition of the absence of luck only, be an epistemic achievement.

The conditions of credit and responsibility raise the issue of epistemic agency. Can we be responsible for beliefs as we are for actions? Can we be deserving of credit for beliefs that may not be under our control, in the same way that actions are?

The problem is that it needs to be shown that it is as appropriate to ascribe responsibility, and therefore credit, to the realm of beliefs as it is to ascribe it to the realm of actions. It has to be established that we are, in some sense, epistemic agents if we are to deserve credit for our beliefs. I will argue that we should be seen as epistemic agents, capable of deserving credit.

Riggs's argument in response to this issue appeals to the plausibility of compatibilist accounts of free will in the realm of action. If our actions are something for which we may be responsible even, if we do not have the kind of control it may seem we require, then he argues it is plausible that this can be said for beliefs too. Whatever grounds responsibility for actions may be what grounds responsibility for beliefs.¹²

This argument can be made stronger. This is because there is something that binds actions of a certain kind and beliefs of a certain kind together. These are the attitudes that we take toward beliefs and actions. The intuitive force of the argument against epistemic agency is severely undermined when one considers how frequently we judge agents on the basis of their beliefs. Pride and admiration are important because they are attitudes that we take toward agents for both actions and beliefs (under certain conditions) and so suggest that, if there is agency, it is something that both our actions and our beliefs can have in common.

¹¹ Riggs 2002b: 95.

¹² Riggs 2002a: 106



Not only are these attitudes taken in relation to actions and beliefs but, we also appear to discriminate between actions or beliefs that are worthy of these judgments in the same way. Just as actions have to meet certain conditions to result in admiration so too do beliefs. The same kinds of luck undermine and prevent attitudes such as pride and admiration in the realm of belief as they do in action. For example, Riggs's condition of the absence of luck is a condition that is consistently relevant in both the realm of agency for beliefs and the realm of agency for actions. I do not feel pride for a valuable action that I performed by luck and I do not feel pride for a true belief formed by pragmatic reasons. Of course this is only one kind of luck that eliminates responsibly and compatibilism might show that there are some kinds of luck that do not jeopardise agency for both beliefs and action. However, this kind of luck is a condition that both share, indicated by the presence of pride and admiration under the relevant conditions.

It may even be argued that it these attitudes that define the area of agency all - together. It is from these attitudes that we infer agency in actions and to deny this indicative function for beliefs would be applying an unwarranted double standard.

In this chapter I have attempted to give an account of what epistemic credit is by providing two of Riggs's arguments for the Achievement of Truth Account. I have also defended the account from the possible problem presented by the issue of epistemic agency. I will now move onto one of Riggs's arguments for his account that I think fails, before providing my own arguments for the value of epistemic credit.

Chapter Two

The Requirements of Knowledge

In this chapter I will consider one of Riggs's arguments for the existence of epistemic credit that I consider to be unsuccessful. He argues that, in order to establish an intuitively satisfying value for the state of knowledge, one must appeal to the value of epistemic credit. I will show that the truth-derived values, which I argued for in the first part of this thesis, can provide an intuitively adequate account of the value of the state of knowledge.

Knowledge in general is taken to be more valuable than any combination of an incomplete collection of its components. Each condition of knowledge therefore adds value to the state. Riggs's argument deals with the value of justified true belief over the value of true belief, where the added value of the condition of justification is important. As justified true belief is a product that is unique to inquiry, its value will be explained by sources of value for the practice. Riggs's argument is in two parts. He argues, negatively, that the truth-derived values are insufficient to give an intuitively satisfying account of the value of justified true belief. He then argues that epistemic credit can provide a satisfying account. This shows that, in order to account for the value of knowledge, we must accept the value of epistemic credit. I will give an exposition of his argument and show that, although the positive aspect is plausible, his negative argument fails and that truth-derived accounts of value can give a satisfying explanation of the value of justified true belief. This means that, although epistemic credit might be able to account for some of the value of knowledge, it does not have to be accepted as a value in order to account for the value of this state.

As argued in the first part of this thesis, there are various ways of seeing how justification may derive value from the value of true belief, but, for my purposes here, I require an account that is immune from the "Value Problem". This is most clearly a problem for more basic accounts of derived value, which argue that justified beliefs are valuable because they are likely to be true. These are accounts that give justification an instrumental value in relation to the value of true belief. Justified beliefs are likely to be true so they are a means to securing true beliefs. This is equivalent to the first, direct kind of way in which inquiry can lead to reliable believing that I argued for earlier in this thesis.

The problem for these accounts is their apparent inability to explain the value of the requirement of justification for knowledge, or the value of justified true belief over the value of true belief. The existence of this value is not in question, only its inability to account for the value of justified true belief over mere true belief is problematic. We seem to have an intuitive commitment to the claim that justified true belief is more valuable than true belief. Standard truth-derived accounts of the value of justification are insufficient as they cannot show why a justified true belief is more valuable than a merely true belief. This is the Value Problem. I will now provide a more detailed explanation of how the problem arises.¹³

If, as in the direct kind of reliabilism, the property of justification derives all its value from being a means to true belief, then it is impossible to explain how justification can add value to an already true belief (as we intuitively think that it should). It is easier to understand this if the problem is related to Kvanvig's game analogy for believing.¹⁴ Kvanvig compares belief-formation to a game where the aim of the game is true belief. If my goal is A and B is valuable only because it helps me to achieve A, then B has no value after A is already achieved. This is because true belief is the only source of value and so justification gets all its value from true belief.

Linda Zagzebski uses the example of a reliable espresso machine in her paper to explain the value problem.¹⁵ She argues that we only value reliable espresso machines because we value good espresso, so if I have a good espresso it would make no difference to me whether that espresso was made by a reliable machine or not. This is analogically similar to the relationship between reliably true beliefs and true beliefs. It follows that this direct kind of truth-derived account does not satisfactorily capture what we take to be valuable about justification. This not the value that makes justified true believing more valuable than true belief. If our intuition concerning the value of justified true beliefs over true beliefs is correct then there must be another source of value for inquiry that explains the added value of justification, when combined with a true belief.

In "Reliability and the Value of Knowledge"¹⁶, Riggs uses the Value Problem to argue for his account of epistemic credit. Riggs argues that we can only account for

¹³ The Value Problem is discussed in depth in papers by Ward Jones (Jones 1997: 424-427), Linda Zagzebski (Zagzebski 2003) and Wayne D. Riggs (Riggs 2002b).

¹⁴ Kvanvig 2003: 53-53.

¹⁵ Zagzebski 2003: 13.

¹⁶ Riggs 2002b.

all the value of knowledge if we deny that all the value of justification is truth-derived¹⁷. Although Riggs's argument is focussed on a state, rather than the practice of inquiry, justification is an outcome that is unique to inquiry and so the point can be made in terms of the practice, as well as the state. He argues that there must be non-truth-derived sources of value for the practice of inquiry. In order to understand the requirements of knowledge as valuable, he argues, we need to recognize an additional fundamental value of epistemic credit. This, as explained earlier, is the value of being responsible for an epistemically valuable state of affairs (analogically equivalent to the value of being responsible for a morally good state of affairs). He argues that accounts of epistemic value that attempt to derive the value of knowledge from the value of true belief alone fail as they cannot explain the requirement of the "absence of luck" for knowledge.

As shown earlier, Riggs notes that justification functions such that it is able to eliminate accidentality from the belief-forming process. It is not enough for knowledge that I have a true belief. That true belief must also be linked to me non-accidentally; the belief must be true because of the way I reached it. This is because knowledge requires justification and justification functions to eliminate luck.

The requirement of justification can only add value to true belief, Riggs argues, if there is an additional epistemic value, epistemic credit. I value being responsible for a true belief and the kind of luck that the requirement of justification rules out is a condition of this responsibility. This is the same for other areas of credit where certain kinds of luck undermine epistemic credit. Even if I am a skilled netball player and I get a shot in by luck, I will not get credit for this because my achievement was undermined by luck.

