

SOSA ON PERMISSIBLE SUSPENSION AND THE PROPER REMIT OF THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

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It is widely agreed that justification—be it moral, prudential, epistemic, etc.—is defeasible. For instance, suppose that you justifiably head toward High Street on a Sunday because you wish for a new pair of shoes, but as you're walking, I tell you that you forgot your wallet at home. In this case, you have a defeater for your (prudential) justification for going into town. Should you continue on your way, your action will no longer be (prudentially) justified. Similarly, suppose that you (epistemically) justifiably believe that the structure you are looking at is a barn. Suppose, further, that I tell you that most of the things that look like barns are actually fakes. In this case, you have a defeater for your belief that the structure you are looking at is a barn. If you continue to hold this belief, your belief is no longer justified.

While it is widely agreed that epistemic justification is defeasible, and much ink in epistemology has been spilled on the issue of the defeasibility of justification of positive doxastic attitudes, such as beliefs and credences, very little has been said about the justification of suspension, and about its defeasibility conditions. Ernie Sosa's most recent book offers a comprehensive virtue-theoretic account of the nature and normativity of suspension in terms of the nature and telic normativity of agential attempts more generally.

In what follows, I first briefly outline the position, and take issue with some details of its normative structure. In particular, I argue that Sosa's telic normativity is in need of normative expansion if it is to accommodate the defeasibility of justification to suspend. Further on, I consider several paths for developing Sosa's view to accommodate this datum and argue that we can find the needed resources in general telic normativity.

1 Sosa on Telic Normativity and Suspension

Sosa is a virtue epistemologist. Thanks largely to his contribution, virtue epistemology has come to be closely associated with a normative framework for the evaluation of attempts (henceforth also 'telic normativity.'). Attempts here have constitutive aims. As a result, we can ask whether or not a given attempt is *successful*. We can also ask whether a given attempt is *competent* (i.e., produced by an ability to attain the attempt's aim). Finally, we can ask whether a given attempt is *apt*, (i.e., successful because competent).

Virtue epistemologists standardly take beliefs to be attempts that have truth as their constitutive aims. Given that this is so, we can ask whether beliefs are successful (i.e., whether they are true). In addition, we can also ask whether they are competent (i.e., whether they are produced by an ability to believe truly) and whether they are apt (i.e., true because competent).

According to Sosa, the above gives us the basic account for first-order evaluations of attempts. Crucially, however, Sosa does not take this to be the whole story. Rather, he countenances two further types of aptness, alongside first-order aptness, or ‘animal’ aptness as Sosa calls it. These additional types of aptness are ‘reflective’ and ‘full’ aptness. Attaining these further types of aptness requires accurate and indeed apt attempt at a higher order, in addition to animal aptness. In a nutshell, the thought is that attempts will rise to these higher levels of aptness only if, alongside animal aptness, one has aptly ascertained that one’s attempt is free from any relevant risk one may be running; one must have arrived at an apt awareness that one’s attempt would be apt. While animal aptness in conjunction with apt risk assessment will be enough for reflective aptness, full aptness additionally requires that first and second order aptness are connected in the right way; one must be guided to animal aptness by one’s reflectively apt risk assessment.

It comes to light that there are a number of normative properties that attempts can enjoy. Crucially, according to Sosa, full aptness enjoys special status among these properties. More specifically, according to Sosa full aptness is the fully desirable status for attempts and that attempts fall short unless they attain full aptness. Moreover, he is also clear that this claim holds with full generality. Any attempt attains fully desirable status qua attempt if and only if it is fully apt, and it falls short qua attempt if and only if it isn’t.

