

Ignorance and investigation

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Suppose Socrates knows nothing about fashion.¹ Indeed, he could not care less about it. Call this attitude *Preferred Ignorance*. Suppose further that he understands the concept atom, namely, smallest indivisible component of the physical universe, but he does not take himself to be in a position to assess whether such components exist. He also has some ideas about the nature of value. But as he tries to articulate what precisely it is that he takes the good to be, he must admit that he does not know. In both cases, we may speak of *Investigative Ignorance*. Socrates's ignorance motivates him to take an interest in physics, though he leaves investigation in this field to others. And his ignorance fuels his thinking about value. Other cases are such that one is unaware of one's ignorance. Suppose Socrates holds firmly that a divine being corresponds with him, though he is deluded about this; or, say, he affirms that there is a wolf approaching, though it is his neighbor's dog. Call this *Presumed Knowledge*.² There could also be a kind of ignorance where one does not hold any attitude to that which one is ignorant about. Perhaps Socrates has never even heard of dinosaurs, or more generally, of beings that once existed but are extinct. This is a kind of *Complete Ignorance*.³

Philosophers have said far less about ignorance than about knowledge.⁴ As a consequence, there is not much of a discussion that could be joined—no types of theories, arguments for and against them, problems that could be re-examined, and so on. Accordingly, the objectives of this chapter must be modest. We will pursue the above examples, suggesting that typically we have reason to prefer states of ignorance that motivate inquiry over states of ignorance that do not.⁵

The chapter starts with an outline of the notion of ignorance we will employ, ignorance as absence of knowledge (see below). Next we distinguish two elements that figure in most ignorance ascriptions: a generic ascription of ignorance and a more precise description of the attitudes a cognizer holds in a given instance of ignorance (see “Ignorance and belief”). We explore kinds of ignorance where cognizers seem to hold *no* relevant attitudes (see “Complete ignorance”), and conclude with a sketch of ignorance in investigation (see “Ignorance and investigation”).

Ignorance as the absence of knowledge

Arguably, the simplest answer one can give to the question “what is ignorance?” is “the absence of knowledge.” This is a literal take on the word. “i-” is a negator prefix, and “-gnorance”

derives from the Greek *gnōsis*, which refers to a state of mind in which the cognizer knows something or understands something.⁶ These considerations suggest a minimal notion of ignorance, namely that it is the absence of knowledge in a wide sense, which may include elements of understanding and grasping.

The negator prefix “i-” could be taken in a stronger, privative sense, signaling not mere absence but lack.⁷ Privation—literally, a state of being robbed of something—is a state where something is missing that *should* be there, as part of something’s nature or as a feature of how things usually are. For example, blindness is a privation insofar as vision is considered the general or natural case. Is ignorance, like blindness, a privation? Some languages capture the distinction between absence and privation when it comes to ignorance. For example, Latin has *nescire* for not-knowing and *ignorare* for being ignorant in a privative sense; German has *Nichtwissen* for a state of not-knowing and *Unwissenheit* for ignorance. If ignorance were primarily or generally a privation, then ascriptions of ignorance imply that something is missing that would naturally or ordinarily be present. We reject this stronger proposal, because it has implausible implications. For every ignorance-ascription to be an ascription of a privation, one would have to consider omniscience, understood as knowing everything that anyone could possibly know, as the standard against which to measure any state of mind. This kind of omniscience is inherently implausible and it is not an ideal to strive for. Obviously, ignorance can be a lack and it often is a lack. But for someone not to know, for example, what every reader of this chapter, including you, had for breakfast today is not lack, but mere absence.

Ordinary ways of speaking about ignorance can refer to the absence of a range of cognitive achievements. Since there is no technical notion of ignorance that seems relevant for present purposes, these everyday ways of speaking are a plausible starting-point. They pull away from the idea that ignorance is standardly or primarily the absence of *propositional* knowledge. In discussions of knowledge, propositional knowledge—knowing that *p*—is considered the most straightforward case. It is also usually considered basic, insofar as other kinds of knowledge are reducible to propositional knowledge. For example, knowing *whether* Walt had cake for breakfast may be reducible to knowing *that* Walt had cake (if Walt had cake) or *that* Walt didn’t have cake (if Walt didn’t have cake). Now one might take a true proposition—say, that Walt had cake for breakfast today—and refer to ignorance of this proposition as propositional ignorance: Skyler does not know that Walt had cake for breakfast today.⁸ But while propositional knowledge may be the standard case of knowledge, propositional ignorance seems less evidently “standard.” Consider the case where Skyler does not know the answer to a fairly open-ended question, such as, “what is a good way to live for human beings?” In thinking about this question, she may need to refine the terms in which she thinks about it, acquire new concepts, learn about empirical research, begin to perceive certain features of situations that are ethically relevant, and so on. Here it may just not make sense to say that what is absent is knowledge of propositions.