However, this account of value is not necessary to account for the additional value of justification. This is because there is at least one truth-derived account, for which I have already argued, that is able to answer the Value Problem. This is the account provided by Edward Craig in *Knowledge and the State of Nature*¹⁸ and supplemented by Ward Jones in "Why Do We Value Knowledge?"¹⁹ This is the account that derives the value of justification of the belief of one agent from the value

¹⁷ He refers to the dual values of getting to the true belief and avoiding falsehood, but I have, for simplicity's sake, condensed these into one (the value of true belief).

¹⁸ Craig 1990.

¹⁹ Jones 1997.

of true belief in another or from the value of future true beliefs by appealing to the indicative function of justification.

Craig avoids The Value Problem by giving justification an indicative function. Craig recognises that someone's success in one instance of belief-forming (a true belief) can help in another, if that belief is justified. He has pointed to another way in which a true belief can be valuable; this is that someone else's true belief can be instrumental in the formation of my true belief.

The Value Problem rests on the fact that for a truth-derived account of the value of justification any true belief is also sufficient to yield all truth-derived value. If all available value is present, then no further condition can add any value. Craig has shown that there are some true beliefs, the true beliefs of others that may have value (because they are true) without having all the intellectual value that another kind of true belief might have. What is of ultimate value is my true belief and so justification can add value to an informant's true belief. The true belief of the informant's belief is necessary, but not sufficient for all the available value (derived from the true belief of the inquirer's belief, based on testimony).

This kind of value is still truth-derived. That a belief is justified (and not just true) is important as it may help someone to gain that true belief on the basis of testimony. The justification of someone else's beliefs is important only because it is allows me to acquire true beliefs that I value. According to Craig's account, I value the justification of the beliefs of others as they help me to achieve my aim of true belief.

Jones's account of the value of justification for my own true beliefs is also able to solve the value problem. The relationship between inquirer and informant or the practice of testimony will always avoid the value problem because, in this relationship, the true belief of the informant's belief is only valuable if it also justified. Jones's account can be characterised in terms of this kind of relationship because my past beliefs can be the objects of testimony on which to form new beliefs. That a belief is reliably true can add value to a true belief because its reliability is accompanied by an indicative property that makes the holder of the belief a recognisably reliable informant. One reliably true belief can lead to another reliably true belief via testimony; this is something that a true belief on its own cannot do.

Riggs argues for the inability of the indicative account of monistic value to explain the presence of the absence of luck in all cases of knowledge.²⁰ He argues that the problem with the appeal to this kind of utility is that it is possible that all the elements that are required for this value can be present when knowledge is not. It follows that there is a condition of knowledge that does not derive value from this indicative function.

The absence of luck, Riggs argues, is not required for the practical utility of acquiring true beliefs from epistemically virtuous agents. He provides the example of Savannah and Madison, where both believe truly that p and both have been established as reliable informants because they share a property that makes them reliably believe truly about beliefs of this kind.²¹ The difference is that Madison believes because of this property, while Savannah in this instance does not; she has made a mistake (she does not have knowledge because she believes truly by luck). Riggs argues that if the value for the belief is derived from the practical utility of having reliable informants, then there is no way to explain why Madison's knowledge is more valuable than Savannah's true belief. I, as an inquirer, will accept both their beliefs because I take both to be reliable informants and so I could benefit from both their true beliefs.

However, this can only be if the value depends on only one kind of indicative function. I can get a true belief from Savannah because I take her status as a reliable informant to indicate that her belief will be true. The indicative functions of the properties of beliefs are numerous and, in a lot of contexts, the indicative function depends on the absence of luck.

This is best shown by the fact that inferring from Savannah's reliability to the truth of the belief depends on the assumption of the absence of luck. If the person gathering information using Savannah as an informant knew that, in this case, Savannah did not believe because of the property that makes her reliable, she would not infer the truth of the belief. The assumption of the absence of luck works when one is using the truth of a belief as an indicator of an informant's reliability. In some contexts we infer from the truth of someone's beliefs to their general reliability as an informant in a particular field. This again is done under the assumption of the absence

²⁰ Riggs 2002a: 97-101.

²¹ Riggs 2002a: 99-101.

of luck; if I am aware that the true belief is not justified I have no reason to infer Savannah's general reliability.

Jones's alternative truth-derived source of value provides a further response to Riggs's objection to the ability of the indicative accounts ability to account for the absence of luck (justification). This is the objection based on the example of Savannah and Madison explained earlier. Savannah is also missing something else of truth-derived value that could explain the requirement of the absence of luck. This is the value with which Jones supplemented Craig's account (also derived purely from the value of true belief). Savannah cannot be in the valuable relationship of an informant with herself, because if upon reflection, she realises that her belief is the result of luck, she will abandon it and so not benefit from the value it has because it is true.

Thus, by appealing to the practical utility of reliable informants, it is possible to explain the value of the absence of luck as a truth-derived value, while providing an intuitively satisfying explanation of the value of knowledge. This is what Craig's account of the indicative function of justification depends upon; it is only when luck is shown to be absent (by the presence of justification) or assumed absent that we can infer the truth of a belief from the properties of agents or beliefs.

Another way of putting this point might be to say that the conditions of epistemic credit have truth-derived value. It could be argued that an account of epistemic credit will reveal that the value of true belief can explain the value of epistemic credit and that the value of true belief is sufficient for epistemic credit, is instrumental for true belief. This is because the conditions of epistemic credit provide the link between a belief and an informant that we require when engaging in testimony. Testimony is valuable because it gets us true beliefs and epistemic credit is valuable because it allows us to attribute certain kinds of beliefs to an agent and, on the basis of this, to take their testimony as reliable. It may even be argued that the experience of pride and admiration is nothing more than the appreciation of this value.

Later I will argue that epistemic credit cannot be derived from the value of true belief because we value it in contexts where it is not required to ground the practice of testimony. We have pride in beliefs formed without the absence of luck, even if they cannot help us or others to form true beliefs or future true beliefs. Riggs's argument fails because he focuses on the value of knowledge in general. However, his positive argument is not entirely implausible. Epistemic credit may account partially

for the value of knowledge, but this cannot be established by examining the knowledge in general. It has to be shown that we value the absence of luck over and above its truth-derived value.

Truth-derived accounts of epistemic value can account for the condition of the “absence of luck” or justification and explain its value (inferred from the insight that it is a condition of knowledge). Riggs’s additional epistemic good is not required and his argument fails. This is because the absence of luck (the property of justification) can derive value from at least two sources that explain how it adds value to an already true belief, and one of those sources is truth-derived.

Chapter Three

Difficulty and the Value of Justifying Methods

The last two chapters of this part of the thesis are devoted to arguing for epistemic credit as a source of value for the practice of inquiry. In Chapter 4, I will show how this can be established by the inference from goal to value (the same inference I used to argue that true belief is a source of value for inquiry). In this chapter I will use an argument similar to Riggs's argument from the requirements of knowledge. I will show that there are contexts in which the degree to which we value certain kinds of justifying methods cannot be explained by truth-derived value. I will argue that the contextual variants that accompany these different degrees in value (in some contexts) support epistemic credit as a value that cannot wholly be derived from the value of truth. This is because the value of a justifying method is dependent on the degree of credit that a justifying method yields.