According to Sosa, various psychological categories—most importantly, guessing, belief, and judgment—are species of affirmation and, as a result, attempts. (Sosa’s main interest is with affirmations with a specifically epistemic aim, which at a minimum involves truth.) While Sosa countenances a variety of psychological categories with epistemic aims, his main focus is on judgment (and judgmental belief). Judgment differs from other psychological categories in that it has a particularly robust epistemic aim not only at truth, but at aptness. To understand this normative requirement on judgment, Sosa asks us to consider Diana, the huntress. As Diana surveys a landscape in search of game, she may see prey in the distance (in good light and calm wind). If a shot is too risky, it is ill advised. A shot then can attain quality in being well, rather than negligently selected. An aiming, then, is assessable by reference to how likely it is to succeed (relative to one’s possession of the pertinent competence), so as to avoid recklessness, and also assessable by reference to how negligent (or not) it may be.

Similarly, according to Sosa, for a judgment to be apt, more is required than merely apt affirmation. What is needed for apt judgment is that one is guided to aptness by apt risk assessment. An apt judgment is a fully apt affirmation.

Where does suspension fit in this picture? After all, telic normativity is a normativity of attempts, but isn't suspension a paradigm of something that is not an attempt, but rather an instance of forbearing from attempting?

To answer this question, Sosa introduces a distinction between two varieties of intentional forbearing:

Narrow-scope: (Forbearing from X-ing) in the endeavor to attain a given aim A.

Broad-scope: Forbearing from (X-ing in the endeavor to attain a given aim A).

According to Sosa, the first, narrow-scope variety pertains to telic normativity proper; the forbearing is done with the domain-internal aim in view. The second, in contrast, is domain-external forbearing, in that the agent who forbears in this sense does not attempt to reach the central aim of the domain in question to begin with; whether to engage in a domain is not a question within the domain itself. In that, broad-scope forbearing, according to Sosa, does not make the proper subject of telic normativity.

To see the place of forbearing in the normativity of attempts, consider Diana again. Diana's archery shots can be more or less well selected. When she spots some prey, Diana can properly aim as follows: to make an attempt on that target if and only if the attempt would succeed aptly. Accordingly, there are two ways in which Diana can fall short, in regard to this aim; she could make an attempt on the target when she would not succeed aptly—because, maybe, the shot would be too risky, given the wind. But she could also fail in her attempt by failing to make an attempt (on the target) when one would succeed aptly.

So, in a nutshell, according to Sosa, narrow-scope forbearing is itself an attempt with an aim: that of attempting if and only if the attempt would succeed aptly. This is the place of forbearing in telic normativity.

How does this translate to epistemology? Again, just like with normativity in general, Sosa thinks that it is only narrow-scope forbearing that is of internal interest to the theory of knowledge proper, in that it is aimed at the epistemic goal of attaining aptness. More specifically, Sosa thinks that epistemic narrow-scope forbearing is what constitutes *deliberative suspension* of judgment, which is an attempt in its own right, one that shares with judging an epistemically distinctive aim: the aim of affirming alethically (positively or negatively) iff that affirming would be apt (and otherwise suspend). Conversely, on Sosa's view, one properly suspends belief on a question if and only if one suspends based sufficiently on one's lack of the competence required in order to answer that question aptly (2021, 85).

In contrast, broad-scope forbearing, according to Sosa, is the stuff of intellectual ethics; that is, it pertains to the question as to whether to engage in inquiry as to whether p to begin with. In this sense it is external to the theory of knowledge proper. Here is Sosa:

Whether to engage in a certain domain is not generally a question *within* that domain.

Telic assessment within a domain assesses mainly the pursuit of aims proper to that domain. An exhausted tennis competitor *may* of course properly consider whether to default, but this is not a decision assessable *within* the sport. When you sense a heart attack in progress and quit for that reason, this is not a decision assessable by athletic criteria in the domain of tennis. Whether to keep on playing is not a tennis decision; it is a life decision. (2021, 66)

Similarly, Sosa thinks that epistemic broad-scope forbearing is tantamount to *non-deliberative* suspension of judgment. It is also an intentional forbearing from alethic affirmation (both positive and negative), but it is not aimed at apt judgment as to whether p ; it derives rather from omitting inquiry into the question as to whether p to being with, whether the refusal is implicit or consciously explicit. As such, norms governing broad-scope forbearing will be norms of intellectual ethics, not epistemic norms proper:

Broad-scope forbearing [i.e., not taking up a question] is not a standing *within* the domain of inquiry into a particular question, wherein it would be subject to the epistemic assessment of attempts that are potentially knowledge-constitutive. (2021, 70–71)

2 Impermissible Suspension

2.1 Suspension and Normative Defeat

To get my first worry into clear view, I'd like to start with a case of ignored normative defeat. To take a variation on a famous example, consider the case of a scientist named Bill, who doesn't believe anything his female colleagues say, because he is a sexist (Lackey 2018). Now suppose Bill carries out two experiments to test his hypothesis that p . Experiment 1 strongly supports that p . Experiment 2 strongly supports that not- p . The scientist comes to suspend on p on this basis. Suppose, next, that a female colleague of his, Anna, discovers a serious flaw with experiment 2, which she points out to Bill. Due to sexist bias, Bill discounts Anna's word and maintains his suspension on p . This is a paradigm case of higher-order defeat. After Anna's testimony that q ("There is a flaw in experiment 2"), Bill's suspension on p is no longer justified.

What does Sosa's account have to say about this case? It would seem that, for all we have been told so far, telic normativity does not have the resources to accommodate the result that Bill is not justified to suspend. Rather, Bill's failure will, at best, be categorized as pertaining to intellectual ethics. To see this, note that Bill never takes up the question as to whether q to begin with, due to his sexist bias. As such, since no attempt at apt judgment is made, the suspension at stake in the case of q will have to be classified as non-deliberative suspension. If that is so, however, its normative properties will not have the capacity to affect the normative properties of Bill's suspension on p either; after all, even if present, normative failure outside the domain of theory of knowledge proper need not affect domain-internal normative properties; even if Bill's suspension on q is impermissible on non-epistemic grounds, it cannot affect the permissibility of Bill's suspension on p .

Recall, also, that on Sosa's view, suspension is permissible insofar as it is sufficiently based on one's lack of the competence required in order to answer that question aptly. It is easy to see that this account predicts, against intuition, that it is permissible for Bill to suspend based on his sexism-generated lack of competence to believe aptly what Anna tells him.¹

Now, it is worth mentioning that there may be an easy way for Sosa out of this case; one thing he could do is insist that Bill does, in fact—albeit implicitly—inquire into whether q by simply hearing the testimony from Anna. After all, Sosa's notion of inquiry is a very 'light' one, whereby the mere monitoring of one's environment counts as such. If so, Bill will count as having epistemically and impermissibly suspended on q , since, in the course of his (implicit) inquiry into whether q , he missed the opportunity to affirm aptly that q .

That said, the route back to problems for Sosa's account is quite short from here. To see this, note that we can easily tweak the case such that Bill doesn't even hear that Anna told him that q . For instance, suppose that Bill simply tunes out whenever a female colleague talks to him. As a result, Bill didn't even register that Anna told him that there is a problem with his experiment. In this case, Bill's epistemic behavior is no better than in the original case. If anything, it's worse. Most importantly for present purposes, the case is equally a case of testimonial injustice and a case of

¹ One move that the virtue theorist might want to make here: competences are dispositions to do well (in certain conditions). Dispositions can fail to manifest themselves when 'masked'; consider the fragility of a vase. When in a room filled with pillows, the vase is still fragile, although its disposition to break cannot manifest itself. Similarly, Sosa could argue, Bill has an epistemic ability to form beliefs based on women's testimony, but it's 'masked' by his sexism. There is one problem with this move, however; factors that 'mask' dispositions are commonly believed to be environmental ones (Choi and Fara 2018)—recall again the vase in the room full of pillows—rather than somehow 'internal' to the item in question. Indeed, when the problem lies within the object itself—say that we inject all the pores of the vase with glue—the more plausible diagnosis is lack of disposition—no fragility—rather than masked disposition. However, in the case of the sexist scientist, it is the subject's own mental states (biases) that interfere in the formation of the relevant beliefs.

defeat. Once Bill is told about the flaw in his experiment, Bill's suspension on *p* is no longer justified. The fact that Bill didn't bother to listen does not improve his situation vis-à-vis the original case on either count.