Perhaps one might say that what is absent is the answer to a question, leaving open how precisely to think of such answers to questions. But the idea that ignorance is typically *of* questions is not sufficiently wide. Ignorance-ascriptions often refer neither to a proposition nor to a question. Instead, we frequently say that someone is ignorant *about* X or *in* Y, for example, about fashion or in biology. In these cases, we are saying that someone is ignorant with respect to many propositions and to any number of questions in a whole field. And yet, her ignorance may not be reducible to ignorance of a set of propositions, or regarding a set of questions. It may include that a given question could not arise for her because she is unacquainted with the relevant concepts, say, in the way in which questions about dinosaurs could not arise for Socrates. This suggests that ignorance is absence of knowledge in a wide sense, where knowledge includes

elements of concept-possession, grasping, understanding, as well as a range of related cognitive achievements.

What, then, is excluded by saying that ignorance is the absence of knowledge? Ignorance is the absence of *knowledge* (in the relevant wide sense), not of some other cognitive achievement, say, attention or active recollection. For example, one is not ignorant by not attending at a given moment to something one knows, or by being asleep, or in some other way not presently accessing what one knows. One can know things and yet not, right now, fully recall them, such that one would have to reconstruct an idea in one's mind in order to have it fully present again. Still, in these cases, one is not ignorant. That is, in states of ignorance knowledge is *absent*, as opposed to merely latent, dormant, unattended to, and so on.

Ignorance and belief

If ignorance is the absence of knowledge, a wide range of doxastic states—states of mind where the cognizer represents the world as being a certain way—count in a sense as ignorance. But in what sense? Suspension of judgment, hypotheses, suppositions, postulates, beliefs with greater and lesser confidence, and so on, all fall short of knowledge. And yet, cognizers who hold these doxastic attitudes are in rather different states of mind. So it is not enough to say that a cognizer is ignorant in the absence of knowledge (A). Something also needs to be said about the doxastic attitude she holds (B).

- A Ignorance is the absence of knowledge. One either knows something or is ignorant of it.
- B Cognizers hold a range of doxastic attitudes: suspension of judgment, beliefs with higher and lesser credence, hypotheses, suppositions, postulates, and so on.¹⁰

The relationship between (A) and (B), and its role in inquiry, is explored in a famous text, the so-called Meno Problem in Plato's *Meno*. How can one search for anything, when either one knows it already, in which case there is no need to search, or one does not know it, in which case one cannot know what to look for or how to recognize it? This question misconstrues what absence of knowledge amounts to: it not only describes all doxastic attitudes falling short of knowledge as ignorance, but it assumes that an ignorant cognizer lacks any doxastic attitude whatsoever to a given content. Part of the explanation that emerges in the dialogue is that cognizers are not typically bare of any doxastic attitudes regarding that which they investigate and which they do not know. Things seem a certain way to them, and they can start investigating by making hypotheses out of these seemings.

The attitudes listed in (B) fall into two categories, the attitudes of inquirers and of believers. Cognizers in the first group make an effort to attend to epistemic norms of thinking carefully, assessing evidence, or assigning a given status to some idea (as a postulate, premise that is under investigation, etc.). Cognizers in the second group fail to make this kind of effort, either because they are unaware that something could be wrong with the way they see the world or because they are epistemically lazy.