The value of different justifying methods is the basis for an argument similar to the argument discussed in the previous chapter. The argument for the requirements of knowledge relied on our having an intuitive commitment to the presence of a value that could not be explained by truth-derived value (but could be explained by the value of epistemic credit). In order to hold to these intuitive commitments, we would have to accept epistemic credit as a source of value for inquiry. I argued that this argument, formed around the Value Problem, did not work, as truth-derived accounts of value could explain our intuitive commitments relating to the value of justified true belief. However, another, similar kind of argument can be shown to support the value of epistemic credit and, more specifically the credit we get for true belief. This is because our intuitive commitments to the value of different justifying methods cannot be explained by truth-derived accounts of value. I will show that epistemic credit can explain these intuitive commitments. If we do not want to abandon them, we must be committed to epistemic credit as a source of value for inquiry.

In different contexts, we tend to value some forms of justification over others (even when the degree of warrant they offer is the same). For example, in a science class at school, it is possible for a teacher to give trustworthy testimony of the outcome of an experiment, and yet we consider it to be of more value for the outcome to be discovered by the pupil for him or herself. We might in some contexts also insist

that someone does not use a calculator to establish the answer to a sum because this justifying method is not as valuable as calculating the answer for oneself.

It is possible to explain some of these variations, like these particular examples, by appealing to the value of true belief only. A person's belief may be valuable because it shows that they are able to successfully use certain kinds of justifying methods. This might establish the pupil as reliable informant for herself and others. This has truth-derived value, as argued in the previous chapter. Also it may help the agent to develop skills that will allow her to form more true beliefs in the future and so the method will have more instrumental value (in relation to true belief) than learning on the basis of testimony or relying on a calculator.

This appeal to truth-derived values is not sufficient to explain our preferences in all contexts. Our preference for some justifying methods, in some contexts, persists after we have established for ourselves and others that we are reliable in this area. This preference cannot be explained by the value of the particular beliefs or by the value of proving our reliability. This is because we do not need as many beliefs, based on a particular justifying method, as we want to establish these skills and our reliability. So it is possible to already have established oneself as a skilled mathematician and yet still find value in formulating solutions that one could form with equal warrant by testimony from another skilled mathematician. A skilled and recognised mathematician might prefer to solve the problem herself, rather than use the justifying method of testimony and so wants more beliefs based on this method than are required to establish her reliability.

A purely truth-derived account of the varying degrees of value assumes that these justifying activities are valuable only if on another occasion I will be able to successfully perform them again. Becoming reliable and establishing oneself as such is only valuable if this helps to form true beliefs in the future. Yet there appears to be added value in successfully completing a sophisticated mathematical problem, rather than relying on testimony from a mathematician, even if it were not possible to retain the mathematical skill.

In short, there must be another contextual variant, a common feature that explains the added value of the justifying methods. I will show that this contextual variant is the varying degree of epistemic credit that the methods result in and that epistemic credit is necessary to explain this value.

In the example above, I have used to isolate the value of epistemic credit in relation to the value of particular justifying methods; I have eliminated cases where an agent has established themselves as reliable. My argument here will be directly in support of the credit we get for achievement of true belief and not the other kinds of credit that I mentioned such as credit for being a reliable believer. This does not mean that they play no role in explaining the variations in value of justifying methods in particular contexts.

The examples I am using have been constructed to isolate credit value, but this does not mean that this value plays no role in other examples. The degree of value of justifying methods can in one context be affected by a variety of sources of value, but an example where only one is present makes the values easier to distinguish. I will argue that epistemic credit for the achievement of true belief is one factor that affects the degrees of value, but I will take it to be an argument for the value of epistemic credit in general.

One thing that suggests that this source of value is epistemic credit is the degree of admiration and pride we may have in relation to beliefs based on preferred justifying methods. I have more pride if I have solved a maths problem myself than if I have established the belief on the basis of testimony. Our responses to achievement in general, within the moral and other domains, are these attitudes. We can be proud of our athletic accomplishments or admire the accomplishments of others. As argued earlier, these two attitudes — pride and admiration — can be taken as indicators of the presence of credit or achievement and so the degree to which they are present here suggests that some justifying methods may result in more of this kind of value. The degree of pride I feel toward myself about a belief varies along with my preference for some justifying methods, in some contexts, and it also varies with the degree of credit that I deserve.

In order to show that these justifying methods are deriving extra value from the degree of epistemic credit they yield, all that needs to be shown is how the nature of these methods affects the degree of credit that they yield. I will show how and why this is possible by appealing to one possible method of measuring the degree to which one is responsible for bringing about a state of affairs (and so the degree of credit one deserves). It seems, I will argue, that we deserve more credit for things that are more *difficult* to bring about and it is for this reason we value some kinds of justifying methods over others. Some justifying methods are more difficult than others

(depending on the context) and these can be more valuable because they yield more credit.

As mentioned earlier, Riggs argues that epistemic credit or achievement is a matter of degree.²² I can deserve more credit for some things than for others. For example, I deserve credit for the successful outcome of a project, whether I work alone or in a group, but if I work alone, I deserve more credit and I can be more proud of the results. This example is from the realm of action, however, it may be extended analogically to the realm of beliefs and epistemic credit.

Riggs argues that the degree of credit someone deserves is proportional to his/her causal salience for a state of affairs.²³ The absence of luck is one condition of causal salience. The degree to which we are responsible for something is measured by how big a part we play in causing that state of affairs. I will feature less in terms of casual salience for the result of a project that was achieved by a group than I would have if I had worked alone and the degree of credit I deserve varies accordingly.

It is not necessary to be committed to a causal account of responsibility because, whatever the account, it must be able to account for the fact that credit and responsibility is a matter of degree and the conditions that appear to affect the degree to which we are responsible. Riggs shows that the degree of accidentality is one feature that affects the casual salience of an agent. The less luck involved in a good outcome of my actions, the more responsible I will be and the more credit I will deserve. This is one contextual variant that may determine an agent's causal salience and the degree of epistemic credit that I may gain in a specific context.²⁴

I suggest that another factor also determines explanatory or causal salience in action that may be more relevant to my discussion here. This is that it seems that the more skill is required of the agent to bring about the state of affairs (or the more difficult the task), the more credit they deserve. A person's actions may be salient in bringing about a state of affairs as a result of other factors, but a person will deserve more credit if those actions are difficult and require skill. This can be illustrated analogically in the moral domain of achievement. I may be awarded credit for bringing about a moral state of affairs, yet I will deserve more if, in order to do this, I had to make complex moral choices and solve moral conflicts.

²² Riggs 2002b: 91.

²³ Riggs 2002b: 91.

²⁴ John Greco gives alternative conditions of casual salience with regard to his account of epistemic credit (Greco 2003).

The varying values of justifying methods (that provide equal warrant) can be shown to vary in value in accordance with the extent to which they require more skills from the epistemic agent or are, intellectually, more difficult. It is more of a challenge for me, in most contexts, to solve a maths problem than to rely on testimony. This is why there is a preferred method of justification in this context. However, if forming a belief on the basis of testimony (where, for example, establishing the reliability of an informant is more difficult than finding out something for oneself) is more difficult, it would result in more credit.

The degree of added value that a justifying method may bring to a belief appears to be proportional to the difficulty of that method. Truth-derived values may be able to explain this in terms of the instrumental worth of difficult methods in relation to true beliefs. These methods are likely to lead to true beliefs for an agent or for others (via testimony) that would not have otherwise been reached. However, this again is dependent on the agent's ability to repeat these methods in the future. This assumption is false and so the relationship between the degree of difficulty of a justifying method and the degree of value that is apparent in some contexts cannot be explained by truth-derived accounts.

In some contexts, the value of a difficult method may be outweighed by the value of an easier method. If, for example, I need to know the answer to a maths problem within a limited space of time, it may be quicker for me to rely on the testimony of an informant who has already formed the belief. However, where these conflicts are not present, I might prefer to solve the problem myself, because of the credit that it yields.