2.2 Moral and Epistemic Constraints on Suspension

One reply that Sosa can give to the worry above is that the intuition of impropriety has a non-epistemic normative source. We think the scientist is doing something wrong because he's doing something morally wrong in not listening to his woman colleague; epistemic injustice (Fricker 2007), the thought would go, is the stuff of intellectual ethics, not of theory of knowledge proper. However, our intuitions are not fine grained enough to see the difference; theory is needed. Indeed, here is Sosa on this topic:

The theory of *knowledge* . . . is the department wherein we find the core issues of knowledge . . . in the history of epistemology, by contrast with the wisdom of inquiry, and with the intellectual ethics wherein we find issues of epistemic justice and epistemic vice, broadly conceived. (71)

I don't find this move particularly plausible, for several reasons. First, it has the unpalatable consequence that tuning up epistemically bad properties can lead to an improvement of an agent's epistemic position. In the above case, making the sexist scientist more sexist such that he not only discounts his female colleagues' words but doesn't even listen will amount to an improvement in his overall epistemic state.

Second, consider a variation of the case in which the sexist scientist systematically mishears what he is being told by female colleagues about his work. Whenever he actually encounters disagreement, he hears agreement. It is perhaps even harder to believe that this trait should lead to an improvement of his epistemic position toward propositions about his work.

Third, note that we can easily drop the injustice component of the case. We may suppose that our scientist simply mistakes disagreement *by anyone* for agreement. Again, it's implausible that, as a result, our scientist should be insulated from defeat. At the same time, the charge that the issue is really an ethical one becomes less credible once the injustice component is removed.

Fourth, it is hard to see how morally problematic features could be instantiated without bad epistemic underpinnings. After all, one thing that the vast majority of the theorists of blame strongly agree with (see Rudy-Hiller 2018 for a nice overview) is that there is an epistemic condition on moral blame. Moral blameworthiness implies that one is not epistemically blamelessly ignorant that one is doing something wrong.² But this suggests

² Crucial emphasis on *blameless* ignorance: most people believe that one can be blameworthy ignorant, for instance, concerning moral matters, which does not render your corresponding

that the sexist scientist is doing something epistemically wrong as well. Otherwise, if he were epistemically blameless, he could not be morally blameworthy. But he is.

Finally, one can even think of cases of moral success that remain intuitively problematic in regard to lack of evidence uptake, which suggest that the source of the intuition is, indeed epistemic failure (absent other normative constraints at the context). Consider the case of Mary (Simion Forthcoming). When her partner, Dan, spends more and more evening hours at the office, she's happy that his career is going so well. When he comes home smelling like floral perfume, she thinks to herself, "Wow, excellent taste in fragrance!" Finally, when she repeatedly sees him having drinks in town with his colleague Alice, she is glad he's making new friends. Mary thinks Dan is a loving, faithful husband, and she trusts him with no hesitation. She never considers the question as to whether Dan is having an affair; on Sosa's view, then, Mary is in non-deliberative suspension on the issue. Is Mary justified to thus suspend? Clearly not. Nor is she justified to believe as she does that Dan is a faithful, loving husband, due to normative defeat. Note, however, that it's hard to find moral flaws with Mary's epistemic ways. After all, many moral philosophers (and a good number of epistemologists) agree that we owe more trust to our friends and family than to people we have never met; if so, Mary's suspension is morally impeccable, but epistemically problematic.