To be sure, one often holds some view, and though it may be false, one buys into it without reservation. Sometimes one may just make an honest mistake about a trivial matter, being ignorant while one takes oneself to have knowledge. Suppose one is entirely confident that one put a pen in a certain drawer and takes oneself to be in a position to assert "the pen is in *this* drawer," and yet it is not. From the inside, this kind of ignorance feels like knowledge, which is why we refer to it as *Presumed Knowledge*. This cognizer is not motivated to inquire,

qualify her views as tentative, or anything of that sort. She may simply be making a mistake, one that appears inexplicable to her once she realizes that, say, the pen is *not* in the drawer where she thought she put it. Here we tend to think that mistakes are just part of life; they do not elicit any strong kind of blame. What may count as offensive, however, is insistence that reflects a delusional self-image, where a cognizer assumes that, unlike the rest of us, she is not liable to make mistakes. Other instances of *Presumed Knowledge* are the target of negative evaluations because cognizers display the vices of dogmatism, often combined with an air of superiority: they preach their views about the world, and it does not register with them that they may be wrong. Further, *Presumed Knowledge* can be related to *Preferred Ignorance*. A cognizer may pronounce her views on X, all the while not considering X worth any serious attention. *Preferred Ignorance* can thus be blameworthy in similar ways that *Presumed Knowledge* is. Those who prefer not to know can seem to dismiss domains of knowledge that to others appear valuable or even urgent.

Still, many cases of *Preferred Ignorance* seem unobjectionable. For example, suppose you prefer to remain ignorant about the chants of some new satanic cult. Similarly, you may be perfectly happy to not know anything about the contents of some TV shows. And so on. These cases are not about avoiding unpleasant, though ultimately useful, knowledge, as when one may be tempted to avoid information about the health effects of smoking because one enjoys it. These are phenomena in which, for example, a sociologist may take an interest, while others may reasonably prefer ignorance, given who they are and what else is going on in their lives.¹¹ Cognizers may have psychological reasons for avoiding knowledge (say, fearing trauma and nightmares, or worrying that certain knowledge may be stultifying) in cases that border on the bizarre, perverse, or trivial.¹² Relatedly, *Preferred Ignorance* can reflect an agent's considered values. Someone may decide that—though in a sense she would know something of which she is now ignorant—filling her mind with the trivia of soap operas or the details of satanic chants is not a cognitive advantage for her.

Consider next the doxastic attitudes that figure in inquiry. In an effort to avoid dogmatism, inquiring minds are committed to assessing—with significant and at times seemingly excessive effort—whether they are in a position to make claims about the world. They assign probabilities to assumptions, qualify views as preliminary, formulate hypotheses, and so on, adopting the attitudes of *Investigative Ignorance*. Given the cognizer's epistemic effort, would it not seem more plausible to refrain from ascribing ignorance to her? Arguably, the answer is “no.” Both (A) and (B) contribute relevant descriptions of her states of mind. Insofar as knowledge is absent, she is ignorant (A). Inquirers *themselves*, in fact, often choose this description. They come across something they are ignorant of and that they would like to know. Hence they investigate. (B) supplies a description of where they stand in their quest for knowledge: as of now, one merely has a hypothesis, a promising model, inconclusive evidence, and so on.

In practical contexts, similar considerations apply. Suppose a car riddled with bullet holes stops right in front of you with screeching tires. A passenger is lying on the back seat with what appear to be gunshot wounds. It seems obvious that a lot hangs on your giving the driver the right directions to the hospital. You may be quite sure about the best way, but not entirely sure. If all you said was “I don't know,” ascribing ignorance to yourself, you would be just as unhelpful as if you confidently asserted a view that might turn out to be false. The driver who seeks your input would be much more helped by a response like “I don't know for sure, but to the best of my knowledge, *p*.” That is, if one *only* said “I don't know whether *p*” in cases where one strictly speaking lacks knowledge, one would misrepresent one's doxastic state. These considerations support that there is a place for both (A) and (B), the ascription of ignorance and the

ascription of a certain doxastic attitude. On its own, each ascription is insufficient for characterizing a cognizer's state of mind.

Complete ignorance

And yet there are also cases of ignorance where (B) does not apply: the cognizer does not hold any particular doxastic attitude to content of which she is ignorant. Call this *Complete Ignorance*. It occurs in (at least) three variations. First, it is possible to be ignorant of something that one has never even heard about. Schematically, in this kind of complete ignorance, the cognizer does not have any attitude to X, and X exists.¹³ Say, Socrates has never heard of dinosaurs, has no views about anything relating to dinosaurs, and also no self-assessment to the effect that he is or is not ignorant about dinosaurs. Socrates is ignorant, and he is entirely unaware of his ignorance. This kind of ignorance is widespread with respect to trivia, but also with respect to any number of facts that simply do not figure in a particular person's life. It is a kind of ignorance *without* particular doxastic states. That is, here the level of description that (B) picks out does not apply. In a case in which someone has never even heard of that which she is ignorant about, her ignorance has no specific place in the cognizer's mind. Nevertheless, it is true to say of her that she is, with a view to a given matter, ignorant.