It seems then that our preference for some justifying methods, in some contexts, depends on the difficulty of those methods, because the more difficult the method, the more credit I deserve (indicated by the varying degrees of attitudes like pride and admiration). The degree of value possessed by a justifying method is affected by the contextual variant of the degree of epistemic credit (proportional to the difficulty of the task). This is indicated by the degree of pride and admiration we have with regard to both difficult actions and beliefs that are difficult to form. Epistemic credit is able to explain our intuitive preference for some justifying methods in specific contexts, which an appeal to the value of true belief cannot. Therefore our preference for some justifying methods appears to support epistemic credit as a source of value for the practice of inquiry.

Chapter Four

Epistemic Credit as a Goal of Inquiry

Earlier I argued that the goals of practice reveal the sources of value for that practice, or at the very least reveal what we take to be the sources of value for that practice. I will now show that we can look to the goals of inquiry to establish epistemic credit as a source of value for the practice. I will argue that, by examining the features of some epistemic testing, it is possible to show that we sometimes engage in inquiries with the goal of achieving valuable belief (the goal of epistemic credit).

The fact that true belief is the constitutive goal of inquiry is often used to defend an entirely truth-derived account of the value of the states that we may only reach by engaging in an inquiry. This I will argue is wrong because, although true belief is the constitutive and thus constant goal of inquiry, I will show that it is not the exclusive goal of inquiry and more importantly there are other goals of inquiry that seek a value that is unique to the practice of inquiry and that cannot be derived from the value of true belief. I will argue for two goals that undermine the exclusivity of the goal of true belief. Later I will argue that sometimes we have the goal of achieving a skilful performance and in this chapter I will show that epistemic credit can be a goal of inquiry.

Before arguing that epistemic credit is a goal of belief it is necessary to make some clarifying points about the inference from goal to value. These points have implications for my argument for epistemic credit and how it is possible to reveal it as a goal of inquiry.

I would like to begin by distinguishing between two types of goals that may be involved in this inference. This distinction will become important later as I will show how it will affect the ease with which one may determine whether epistemic credit is the goal of believing. The distinction is between what I will stipulate as “aims” and “purposes” (two types of goals). An aim is a goal one has in order to meet some further goal (a purpose). For example, I might have the goal of discovering what time the bus arrives, but this is only with the further goal of getting to the bus stop on time. Here my aim is to form a true belief about the arrival of the bus, but my purpose is to catch the bus. The value of the one goal is derived from the value of the other. For my purposes in this thesis, I am looking for goals that possess value (or perceived value) that is uniquely available to us through the practice of inquiry.

I think it is also necessary to make clear that this inference does not mean that I must always aim for something if I am to derive value from it. Sometimes we get unexpected value without necessarily pursuing it. It seems that to be a source of value for a domain a goal need not be constant. The fact that it is a goal in some contexts tells us whether it is a possible source of value for all contexts. This is especially true for activities that may have multiple sources of value because I may aim for one and get the other. For example, Jane undergoes rhinoplasty surgery. Her goal was to alleviate breathing difficulties, but at the same time (as an added bonus) she becomes more attractive. Here the source of value for rhinoplasty surgery is that it both helps breathing problems and it makes one more attractive. They are both sources of value, despite there being only one goal in this particular context. Many people undergo rhinoplasty surgery for the sake of this very goal. The fact that something is a goal of a practice in *some contexts* indicates it as a source of value for the practice in general. I will show that there are some contexts in which the goal of true belief is merely an intellectual aim required for the satisfaction of another intellectual goal, which can be the purpose of some instances of belief-formation.

I will now, in light of these two clarifying points, show how, in some contexts, epistemic credit can be revealed as a goal of inquiry and thus a possible source of value for all inquiries.

It may be problematic to isolate alternative goals in an inquiry. This is because the goal of true belief is the constitutive goal of the practice and so is necessarily constant. This means that it might be easy to overlook other possible goals. The distinction between aim and purpose made earlier in this chapter becomes important here as it affects how we are to determine whether epistemic credit is a goal of inquiry. As epistemic credit is dependent on the value of true belief, true belief will always feature as part of the goal to achieve this value. This means that if epistemic credit is a goal then it will be a purpose in relation to the aim of true belief. I have to get the true belief to get credit for a belief, so in aiming for this credit (as my purpose) I must aim for true belief. This means that, even when epistemic credit is a goal of an inquiry, true belief will also be a goal. The necessity of the true belief goal for inquiries that aim at epistemic credit partly explains why epistemic credit is unique to the practice of inquiry (the valuable good that I am responsible for when I have epistemic credit are states that can only be the outcome of inquiry, where I use justification as a means to my goals of true belief). This creates a problem for

identifying the goal of inquiry because it is not always clear whether true belief is the intellectual purpose or the intellectual aim.

To help identify the goals of inquiry I will introduce another epistemic practice: epistemic testing. Testing is a broad practice used in all domains. We can test whether someone has brushed her teeth properly or if someone is fit enough to take part in an athletic event. The tests from these examples are the kind of tests used to check whether engagement in other practices has been successful, such as whether my training for the event has been successful. Epistemic testing is used to check the outcome of practices in the epistemic domain.

Most epistemic testing appears to relate closely to inquiry. We can use epistemic testing to determine whether the goals of inquiry have been met. For example, there are tests used to check that an inquiry that has the purpose of true belief has been successful. I might perform an inquiry to ensure I have true beliefs about the rules of the road. To ensure that this inquiry has been successful, I write a test. The purpose of the test is to check that I have true beliefs and therefore that the goal of the inquiry has been met.

As shown in the example above, where a test accompanies an inquiry, that test will reveal what the goal of that inquiry is. Its purpose is to check that this goal has been met. This is true for beliefs where true belief is an aim and not the epistemic purpose of the test. There is one kind of test that relies on the indicative function of justification. This is where the ability to establish certain propositions is evidence of a skill that provides a basis on which to trust an informant (with regard to beliefs formed in a similar way on another occasion). An example of this would be an accountancy test, where what is important is the ability to do accounting and not the results of the examples used for the test. The purpose of the "testee" is to establish himself as a reliable informant in a specific field and it is the goal of the tester to establish the testee's trustworthiness. The aim of the agent being tested is to establish the truth regarding the specific questions of the examination but this serves the purpose of proving that one has become reliable in using the methods involved in the inquiry.

Given that looking at a test can reveal the purpose of inquiry, it is possible to reveal epistemic credit as the purpose of some inquiries and so a possible source of value for other beliefs in the epistemic domain. Some particular types of academic testing seem to be an example of testing that reveals epistemic credit as the goal of

some inquiries. I would value having a master's degree in mathematics or any other science. I am required to perform at least one inquiry to get this degree and the results of the inquiry must be examined to see whether or not it was successful. The examination does not check only that the inquiry has resulted in a true belief as it requires that belief also be justified. One thing that the requirement of justification might do is to provide grounds for the examiner to think that the claim of the examination is true. However this cannot be all that it is doing. This is because it matters what kind of justifying method you use. For the most part, it matters that the justifying method is of sufficient difficulty and that it provides grounds on which one can attribute the outcome of the inquiry being examined to the inquirer. Testimony is insufficient for these examinations and they require some degree of independent work.

Ensuring that the resulting belief is justified upon specific methods goes beyond checking that the agent undergoing the tests is a reliable informant in terms of these methods because these examinations are worthwhile for inquiries done by already reliable informants. Therefore this value cannot be said to be derived from the value of true belief. They are also worthwhile if the same candidate could not pass the test again in the future, if they do not retain the established skill. The fact that the success of the test results in pride suggests that there is credit or achievement at stake. These tests check that I am deserving of credit by requiring that the result of inquiry be a true belief reached with the absence of luck (hence the requirement of justification) and a sufficient degree of credit. Therefore the purpose of the inquiry that the examination checks is epistemic credit and so epistemic credit is a source of value for the epistemic domain.