3 Suspension, Defeat, and Negligence

Sosa has not discussed the issue of normative defeat directly. However, in *Epistemic Explanations*, he has started theorizing about negligence within his virtue epistemological framework. Most importantly for present purposes, he suggests that negligence may preclude competent performance. In particular, negligent failure to inquire may preclude competent judgment. If so, we could maybe avail ourselves of this normative resource to explain how negligent failure to inquire may preclude competent suspension as well.

Note, first, that cases of normative defeat do plausibly count as cases of negligent failure to inquire. Consider again the case of Bill the sexist scientist. Bill is told by female colleague, Anna, that there is a flaw in one of the experiments that led him to suspend on *p*, but Bill doesn't listen. Isn't this a prime example of a negligent failure to engage with the question as to what he was told? If Sosa is right and negligent failure to inquire precludes competent judgment, then presumably it also precludes competent

moral failures blameless. See Zimmerman 1997 (who dubs this phenomenon 'indirect blame-worthiness'). See also Elizabeth Harman's (2011) recent work on moral ignorance, suggesting epistemically blameless moral ignorance does not excuse. Since the case discussed here is not one of moral ignorance—blameless or otherwise—I take my point to remain unaffected by Harman's and others' arguments to this effect.

suspension. Given that justified suspension is competent suspension, we get the desired results that Bill is not justified in his suspension.

Unfortunately, there remains a fly in the ointment: negligence is itself a normative property. If your failure to inquire into whether *p* is negligent, then you didn't inquire into whether *p* although you *should* have. Crucially, while one may agree that we need to understand normative defeat in terms of violations of norms requiring us inquire, the task Sosa faces is to offer an account of these norms within the scope of theory of knowledge proper—rather than intellectual ethics. For virtue epistemologists like Sosa, this means offering an account that is available to virtue epistemology. Since the kind of negligence that precludes justified suspension is a normative epistemic property, what we need is a substantive account of the kind of negligence that precludes justified suspension in terms of abilities or other resources available in the theoretical machinery of Sosa's framework. To say that cases of external defeat are cases in which competent suspension is precluded by negligent failures to inquire gives us a way of identifying the task that we are facing, but not yet a way of accomplishing it.

Unfortunately, there is in-principle reason to worry that it will not be trivial to accomplish this task, given Sosa's framework. To see why, note again that Sosa conceives of telic normativity as the normativity of attempts: whether an attempt is successful, competent, or apt presupposes that an attempt was made. In this way, telic normativity presupposes that the agent has made an attempt. As a result, whether or not the agent *should* make an attempt is not assessable in terms of the telic normativity of attempts. Recall also that, to make sense of norms requiring us to inquire, Sosa distinguishes between epistemic normativity of the theory of knowledge (i.e., telic normativity) and the broader normativity of inquiry. Obligations to inquire fall into the broader normativity of inquiry, which pertains to intellectual ethics.

The trouble is that Sosa's suggestion that negligence may preclude competent judgment is hard to square with the preceding claims. To see this, let's return to the case of the sexist scientist once more. Recall that the thought was that when Bill doesn't listen to Anna, he falls foul of negligent failure to engage with the question of what Anna tells him. But now note that negligence is normative: to be negligent is to fail to do certain things that one should have done. In particular, the way in which Bill is negligent here is that he fails to take up the question of what Anna tells him even though he should have done so.

We are now in a position to see the in-principle problem for Sosa. If Bill's negligence consists in his failure to take up the question whether *q* even though he should have done so, his failure does not fall in the normativity proper to the theory of knowledge but into the broader epistemic normativity of inquiry. As a result, it is now hard to see how his negligence may preclude deliberative competent suspension on *p*. After all, deliberative competent suspension does fall in the normativity proper to the theory of

knowledge. At the same time, this normativity is autonomous and protected from incursion of extraneous normativity, including that of the broader normativity of intellectual ethics. It looks as though accounting for cases of normative defeat in terms of negligence that we are envisaging is not available to Sosa after all, at least not provided that the rest of his theory stays put.