Consider a second kind of complete ignorance. Here one does not altogether lack attitudes related to X. Instead, assume that the cognizer has a belief about something that may not exist, as when someone thought about the Form of the Good while in reality there is no such thing. Such thinking can be quite extensive: someone may have developed a detailed theory about imperceptible and unchangeable Forms.¹⁴ He posed any number of questions about why these Forms are the highest kind of reality and how they explain everything else—and yet it could turn out that there are no Forms. Is it true to say that this cognizer was thinking about nothing? There is a sense in which he was thinking about what is not, assuming he thought about Forms although there are no Forms. And yet, there is also a sense in which he cannot have thought successfully about Forms if there are none; for his thinking was meant to refer to something, but the very objects that it was meant to refer to do not exist.

Schematically, in cases like this the cognizer has attitudes to X, but X does not exist. This kind of ignorance is complete in a peculiar fashion: much goes on in the mind of the cognizer, and yet all of it is in some basic ways misdirected. Though it gets the very existence of that which is thought about wrong, this kind of ignorance can have upsides. It can fuel theorizing, sometimes over centuries or even millennia. Consider other examples, such as the question of whether there are atoms, or whether there is void. Since the times of Pre-Socratic atomism, debates about smallest constituents of the physical world and about the void motivated major projects in physics, many results of which are important independently of whether later generations of scientists come to hold the view that there are atoms or that there is void. The second kind of complete ignorance thus differs from the first, which—given that the cognizer does not have any relevant attitudes—cannot motivate further thinking.

Third, consider cases where ignorance is almost, though not entirely, complete. Suppose a cognizer is ignorant about something that is relevant to her way of making sense of the world. This kind of ignorance can be described by the metaphor of a mental blank.¹⁵ Assume that a cognizer who knows nothing about evolutionary biology nevertheless refers to kinds of animals and plants, and takes a certain interest in the natural world. Now suppose she is aware that she does not have a clear understanding of the ways in which kinds of living beings differ from each other, of whether there were any living beings in the past that no longer exist, and so on. There is a self-perceived gap in her web of assumptions about the world. Though the cognizer cannot

pinpoint the kind of knowledge that would fill this gap, she may be able to locate it as situated, say, somewhere in the sphere of talk about kinds of living beings and their history. In such cases, ascriptions of ignorance refer to some actual mental states of the agent—not just to their absence. They refer to attitudes that delineate the domain where a reflective cognizer perceives gaps.¹⁶ This kind of perception can be vague or well-defined; it can be at the periphery of a cognizer's attention, or it can be acutely felt; it can be extensive, as when one has never heard of evolutionary biology at all, or specific, as when one is unaware of a specialized field such as phylogenetics, or misses one particular bit of information.

These three kinds of *Complete Ignorance*, therefore, differ in how they relate to investigation. The first cannot motivate inquiry. The second motivates inquiry, even though it can be misdirected in basic ways. The third can lead a cognizer to ask questions that are, as it were, on the right track—questions that are geared toward her understanding of the world and gaps in her knowledge.

Ignorance and investigation

That knowledge is valuable has been defended in any number of ways: say, as a starting-point that one should take for granted without demonstration; because we have a natural desire to make sense of the world; because we have practical ends; or insofar as even skeptics presuppose that knowledge—if only it were available—would be good to have.

If ignorance is the absence of knowledge, and if knowledge is valuable, ignorance would seem to be bad. At least, it would seem to be comparatively bad, a state where something of value is absent.¹⁷ This premise is not in conflict with cases where knowledge is not valuable, say, because pieces of knowledge are generated by mere iteration of the same move (“I know that I know,” “I know that I know that I know,” etc.), or knowledge of tautologies. There is a sense in which one plausibly speaks of knowledge here; but it is a weak sense that does not invoke all normative dimensions of knowledge. Arguably, there is *some* achievement even here, for otherwise, say, the cognizer might be confused and mix up the iteration, or make some other mistake in generating the series. It is not, however, an achievement that one ordinarily considers worthwhile. There are some confined contexts where pointless memorizing or similar achievements count as praiseworthy, say, some game show where a candidate displays an idiosyncratic cognitive skill, comparable to, on the non-epistemic side of things, a hotdog eating contest. Setting these contexts aside, for the most part knowledge is used as an honorific, a success term that describes a cognitive achievement that is considered worthwhile.