It might be argued that this is not enough to establish that the purpose of the inquiry is epistemic credit. This is because there are two other things at stake that may be the goal. These are the actual attainment of the degree and the recognition one might gain as a result of the degree.

Of course these other valuable goals depend on epistemic credit being valuable, this is what the recognition is for and the degree tells us that the inquirer has passed an examination for which epistemic credit is a requirement.

I have not provided an account of the value of epistemic credit, but it must go beyond being instrumental for degrees or recognition because these two things pick out and are a response to something that has independent value. It is conceivable that

an agent might aim for epistemic credit only to get recognition. This kind of goal cannot support my argument because I want to show that epistemic credit is sometimes a goal of inquiry (and this must be the goal for the value of epistemic credit and not its instrumental value in allowing for recognition).

It may be possible to construct examples where testing of this kind is less formal and does not result in a degree or recognition, but I do not think that this is necessary. There are other ways to get a degree and recognition for it. I could probably even buy one. I think it is clear that we most often prefer the process of inquiry and testing over and above these other methods. This is partly because this is not all we are after; we want epistemic credit too. In most cases these tests do not only result in recognition from others but also pride on behalf of the inquirer. This pride is a result of the agent's recognition that they have epistemic credit, part of what they wanted from the inquiry that has been examined. This pride, it can safely be assumed, is, for the most part, as result of reaching one's goal, and acquiring credit.

Testing reveals that, although my aim might be true belief, I can have further intellectual goals that this aim serves and, as goals of the practice of inquiry, these can be seen as sources of value for epistemic agents, available to us by engaging in inquiries. This may only establish epistemic credit as a perceived value and yet, by comparing it analogically to other sources of credit, there seems little reason to think that it is not in fact valuable. I have already assumed that the goals of inquiry, in general, are not misinformed.

As I have argued before, the fact that we may not have these goals in all contexts does not undermine them as possible sources of value for these contexts. Epistemic credit is thus a source of value for inquiry and this undermines truth-derived values as the only sources of value for the practice.

Part Three: The Achievement of a Skilful Epistemic Performance

The final source of value for which I will be arguing is the value of epistemic performance credit, the credit that we get for skilful performances of the practice of inquiry. This value is unique as it implies that there is a source of value for inquiry that is wholly independent of the value of true belief; value for which the value true belief is not necessary except as the goal of the practice of inquiry. This further undermines the appeal to the value of true belief to explain the importance of the practice of inquiry. I will argue that inquiry has value that is not dependent to the value of true belief at all.

I will introduce this value with an argument by analogy from another domain of value. Riggs's model of epistemic achievement, the Achievement of Truth Account, can be extended (by analogy) into another form of achievement that does not rely on the value of true belief. This is the Skilful Performance Account, which is an account of a different kind of epistemic credit (epistemic performance credit). This is the credit that we get for epistemic performances because they are skilful. They are performances that can only be delivered when engaging in an inquiry. I will support this analogy with examples that appear to instantiate this value. There is also reason to think that this kind of credit can be a goal of inquiry in the same way that epistemic credit is. Thus I will show that the inference from the goal of practice to a source of value of practice supports the value of epistemic performance credit. I will rely on many of the arguments from earlier in this thesis to support my account. The last chapter in this section will consist of responses to two objections that may be made to the Skilful Performance Account of epistemic value. These are objections to the plausibility of these performances having value that is independent of the value of true belief and to my claim that these performances have a value that is unique to inquiry.

Chapter One

Performance Credit

This chapter is devoted to both introducing and arguing for the Skilful Performance Account of Value. The two sections provide two kinds of arguments for the existence of a kind of epistemic credit (epistemic performance credit) that is different to Riggs's account of epistemic credit, featured in the Achievement of Truth Account. I will argue for the account and the existence of this credit by analogy. This analogy is similar to Riggs's use of analogy for the Achievement of Truth Account. I will then go on to show, by example, that this analogy must be correct. The examples reveal that epistemic performance credit is able to explain the extent of value and credit involved in some true and some false beliefs, value for which Riggs's notion of epistemic credit cannot account. I will also show how this value displaces true belief as necessary in accounting for all the value of inquiry, because skilful performance credit has value that is not truth-dependent.

Section A — Argument by Analogy

There is something interesting that emerges from the analogical arguments for epistemic credit. As shown earlier, the value of being responsible for an epistemically good belief can be seen to be analogous to the value of being responsible for a morally good state of affairs. In both cases, I value the goods produced (true belief or a morally good state of affairs), but I also value being responsible for these goods. There is another analogical equivalent and this is the value of being responsible for actions in the realm of sport. Riggs uses the example of a pool player where it is possible to get credit for a good shot in pool, on condition of the absence of luck.²⁵

Moral credit is structurally similar to Riggs's model of epistemic credit. Here credit results from being responsible for something that is independently good. Moral credit is dependent on there being a morally good state of affairs for which one is responsible, while epistemic credit is dependent on an epistemically good (true) belief. Some examples of sports are similar to this. Riggs's pool player can be responsible for the value of winning the game (or not) depending on the role of luck in his accurate shots. However, there are some activities, and most prominently in

²⁵ Riggs 2002b: 89.

sports, where it is difficult to determine what is valuable at all when luck is involved because there is no extra value to which to appeal. And yet, if they are attributable to an agent, they are achievements, something for which an agent deserves credit as expressed by the admiration that we have for them.

We engage in many activities with somewhat arbitrary results, but whose results, like some true beliefs, are difficult to come by and so require a skilful performance. Take climbing mountains or running marathons (non-competitively), we see these as worthwhile, even if a description of the resulting state of affairs, without appealing to the performance required, seems arbitrary, (such as “travelling 42.2km” or “reaching geographical point x”). We are still motivated to meet these goals and so there must be an independent source of value, so that, as a result of the goals, people feel pride at their “achievement” and we admire those that can “achieve” in this way. As the goal has little value alone, this cannot be the kind of achievement that Riggs discusses because according to Riggs model of achievement one must be responsible for an independently valuable state of affairs. This achievement is not dependent on the goal being met, but rather on the skilfulness of the performance. I can admire someone who has run 42km and not quite reached their goal of 42.2km because there is a sufficient degree of skill involved in running 42km, it is a difficult thing to do.

Furthermore, the fact that the degree of pride and admiration present is proportional to the difficulty of the task suggests that the credit one can get from these activities is dependent on the skill involved in accomplishing the tasks. I am more proud of running 10km in 45minutes than I am of running it in 1 hour. We admire a climber that reach a point by a journey that no one else has been able to before more than climbers that use a frequently travelled route. This can all be explained by the fact that what we admire is the difficulty of the accomplishment. The cases where the sense of achievement is stronger, as suggested by the relevant degrees of pride and admiration are cases where the accomplishment took more skill or are more difficult.

As I argued in the second part of this thesis, the degree to which Riggs’s model of epistemic credit is present may depend on the degree of skill involved in bringing about the belief, but perhaps this dependence is stronger than it initially seems. The sports example suggests that there is a sufficient degree of skill that may make an action valuable independently of the value of its result. This kind of achievement is evident in examples where pride and admiration cannot be explained by appealing to the achievement of an independently valuable state of affairs. These

examples include cases where the product of the performance has arbitrary value or where the desired outcome of the performance has not been achieved. This value appears to be proportional to the relative level of difficulty or skill required for the performance.

It is not true that the value of these actions can be reduced to the value of being good indications of someone's useful skills and abilities. Many of these actions do not have to be repeatable to be worthwhile. There is value in having run a marathon just once. It seems rather that there is value in performing something that requires skill beyond the instrumental value of the skill and the value of the product produced. It is valuable to do something that everybody knows you can do (and therefore is non-indicative) if doing it is difficult or skilful. I can admire someone for their skill or abilities, but I can also admire them for a performance of their skill, these two positive evaluations are distinct. For example, I may admire someone for being a good dancer, but this is different from the admiration I feel toward a display of her good dancing skills. We can give credit for individuated skilful performances.

