

Fogelin, Robert J. Pyrrhonian Reflections on Knowledge and Justification. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. xiii + 238 pp. Cloth, \$38.00 — This is not a work of historical scholarship, but a provocative attempt to apply ancient Pyrrhonism and the later Wittgenstein to the problems of contemporary analytic epistemology.

The work's first half advances a criterion for knowledge that is a hybrid between internalist and externalist approaches: internalist in that the believer must conduct herself in an epistemically responsible way; externalist in that the believer's grounds must guarantee the truth of her belief, although she need not know that her grounds do so. (This latter requirement is akin to Dretske's conclusive reasons approach, a point I'll return to.) By way of supporting his own view, Fogelin turns to criticize rival approaches: fourth-clause theories, reliabilism, and subjunctive views of the Dretske-Nozick type. His method here will frustrate readers who expect to see candidate theories given a detailed and rigorous development, and then painstakingly assessed in the light of various counterexamples. Fogelin prefers to take a broader view, looking at the general motivation behind a theory and the ways in which his approach can better account for those motivations. I suspect that readers already conversant with these topics will find little of interest in this part of the book.

Fogelin spends surprisingly little time developing his

hybrid account. Indeed, one gets the sense that the work's first half serves merely to set the table for the second part, where Fogelin turns, theory of knowledge in hand, to ask whether anyone can actually have such knowledge. Fogelin's targets here are Chisholm's foundationalism and two varieties of coherentism (BonJour's and Davidson's). What he finds is that none of them are successful in evading skepticism — that is, they "come nowhere near" showing that all skeptical possibilities are false (p.194). These results are in one respect interesting, inasmuch as Fogelin repeatedly finds his targets purporting to refute skepticism while at the same time illicitly assuming that skepticism is false. Yet Fogelin goes too far, I believe, in suggesting that these findings refute the theories he considers. For even if neither foundationalism nor coherentism offers a solution to skepticism, there is still reason to argue over which one, if either, correctly describes the structure of our justificatory practices.

Fogelin concludes that there is no absolute refutation of skepticism. But ironically, after criticizing others for presupposing that skepticism is false, Fogelin himself embraces a Wittgensteinian account on which it would be the worst kind of absurdity to claim, for instance, that I don't know this is a hand (p.201). On Fogelin's account we do have knowledge, insofar as we have true beliefs that are supported by grounds that are, when judged by common standards, adequate. But there will always

be stricter standards, in particular the standards of philosophy, and "if we press for justification we quickly become aware that none is forthcoming" (p.195). In this way skepticism can never be refuted absolutely, but only relative to a certain level of scrutiny. "Knowledge claims are always made within restricted frameworks" (p.203).

It is not as clear as it should be how this approach differs from Dretske/Nozick style counterfactual theories. These theories agree that we can never rule out all skeptical possibilities, and such theories might well concede that context determines which possibilities are relevant — i.e., which must be ruled out for the sake of knowledge.¹ Fogelin criticizes such accounts for attempting to explain this notion of relevance in terms of counterfactuals and possible worlds semantics (pp.66-78). What he instead offers is a story about our ordinary forms of life, combined with a Gricean account of conversational implicature. Fogelin never makes it clear whether this constitutes a genuinely new approach or a novel perspective on familiar findings. The Pyrrhonian theme adds a further, particularly interesting perspective, and constitutes a plausible attempt to work out the Pyrrhonist skeptical position along the lines suggested by Michael Frede. It is these novel perspectives that make the book interesting and provocative. — Robert Pasnau, St. Joseph's University.

i. For an impressive recent effort to blend Nozick's counterfactual approach with a contextualist reply to skepticism, see Keith DeRose, "Solving the Skeptical Problem," Philosophical Review 104 (1995) 1-52.