Knowledge in science, or any kind of inquiry geared toward finding out how the world (or some aspect of it) is, seems to be a straightforward case: its value is fairly uncontroversial.¹⁸ Accordingly, ignorance is thought of as disvaluable, a condition to get rid of by attaining knowledge.¹⁹ And yet it is precisely in science that ignorance is sometimes positively appreciated. For researchers, ignorance is embedded in a mindset geared toward discovery. The (B)-type doxastic states associated with inquiry—hypotheses, postulates, and so on—seem unobjectionable. Indeed, they seem to be informed by epistemic norms of caution, dedication to truth-finding, and so on. That is, one way in which *Investigative Ignorance* seems praiseworthy is tied to the (B)-type doxastic attitudes that researchers tend to adopt. Relatedly and in addition, inquirers tend to adopt interrogative attitudes, aiming to formulate precise questions and pursuing these questions. Arguably, to ask questions that can guide inquiry is an achievement.

But how about, as it were, the ignorance itself? To register that one is ignorant about something is presumably an achievement. This condition of registered ignorance seems good at least in a comparative sense: better than holding unfounded views or not realizing that there is

something one does not know. It is a step toward discovery and knowledge. Is it thereby a good state of mind?²⁰ It might seem outrageous not to concede this. Otherwise, only complete and ideal knowledge of the world is good and all lesser states of mind count as bad.²¹ This is arguably too tragic a view, one that gives too little weight to comparative evaluations. It may seem that the researcher is not only in an improved state of mind because she can formulate questions. More than that, by formulating and re-formulating her questions, by repeatedly revising her premises and methods, etc., her ignorance itself changes. It becomes an increasingly well-defined gap with recognizable contours, such that she can see what is at its periphery, what it relates to, and so on.

Concluding this sketch of ignorance and investigation, consider again the distinction between *Presumed Knowledge* and *Preferred Ignorance*. Both incur, often, blame; and both seem closely related. One way in which they differ, however, is that *Preferred Ignorance* can play a positive role in investigation. For example, inquirers can choose to be ignorant because they think that not availing themselves of certain information is conducive to discovery. Consider the so-called veil of ignorance that the Rawlsian tradition in political philosophy recommends for the “original position.” In this hypothetical setup, agents decide about norms that should be accepted in a state. When they ask which principles would be just, they might be led astray by knowing which position in a society they inhabit. Only if they do not know whether they are rich or poor, healthy or sick, and so on, are they going to think in the right ways about justice.²² The core intuition here resembles the image of justice with a blindfold. Not seeing certain particular features of the people involved in a given interaction, so the argument goes, can be conducive to better thinking and better outcomes. Analogues exist in empirical research in any number of contexts, as in when medical researchers conduct double-blind studies, aiming to remove expectations that bias results.

Hence blinding can have epistemic value: it can be conducive to attaining knowledge. Nevertheless, blinding involves loss of information. Researchers who employ blinding as a tool, be it in political philosophy, in clinical studies in medicine, or in other domains, tend to revise their methods in an effort to balance the good and the bad of it. For example, the veil of ignorance may be revisited, because the concern may arise that, via blinding, one tends to imagine a fairly uniform “standard person.” This may lead to principles of justice that are ill fit for societies that are in fact quite diverse. Similarly, in medicine methods of testing medications undergo revision. What counts as placebo, how expectations of patients are to be seen as relevant to therapies, and so on, are matters of dispute and reevaluation. That is, in fine-tuning their methods, researchers aim to balance advantages and disadvantages of undisclosed information. Where they decide in favor of blinding, they do so with the assumption that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, *not* with the assumption that the undisclosed information is in principle without any value.