The model of achievement evident in these practices does not require a valuable product of an action. I think that the value of our belief-forming practices can in part be explained on a similar model of achievement. This is different to Riggs's model of achievement where one is responsible for achieving a true or independently valuable belief. According to my model of achievement, the Skilful Performance Account, achievement is sometimes responsibility for a skilful performance.

I have shown how this kind of achievement is a source of value in the realm of action. This can be extended analogically to the realm of beliefs. Riggs's analogical argument from Part One, where it was shown that the similarities between action and belief suggest they share a source of value, provides grounds to think that this is another source of value that the two areas may share. If the realm of achievement in sports can be extended to the achievement of skilful performances, then it seems that the same would be true for believing. This means that there is a value for believing that is independent of any other intellectual value, including true belief. The model of achievement does not require an independently valuable state of affairs for which an agent deserving credit must be responsible, therefore this value does not require true belief to be valuable. This is the Skilful Performance Account, this is different from, but can be taken in conjunction with Riggs's Achievement of Truth Account.

Section B — Argument by Example

Having shown that there are analogical grounds on which to accept the Skilful Performance Account of Value (and the contingency of the value of true belief for all forms of intellectual value), I will now show that this account of value is able to explain the value present in various examples of beliefs. As my account is pluralistic (it includes Riggs's epistemic credit and the value of true belief), it is difficult to isolate this value in examples where other values are evident. Making a contribution toward the cure of a disease may require a skilful performance, but this will be overshadowed by the value of the cure and being responsible for it. There are examples where these other values are either not recognised as significant or are not present at all and with these it is possible to isolate the value of epistemic performance credit. In doing so, I will show that these performances have value that is non-truth-derived because these examples isolate out this kind of value

I will provide examples of achievement where it is not possible to appeal to the value of true belief as the "good" for which the agent is responsible in order to isolate the kind of credit I am arguing for (epistemic performance credit). These are cases where either the truth of the belief seems to have insignificant value or where the belief is not true at all.

The examples of trivial true beliefs that I am relying on are not examples where a true belief is not valuable but examples where we judge these beliefs to have little value. For example, my belief about the number of fibres in the computer laboratory carpet seems to have little value. Although this judgment and other judgments like this may be wrong, they exist and they can occur in conjunction with attitudes like pride and admiration. If the value of a true belief is judged to be trivial one cannot appeal to this value to explain the pride and admiration that these beliefs may evoke or the sense of achievement that they result in. This is because these attitudes depend on us recognising the elements of value to which they are a reaction. Therefore these examples may help to isolate other kinds of achievement to which pride and admiration can be a reaction.

It seems that the value of epistemic performance credit may be able to capture some the value I find in engaging in many areas of philosophy. In some areas of philosophy the value of the true belief is obviously important, such as whether God exists or not, but the value of true belief is not all that is available in these kinds of

inquiries. There are fields whose interest is not only the potential outcome of the inquiry, but the fact that beliefs in this area are particularly elusive (the challenge that the inquiry presents). Of course the goal of these inquiries is true belief, this is what I am looking for but there seems to be another available value. Engaging with these areas requires skilful epistemic performances. One can be proud of these performances and this pride is not dependent on having achieved true belief, or even having gotten closer to it.

For example, for some of my past philosophy essays the pride I feel coexists with my belief that I have not gotten closer to the truth. I am proud because I have achieved something difficult. I can look back at a past essay and see where I have gone wrong (and judge my claims to be false), but I am still proud in so far as the essay was sophisticated and took skill to deliver. The inquiry on which the essay was based may be shown to have been subtle, original or complex, while still resulting in a false belief. The essay captures a past epistemic (belief-forming) performance (an inquiry) and this is something of which I will be proud if I judge that the performance was skilful. This evaluation is not limited to my own epistemic work; I care about the epistemic performance of other people engaging in philosophy and, in so far as this performance is skilled, I feel admiration toward them.

Performances that result in a solution to maths problems are valuable and this is expressed in terms of pride or admiration, even if the true belief they uncover is judged to be arbitrary or if they fail at their attempt. If the solution is correct, true belief may account for some of the value of the belief, but it seems that for the most part (where the true belief is not judged to be significantly valuable), it is taken as valuable in proportion to the difficulty of the performance required. If the belief is false, then one cannot appeal to truth at all for the value, which means that the value of the achievement cannot be derived from or be dependent on the value of true belief. This is my model of achievement where one can get credit for a performance that does not result in an independently good state of affairs.

This value of epistemic performance credit would explain what there is to admire in the performance of a trivia quiz. We can admire someone for answering correctly a range of unrelated and arbitrary general knowledge questions and this does not seem to depend on the value of true belief at all. The value of true belief can in this case be judged to be arbitrary and insignificant to the achievement and so the presence of credit must be explained by appealing to epistemic performance credit.

The model of achievement evident might explain the value of some other false beliefs. For example, a comprehensive and well-justified scientific theory may in time be proven wrong and lose any practical usefulness; like the theories of Ptolemy that have long since been proven false. However, being credited with the theory does not lose all its value and we may still admire the person responsible for it. This I think is because such a theory can constitute an intellectual achievement without bringing us closer to the truth.

In all these cases, the absence of the value of true belief might suggest that the pride is related to one's abilities and the instrumental worth of forming beliefs that are true in the future. I can be proud of my abilities because they have the potential to bring me to true beliefs in the future, but the achievement evident in these examples is more than just developing epistemic abilities or proving that you have a specific skill, for yourself and others, because these practices go beyond and continue after these skills have been developed and established and their value does not depend on one's ability to perform equally well on another occasion. It is being credited with a performance that is valuable in proportion to the degree of skill involved and so these examples are examples of epistemic performance credit and support the Skilful Performance Account.

This kind of value appears to be something that is exclusively available to us through the practice of inquiry. The kind of performance on which the credit values depends is the performance of an inquiry. Epistemic skills are used to seek true belief and so, in delivering a performance of them, an agent is performing an inquiry. This value does not depend on the inquiry being successful with regard to the constitutive goal of true belief. I can fail in my attempt to get a true belief, but still have delivered a skilful performance. The only relevant value that true belief has in relation to the value if these performances derives form the fact that true belief can in some contexts be elusive. True beliefs can be difficult to acquire and so inquiry can be a practice in which an agent can deliver a skilful performance of sufficient difficulty to acquire epistemic performance credit. This is not the primary value of true belief and there are other kinds of beliefs that can be equally elusive, like some justified false beliefs. Therefore the value of epistemic performance credit is not dependent on the value of true belief, although, as a performance of an inquiry, it is dependent on aiming for this true belief.

Chapter Two

Epistemic Performance Credit as a Goal of Inquiry

I argued earlier that the goals of believing reveal the sources of value for our belief-forming practices. I argued that, even when true belief is a goal of inquiry, it might not be the only goal by showing that we also want epistemic credit and pursue this value in our belief-forming practices. This argument supported epistemic credit as a goal of inquiry and thus a source of value for the practice. In this chapter, I will be using a similar argument to argue for the source of value that is the focus of this part. This is the value of epistemic credit and it implies that there is some value to be gained from our belief-forming practices that does not depend on us ever, in any inquiry, successfully meeting that inquiry's constitutive goal of true belief. I will show that one of the goals of some inquiries is not dependent on true belief for its satisfaction. I have argued that one can infer from a goal to a value, this suggests that there is intellectual value that is independent of our belief-forming practices. This is the value of epistemic performance credit, the value present in the Skilful Performance Account.