Sosa does offer the beginnings of an account of the kind of negligence that is at stake in the cases discussed. He considers a case in which you are adding numbers via mental arithmetic. If the set of numbers you are adding is sufficiently large, you will not be sufficiently reliable to arrive at a competent belief about the sum. Suppose that you are still sufficiently reliable but barely so. At the same time, you have a calculator ready at hand, which would keep you safely above the relevant threshold. If you insist on mental arithmetic here, Sosa argues, you fall foul of negligence.

With the case in play, let's move on to Sosa's view of negligence. Here is the crucial passage:

I am suggesting that negligence is a failure of competence, that one proceeds inappropriately in performing as one does if one *should* have taken the steps by not taking which one is negligent. One is then to blame (in the negligence mode) for not having taken those steps. . . . *Competent attainment of aptness requires availing yourself of sufficiently available means that would enable a more reliable assessment of your first order aptness and competence.* If there are no such means, then there is no such negligence, and no such incompetence. In such a circumstance, the agent might then be able to determine with sufficient competence that they are in a position to proceed competently enough on the first order. (2021, 63)

Sosa's key idea is that if you can assess your first-order competence by more reliable means but fail to do so, then you are negligent. In particular, you fall foul of a kind of negligence that precludes what he calls the 'competent attainment of aptness.'

Most importantly for present purposes, given that competent suspension requires that one suspends based sufficiently on one's lack of the competence required to answer the question aptly, negligence precludes competent suspension. Sexist scientist Bill does have sufficiently available means that would enable a more reliable assessment of the aptness of his suspension—Anna's testimony. Since he ignores it, Bill will count as a negligent suspender.

The problem with this account of negligence, however, is that it is too strong; it makes negligence and hence defeat too easy to come by. To see this, consider a case in which I ask my flatmate who is currently in the kitchen whether we have any milk left. He tells me that we do. Now, I do

have several more reliable means of assessing my first-order competence available to me. For instance, I could go to the kitchen and have a look myself. Crucially, however, failure to avail myself of these means doesn't make me negligent. And, most importantly for present purposes, it doesn't preclude my judgment that there is milk in the fridge from being competent.

Sosa's account of negligence is insufficiently normative. What matters, according to Sosa, is the *availability of alternative means* that would lead to a more reliable assessment of first-order aptness and competence. However, the difference maker is normative, not descriptive; what matters is not (only) whether one has alternative means available that would have led one to a more reliable assessment of first-order aptness and competence, but (also) whether one *should* have availed oneself of these means. In the case of the sexist scientist, he should have taken the woman's testimony into account in assessing the credentials of hypothesis *p*. Similarly, Mary should not have ignored all the evidence suggesting that her husband is having an affair. In contrast, in the milk case, it is not the case that I should have had a look myself.

Sosa's account of the normativity of negligence in terms of availability of alternative means doesn't work, at least unless we add that the available means are means one should have availed oneself of. Crucially, it is precisely this 'should' that we wanted to explain in virtue epistemological terms. We are thus back to square one once more.

4 A Better Way

In what follows, I want to gesture at a different way to accommodate the normative defeasibility of suspension within telic normativity. In particular, I will suggest that what is needed is to enlarge the normative remit of epistemic telic normativity in line with plausible normative facts about general telic normativity.

Let's take stock. We have identified two in-principle problems with the virtue theoretic account of epistemically permissible suspension under discussion.

First, Sosa's epistemic telic normativity is the normativity of attempts, but in the cases under discussion not attempt is being made to begin with: the defeating evidence is totally ignored. As such, what we need is an account that accommodates attempts that *should* have been made.

Second, on Sosa's account of suspension, one properly suspends belief on a question if one suspends based sufficiently on one's lack of the competence required to judge aptly. By definition, however, the protagonists in the cases we have looked at do lack the relevant competences. The sexist scientist, for instance, is not a competent uptaker of testimony from women, due to his sexist bias; he does suspend based on his (sexism-induced) lack of competence to judge aptly. What seems to matter, then, is not whether

one misses a competence, but rather whether one *should* have had the competence to begin with.

