

Disagreement and Evidence

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Introduction

- ▶ What should we do when we disagree?
- ▶ Can evidence fail to support exactly one conclusion?

The Connection

- ▶ Does permissivism imply steadfastness?
- ▶ Would a steadfast theory grounded in permissivism be any good?

From Permissivism to Steadfastness

- ▶ I'll be less confident only if I have a reason to think I'm wrong.
- ▶ I'll be less confident in response to your disagreement only if your disagreement gives me a reason to think I'm wrong.

Believing Implications

- ▶ It shouldn't be that I can clear-headedly believe something and deny what follows from it.
- ▶ So showing that someone could clear-headedly believe permissivism and deny steadfastness would show that permissivism does not imply steadfastness.

Permissivism Without Steadfastness

- ▶ Suppose I think that there are very few cases of permissive evidence. Or even just one.
- ▶ Permissivism follows but steadfastness does not.

Another Argument for Permissivism

- ▶ Consider agents with extremely fine-grained doxastic states.
- ▶ It seems that uniqueness might be implausible for these kinds of agents.

Disjunctions

- ▶ Permissive evidence is supposed to equally support two distinct hypotheses.
- ▶ But it might seem natural to think that it is in fact evidence of the disjunction.

Probability

- ▶ Assuming two hypotheses are incompatible, the probability of either one cannot be more than 0.5
- ▶ Which makes it hard to see how permissive evidence is evidence of either hypothesis.

Scepticism

- ▶ Steadfast theories charge that conciliatory theories lead to scepticism.
- ▶ But one might wonder about whether or not a steadfast theory grounded in permissivism does any better.

Stability

- ▶ Another objection is that conciliatory theories ultimately call for their own rejection.
- ▶ But one might wonder whether or not a steadfast theory grounded in permissivism can really make this objection.

Conclusions

- ▶ Permissivism does not imply steadfastness.
- ▶ Steadfast theories grounded in permissivism cannot appeal to two of the most powerful arguments against conciliatory theories.