Earlier I showed that true belief will always be an aim in inquiries the purpose of which is epistemic credit. This led me to turn to epistemic testing as a way of determining the goals of an inquiry beyond its aim. I showed that as testing is used to check that the goals of an inquiry have been met, it could be used to show that epistemic credit is an actual goal for some inquiries and so a possible source of value for them all. True belief is the constitutive aim of inquiry and so it is problematic for determining all possible goals of inquiry, not just the goal of epistemic credit. I will, therefore, turn again to epistemic testing to show that the achievement of a skilful epistemic performance (or epistemic performance credit) can be a goal in some inquiries and so it is a possible source of value in an inquiry (as argued in earlier the goal does not have to be present in every context that the value is).

There appear to be tests that check whether the outcome of an inquiry is a skilful performance. An example of this will be testing involved in a philosophy examination, my master's thesis, for example. This will be examined to determine whether the outcome of the inquiry conducted for the degree was a skilful epistemic performance. It cannot be a test for true belief as this is not a requirement of the test. My examiner could disagree with me and still judge that I have met the requirements

of the test. The test does require some degree of justification. This might suggest that it is establishing whether I have established epistemic skills that will yield true beliefs in the future or that I am reliable as an informant. Even if this does play a role, it cannot be seen to be the only source of value for justification. I am not required to be able to pass similar tests in the future and so I have accomplished something, even if I could not use the justifying methods with success again. This does not mean that I do not progress or develop in terms of my epistemic skills as a result of the inquiry. However, the purpose of the test does not appear to be to check what I can or might be able to do; it checks what I have done already.

In Part Two, the requirement of justification, by specific justifying methods, and the absence of reliability as a requirement of the test suggested that epistemic credit is a goal of the inquiry. This was reinforced by the presence of pride or admiration at the outcome of these tests. In this test it seems that pride and admiration may also be present. I am proud of myself once I have met the requirements of the test. This means that the goal of inquiry is something about which I may be proud. However this cannot be Riggs's epistemic credit because, as mentioned above, true belief is not a requirement of the test (and true belief is necessary for Riggs's epistemic credit).

It seems that the best way to explain the requirements of this test is that it is a test for a skilful performance. This is reinforced by the fact that, the more skilful my performance, the prouder I will be and the better I will do with regard to the test. The conditions of this test thus reveal that at least one of the purposes of my inquiry for my master's degree is to achieve a skilful epistemic performance and thus reveal this as a source of value in general for the epistemic domain.

Chapter Three

Possible Objections

It is possible to raise a few objections to my claims in this part of the thesis. I will raise and respond to two objections to my argument. The first objection questions whether epistemic performance credit is independent of the value of true belief, as I have argued that it is. I will respond to this objection and argue that although epistemic performance credit may be dependent on more than the difficulty of an accomplishment it is not dependent on the value of true belief. The final objection is in response to my claim that epistemic performance credit is only valuable to us as a result of engaging in an inquiry. This is based on Sosa's discussion of a performance value that suggests that there is one kind of skilful performance credit for all practices and so it is not a value exclusive to inquiry.

Objection 1

There is something worrying about the comparative value of different kinds of credit. This is that, by making the value of the performances independent of the value of their goal all that is left to explain the degrees of value of these performances is the degree of difficulty of the performance. There is something wrong with this, as there seem to be some kind of performances that are more valuable to achieve than others for reasons other than their greater degree of difficulty. I could be highly skilled at buttering toast while juggling burning bowling balls, this requires great and rare skill, but the value of this performance appears to be less than the value of running a marathon or of a mathematical performance.

My main claim in this part of the thesis has been that there is a source of value for inquiry, namely epistemic performance credit, that is dependent on the degree of skill required for a performance and not on the value of true belief. It is consistent with this claim that there are skilful performances that do not have value, and that there are skilful performances that share the same degree of difficulty but do not have the same value.

The value of skilful performances that result in immoral actions or immoral beliefs are good examples of skilful performances that do not seem to be valuable or worth of epistemic performance credit. For example someone might deliver a skilful performance of a murder or someone might develop a skilled justification of a racist

belief. In these cases there are many values that may affect our overall judgment of the situation, such as the immorality of the belief or action and the degree to which the agent deserves credit for it. However, despite this confusion it seems clear that the performance itself, independently of its result, is not valuable it is not worthy of epistemic performance credit. These are not performances that it is appropriate to feel admiration toward.

Perhaps a full account of epistemic performance credit will reveal the exact conditions of the value and all the variables that might affect the degree of value of a skilful performance. The claim that not every instance of a skilful performance has value is not an objection to my account. The problem for my claim arises when it appears that one of the variables that might affect the value of the performance is the value of true belief. I have argued that the value of intellectual performances is independent of the value of true belief and so it cannot be used to explain the varying degree of value between performances of the same degree of difficulty.

I will now provide two examples that might suggest that the value of intellectual achievement (epistemic performance credit) is independent on the value of true belief. An appeal to the value of true belief might be required to explain the difference in value between juggling flaming bowling balls while buttering toast and the value of answering an equally difficult mathematical problem. It might be argued that intellectual performances deserve more epistemic performance credit than this juggling performance only because they are related to true belief and thus derive value from the true belief.

The fact that different true beliefs might have fluctuating degrees of value suggests another example that may suggest a dependence of epistemic performance value on the value of true belief. For example, the performance of justifying a belief about how many grains of sand there are on a beach may be considered to have less value than a performance justifying a belief about the national birth-rate. It is conceivable that these two epistemic performances are equally difficult. The obvious way to explain the difference in the credit value might be to appeal to the varying value of the beliefs that each justifies.

It may be argued that this objection is confusing two different values, first is the value of the epistemic performance credit and the other is the value of the performance all together, including the value of its out-come and any other additional values that might arise out of the completion of the task. A possible response to the

objection to my account thus might be to deny that there is a difference between the performance credit values of the relevant performances, and to show that all that is different is the overall value of the state of affairs, brought about by the accomplishment.

However, the difference does seem to be a difference between epistemic performance credit values and not a balance of a variety of values. Even failed attempts at solving maths problems seem to be more valuable than juggling flaming bowling balls and justifying a false belief about the national birth rate may still have more value than a successful inquiry into the amount of grains of sand there are on a beach. The epistemic performance credit values must be different because this difference exists even when there are no other independent values like the value of true belief to which to appeal.

The problem with this response to the objection is, however, part of the problem with the original objection. In both these examples the preference for a performance does not change with a change in the truth value of the relevant belief. There is a difference between the performance values but this cannot have anything to do with the value of true belief because these variations are present when one cannot appeal to the value of true belief.

This is further evident from the fact that epistemic performance and running marathons are similar in the way that they relate to the degree of value of juggling flaming bowling balls while buttering toast. We judge marathon performances to be more valuable than the juggling performance and this cannot be explained by appealing to an independent value like the value of true belief. As argued earlier running marathons has little value apart from the value of the skilful performance. If there is nothing like true belief to explain the difference here then it seems that whatever explains the difference between juggling and marathon performances can explain the difference between juggling and the performance of an inquiry.

An appeal to the value of true belief is cannot explain the epistemic performance credit value of epistemic performances. Although the examples above do raise a question about what factors, other than difficulty, determine the value of performance this answer cannot be in terms of true belief and so is not a threat to my claim in this part. This question will be relevant to a complete account of the value of epistemic performance credit

Objection 2

Another possible objection is about the adequacy of epistemic performance credit to answer the questions of this thesis. I have limited my discussion throughout to the kinds of value available to us uniquely as a result of inquiry (so that these values might explain the unique significance of the practice), and it may be questioned whether epistemic performance credit is unique to this practice. This is especially problematic when one considers Sosa's argument in "The Place of Truth in Epistemology"²⁶ concerning a different kind of value, namely "performance value".²⁷

Sosa's performance value is the value of a performance required for a specific end. Sosa discusses this value in terms of artefacts. If an artefact is able to operate properly and yet does not, because of bad luck, achieve the end for which it was designed, its proper performance may still be seen to have value. For example, there might be a sophisticated piece of machinery that works properly toward the end for which it was designed and yet fails because it was not installed properly. Its performance might still be seen to have value but for Sosa this value is aesthetic. He provides no argument for this and so the claim appears to be an intuitive point.