Conclusion

Ordinary ignorance ascriptions, we have argued, do not necessarily ascribe a lack or privation. They ascribe the absence of knowledge. Cognizers are not expected to aim indiscriminately for knowledge. Their considered values, psychological considerations, or even the very method of a research project can make it plausible to selectively prefer ignorance. And yet, many kinds of ignorance seem worrisome. We distinguished between the attitudes involved in what we called *Presumed Knowledge*, *Preferred Ignorance*, *Complete Ignorance*, and *Investigative Ignorance*. Much more could be said beyond this outline. For present purposes, we have tried to establish one criterion by which to assess ignorance in normative terms: generally speaking, and in spite of exceptions,

ignorance that shuts down inquiry seems more vulnerable to criticism than ignorance that motivates inquiry.

Notes

- 1 Avery Archer, Elizabeth Balough, Jonathan Fine, Abram Kaplan, Christiana Olfert, Nandi Theunissen, Achille Varzi, and the participants of the Fordham Ethics & Epistemology Group offered much appreciated comments.
- 2 See Vogt (2012: Ch. 1).
- 3 Yet other kinds of ignorance are related to action. One may not have how-to knowledge, knowledge of what to do, or (more controversially) knowledge of what one is doing.
- 4 Bernard Williams (1995) focuses on skepticism and some related questions; but he does not ask what ignorance is. This is typical of the few existing contributions on ignorance. Peter Unger (2002) is a defense of skepticism, not a book about ignorance.
- 5 Our discussion aims to pick out kinds of ignorance that are particularly relevant to normative practices. A different approach might stipulate that an account of ignorance ought to fall out of an account of knowledge. This approach has merits, but it does *not* lead one to think about kinds of ignorance that are salient in our practices of ignorance-ascriptions.
- 6 The Greek word *gnōsis* also refers to “seeking to know/inquiry”. This use of the Greek term relates to a question relevant to our topic, namely whether one associates inquisitive attitudes with knowledge-states or with ignorance-states.
- 7 Philosophers who consider the lack-view as standard tend not to distinguish between lack and absence. See Peels (2010, 2011, 2012) and Le Morvan (2011, 2012).
- 8 Notice that one does not tend to say “Skyler is ignorant that . . .”, but “Skyler does not know that . . .”; “ignorant that” sounds off. When we use the term “ignorant” in an ascription of propositional ignorance, we have to use a circumlocution, something like “Skyler is ignorant of the fact that . . .”
- 9 The nature of questions is under-explored in philosophy. For a recent contribution, see Friedman (2013).
- 10 An alternative view assumes that cognizers hold beliefs with certain degrees of credence. Low credence counts as ignorance; if a certain threshold of confidence is met, cognizers count as holding beliefs; in full confidence plus X (where X is justification or something else that secures the status of knowledge), they have knowledge. This approach neglects phenomena we address, for example *Presumed Knowledge*, or that absent knowledge one is, strictly speaking, ignorant. On threshold views of belief, see Foley (1992).
- 11 One may also prefer *others* to be ignorant, as when one prefers a terrorist to be ignorant of bomb-making (we owe this example to Avery Archer).
- 12 Relatedly, they may have preferences about the mode of knowledge-acquisition, for example preferring to learn about some acts of brutality by reading about them, rather than by seeing photos or video-footage. They may be aware that knowledge acquired by sense-perception may figure differently in their psychology. Some cases that we colloquially refer to as “ignorance is bliss” may be of that sort: we recognize a need for being informed, but only up to a point, realizing that it would be debilitating, for example, to know about all health risks in a way that is supported by visual material.
- 13 “Exists” is used here in a sense that includes past existence, the existence of abstracta, and so on. The point of our formulation is to exclude cases where a cognizer does not know X and X does not exist, as when, say, I have never heard of planet Z and planet Z does not exist.
- 14 This person would be Plato.
- 15 We *don’t* mean to refer here to the idea of not being able to recall something, and in that sense “having a mental blank.”
- 16 When access to vital information is impeded, or when one cannot put one’s finger on the missing piece of a puzzle, ignorance may be a painfully perceived deficiency. Versions of this phenomenon are pervasive—and arguably, the more you know, the more you know it: the research project is at a dead end, the directions for the road trip were wrong, the manual for the fancy oven makes no sense to you, and so forth. The agony may relate to the importance of one’s project, but it can also derive from a kind of cognitive unease. One may know that one knew something, cannot remember it, and then agonize over remembering it, even though one’s remembering it is not important and has no consequences; we owe this last example to Abram Kaplan.
- 17 Badness or disvalue is not necessarily tied to blameworthiness; a disvaluable state can be unfortunate or disadvantageous, without there being anything that the cognizer did wrong.