Both of these points suggest that we need more normative resources than epistemic telic normativity, as put forth by Sosa, provides. For a correct account of justified suspension, we need to be able to also assess (at least some) attempts that *should* be made, and competences one *should* have within theory of knowledge proper, rather than merely at the level of intellectual ethics.

At the same time, of course, some ‘shoulds’ governing attempts and competences will fall outside the theory of knowledge proper indeed, and squarely within the remit of intellectual ethics. The question as to whether I should know more about mathematics, the geography of oceans, and the workings of the human lungs than I presently do will not concern the theory of knowledge, and the corresponding normative failures—should I exhibit them—will not defeat my justification for my current beliefs and suspensions.³

If all this is right, it would seem as what needs to be done is that we move the border between the theory of knowledge proper and intellectual ethics, such that we allow some ‘shoulds’ governing attempts and competences to fall on the side of theory of knowledge, while others remain squarely within intellectual ethics.

I will begin by discussing ‘shoulds’ governing attempts. First, to see why it is independently plausible that attempts that should have been made can be domain-internal, let’s go back to Diana, the huntress: Diana’s archery shots can be more or less well selected. We have seen that Sosa agrees that there are two ways in which Diana can fall short, in regard to her aim to succeed aptly; she could make an attempt on the target when she would not succeed aptly—because, maybe, the shot would be too risky, given the wind. But she could also fail in her attempt by failing to make an attempt (on the target) when one would succeed aptly. There are, thus, two types of metacompetence failure Diana can display: failure to assess risk properly and failure to assess opportunity properly. When going back to epistemology, the latter failure is the stuff of unjustified suspension: a failure to judge (affirmatively or negatively) when one would have judged aptly (independently of whether one attempted to do so or not).

³ Sandy Goldberg (2018) discusses cases of people occupying certain social roles in which it seems as though normative defeat can be generated by a failure to inquire into topics that one has a social or professional obligation to know about. For instance, a doctor that believes that *p*, in negligent ignorance of a well-documented advance in his field that suggest that not-*p*. I agree with Goldberg that these are cases of genuine defeat. However, I don’t agree with his diagnosis in terms of social normativity encroaching on epistemic normativity proper. I argue elsewhere (Kelp and Simion Unpublished manuscript) that certain social roles are constituted by epistemic norms, which explains this datum. I also think telic normativity can easily accommodate this datum; just like there are constitutive norms of hunting generated by the domain-internal aim of hunting, there are constitutive norms of medicine generated by the domain-internal aim of medicine. Some of these norms are epistemic.

Now, here is one question: Why think that Diana's failure of the second kind—opportunity assessment failure—is conditional upon her making any attempts—including attempting to shoot, and including attempts to shoot if and only if the shot is apt—to begin with? Why think that this 'should' pertains to the normativity of extant attempts, rather than to the normativity of attempts that should have been made? After all, it is plausibly constitutive of the huntress's professional role that she should make hunting attempts, including attempting to shoot if and only if the shot is apt. A huntress who fails to make any hunting attempts is a rubbish huntress. The metacompetence to assess risks and opportunities in Diana's case is not attempt-conditional. It is also, at the same time, not domain-external. The question is not whether Diana should become a huntress to begin with; that's, of course, the stuff of professional ethics. Rather, what is going on is that, in her capacity as a huntress, Diana shoulders 'shoulds' pertaining to attempts she should make, not just 'shoulds' governing the ones she does make. Indeed, plausibly, these 'shoulds' are constitutive of what it is to be a huntress.