If one extends this to the epistemic realm, as is Sosa's intention, it means that the performance of an epistemic agent that is skilful and yet fails to achieve true belief may have value, but not intellectual value. These are exactly the kinds of performances that I have argued may result in pride or admiration. When performances of this kind are attributable to an agent, I have argued, they result in epistemic performance credit and achievement.

Two of Sosa's claims with regard to this argument may be potentially problematic for the Achievement of a Skilful Epistemic Performance. The first is that these performances have aesthetic value. The second is that they do not have intellectual value.

Sosa's claim that these kinds of performances have aesthetic value may present a potential problem for my claim that this kind of credit is unique to inquiry. I do not share his intuition that these performances are aesthetically valuable. When I look back at a past essay that captures a skilful epistemic performance the pride I feel is in relation to the skill of the performance not for any aesthetic quality that the essay has. I take essays of this kind to have variety of properties, such as subtle or original,

²⁶ Sosa 2003.

²⁷ Sosa 2003: 176.

but I do not take it to be beautiful. I do concede, in spite of this, that this claim does seem to hold some plausibility. Cricket spectators might describe the performance of a match as beautiful and it may be that part of what is beautiful about a ballet performance is that it is a skilful achievement. If this is the case then Sosa has revealed an interesting relationship between skilful achievements and beauty. I remain sceptical as to whether these descriptions are not accurate, suspecting that they stem rather from the appreciation of achievement alone.

If they are seen to have aesthetic value, then it might be argued that the credit I am considering is not unique to inquiry as an agent can get it from playing a game of cricket or a dance. Even if the value in question is aesthetic, I think that the credit one gets for the achievement of a skilful epistemic performance can still be seen to be unique to inquiry. This is because, although the value might fit under a broad category of aesthetic value, it is different in kind to other kinds of aesthetic value. If the solution to a complex maths problem is beautiful, then this beauty must be very different to the beauty of cricket game. This point is for the most part intuitive, but I think that it is clearly evident from the fact that we do not just want skilful performances. We want some of these to be performances in an inquiry this implies that they have value that no other practice can bring us.

Sosa's other two claims concern the demarcation of the domains of intellectual value. He dismisses performance value as aesthetic and concludes that this is not intellectual and, because of this, he takes it to be irrelevant to his discussion. I will argue that Sosa has not shown that epistemic performance credit is not *intellectually* valuable, and, even if it is not, the fact that it is a value that is unique to inquiry means that is significant to epistemology.

Sosa does not give an account of what he takes intellectual value to be. He takes the claim that performances have aesthetic value to be sufficient to show that they do not have intellectual value and his application of the term 'aesthetic' is purely intuitive. I argued in the introduction that the values unique to inquiry could be seen as intellectual because they excluded the pragmatic values that a belief might have. These appear to be to very different uses of the term. I will show that without an account of what demarcates the domains of value Sosa claim cannot be accepted. This is because he assumes that these domains are exclusive that if something has aesthetic value it cannot have intellectual value.

The question of what demarcates domains of value is complex and a large project and there might also be inconsistencies in the way that we apply these demarcations. Without a proper account of what defines domains of value it is difficult to tell whether they are indeed exclusive or whether they may overlap. For example, the conditions that make up epistemic credit and intellectual value might allow for some kinds of beauty to be intellectual, especially if the general value of beauty is constituted by different kinds of beauty. I have argued that if performances have aesthetic value then in the case of epistemic performances, at least, this aesthetic value is distinct. It is distinguished by being intellectual and this is partly what characterises it. Therefore this is an example where a value might straddle different domains of value and show that they may not be exclusive. For this reason, Sosa is wrong to dismiss performance value as non-intellectual just because it is also aesthetic; he has not dismissed that there might be distinctively intellectual aesthetic value.

Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to give a proper discussion of what demarcates areas of value, I have already attempted to show that my discussion has been in terms of one use of the term 'intellectual' (opposed to 'pragmatic'). I have limited my discussion to discovering what possible sources of value are exclusively available to the practice of inquiry. This discussion is valuable regardless of whether it is an account of intellectual value it can explain the importance of inquiry and it has the potential to explain the value of the states that can arise out of inquiry only, states like justified belief or knowledge, that are central to epistemology.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have argued that the practice of inquiry is taken to be significant because there are at least three sources of value that are exclusively made available to us by engaging in the practice. These are the values of reliable believing, epistemic credit and epistemic performance credit.

I have also emphasised the fact that the values available go beyond the value of the constitutive goal of inquiry, true belief. Although the value of true belief undoubtedly plays a significant role in accounting for the importance we bestow on the practice, it is insufficient and sometimes not even necessary to explain the importance of many inquiries in which we engage. Sometimes we want more than true belief for ourselves and others, now and in the future, because we want those valuable beliefs to be our achievements. Sometimes the value of true belief plays no part at all in the value we get from engaging in an inquiry. We can achieve a skilful epistemic performance without securing true beliefs for ourselves or others, now and in the future.

My arguments have relied upon what we want from an inquiry and our judgement of what kinds of outcomes of inquiry we find to be valuable. This is because of the use of the inference from goal to value, my appeal to examples that isolate circumstances that we take to be valuable and the role of the reactive attitudes like pride and admiration. The conclusions of this thesis rely on the assumption that our goals and desires (for things that we take to be valuable) and that our preferences for and perceptions of what is valuable are not misinformed. I have assumed our general ability (not immune to error) to pick out what is valuable in the world and the general appropriateness of these desires and evaluations. Of course this assumption has not been taken up without qualification. I take our evaluations to be plausible in the absence of evidence that suggests that we are misinformed. However this assumption is still not strong enough to give a complete account of the value of inquiry.

There is still the need for a more developed account of these values and this might open the discussion as to whether they are truly valuable. There are attempts at an account of the value of true belief and it is possible to question its value on the basis of this account, one of the things that we appear to want and so, at first glance,

seems to be valuable. It may be worthwhile to explore what accounts for the value of epistemic credit and epistemic performance credit. A broader topic than this, it may be worthwhile to look at the general categories of credit as they apply to practices in general, not just the belief-forming practice of inquiry. It can be asked what part these kinds of value play in overall understanding of value and simultaneously whether our perceptions of value are really correct, as I have (and I think somewhat safely) assumed. Answering these questions will go further in explaining the importance of inquiry over and above other belief-forming practices in our lives in general. The sources of value also have the potential to explain some the value of some of the states we associate with inquiry only like justified believing or knowledge.

My discussion in this thesis has been located specifically in the context of epistemology, but it points to a more general phenomenon of the relationship between the difficulty of an action and its value. Examining the value of inquiry is just one way of revealing this phenomenon. The relationship between difficulty and value may be something that is worth exploring in general. However, the fact that I have focussed on an epistemic version of this value remains distinctly significant. Belief-formation is often given a subsidiary role in terms of the projects in our lives. It is often seen as a pre-condition of achieving value in the realm of action. By accepting a non-truth-derived value for difficulty in belief-formation (both in conjunction with other epistemic goods and on its own), it is necessary to see belief-formation as valuable in its own right, apart from any intrinsic value that true-belief might have. Some of our valuable projects appear to be purely intellectual (with purely intellectual rewards) and they can stand alone, separate from any part they play in similar projects that are action-based.

At the very least, this thesis has taken the first step toward a different discussion by isolating the things that we think are important about inquiry. This provides the first step towards producing a complete understanding of the role of inquiry and the importance we bestow upon it.

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