On pain of losing the analogy, we should expect that the normativity internal to the domain of the theory of knowledge proper follows suit; there will be attempts that the epistemic agent should make, given that the opportunity arises to judge or suspend aptly as a result of making said attempts. Epistemic agents who will ignore easy opportunities by not even attempting will be rubbish epistemic agents, just like huntresses who don't bother to take easy targets, or who don't even bother to assess shooting opportunities, are rubbish huntresses.

There is, of course, an important disanalogy between the two cases: one can choose not to be a huntress. It's harder for agents like us, with our cognitive capacities, to choose not to be epistemic agents. If so, the domain external question—should I engage in epistemic endeavors—does not even arise for us: we just can't help it. What room is there left, then, on this picture, for questions of intellectual ethics?

Note that Diana is not an ideal huntress; there are limits to the amount of opportunities she can take. Should she find herself in a forest filled with thousands of easily available targets, she can reasonably be expected to make a limited number of attempts. Likely, she will be normatively constraint to shoot at the most readily available targets. For the rest, it's up to her; she can't attempt to shoot at all of them, so it's up to other normative considerations, not pertaining to the domain of hunting, to decide which shot to attempt. Maybe Diana has moral concerns against shooting cubs; maybe she has prudential interests in favor of shooting expensive prey; in all these cases, these domain-external normative considerations will guide her choice.

Our epistemic environment is a bit like the forest filled with too many shooting opportunities. We have plenty of opportunities to judge aptly about thousands of things just as we walk down the street. We can't

take them all; we are psychologically limited creatures. Some we should (epistemically) take: I should form the belief that there's a building before me when it's in plain sight; I should believe the testimony of others, absent defeat; and so on.

For the rest, there will be many opportunities that I just can't take, because of the limited kind of being that I am: there's a limited number of attempts at apt judgment I can make. That's why whether I decide to study mathematics is a question of intellectual ethics, guided by prudential, moral, and other non-epistemic normative constraints. Epistemology only asks that I take the easiest of opportunities that lie right in front of me, just like hunting only asks that Diana makes attempts at the easy targets.

This concludes my discussion of attempts one (epistemically) should make; they correspond to (easy) epistemic opportunities one should take, because one would thereby aptly judge. The 'should' at stake is internal to the epistemic domain, because it pertains to what it is to be a good epistemic agent to begin with.

How about cases in which you lack the relevant competence to begin with, although you should have had it? Recall that the case of the sexist scientist is plausibly like that. He does suspend based on his lack of competence to judge aptly, which, in turn, is triggered by his sexism; he can't give the woman the credibility she deserves. Is this failure also going to be epistemic domain internal? After all, by stipulation, the sexist scientist does not miss an opportunity to believe aptly, since he lacks the competence to properly assess the woman's credibility to begin with.

I suggest that we step away from epistemology once more, go back to cases of general telic normativity, and ask the question: Is it plausible to think that there are norms internal to the domain of hunting that regulate what competences huntresses should have? I think the answer is clearly "yes." Indeed, it is arguable that these are norms that are constitutive of the domain: huntresses should, at a minimum, be able to spot the prey, shoot, and hit the target with some degree of reliability in normal environmental conditions. Huntresses who lack these basic abilities are rubbish huntresses; indeed, if they lack them all, they may no longer count as huntresses at all. And this is not the stuff of professional ethics, but rather constitutively normative of the domain of hunting itself.

Similarly, I want to suggest that epistemic agents are rubbish epistemic agents when they lack competences that are constitutive of the kind of epistemic agents that they are, by the light of normativity internal to the epistemic domain itself. Sexists, hallucinators, and wishful thinkers alike are in breach of epistemic norms proper. This explains why the normativity of competences one should (epistemically) have can affect the normative status of one's epistemic attempts.

5 Conclusion

I have argued that Sosa's epistemic telic normativity is in need of normative expansion. To do that, I have focused on Sosa's account of suspension and how it can—or cannot—deal with normative defeat. I have argued that, in line with general telic normativity, we should conceive of epistemic telic normativity as also concerning attempts we should have made, as well as competences we should have had.

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