

1 **A foundherentist conception of the justification of religious belief**

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5 In *Evidence and Inquiry*, Susan Haack presents a theory of justifica-
6 tion which is an intermediate position between foundationalism and
7 coherentism.

8 ...foundationalism and coherentism do not exhaust the options;
9 there is logical space in between. At its simplest, the argument is
10 this: foundationalism requires one-directionality, coherentism does
11 not; coherentism requires justification to be exclusively a matter
12 of relations among beliefs, foundationalism does not... So: a the-
13 ory which allows no-belief input cannot be coherentist; a theory
14 which does not require one-directionality cannot be foundheren-
15 alist. A theory such as the one I favor, which allows the relevance
16 of experience to justification, but requires no class of privileged
17 beliefs justified exclusively by experience with no support from
18 other beliefs, is neither foundationalist nor coherentist, but is inter-
19 mediate between the traditional rivals.¹

20 Haack calls such a theory “foundherentist.” Foundherentism is a the-
21 ory of justification which is supposed to include the virtues of both a
22 foundationalist and coherentist epistemology without their respective
23 vices. In this paper, I will modify Haack’s foundherentist position to
24 present a feasible model for the justification of religious belief.² The
25 foundherentist position I will offer has internalist, coherentist, and
26 evidentialist conditions of justification as well as a strong volitional
27 component.

28 However, before presenting the foundherentist picture of the jus-
29 tification of religious belief, some preparatory groundwork is nec-
30 essary. Plantinga’s theory of the warrant of Christian belief poses
31 a formidable alternative epistemic model for religious belief. It is a



32 theory in which justification together with internalist, evidentialist, and
 33 coherentist components characteristic of a foundherentist position are,
 34 at best, relegated to the background. In the first part of this paper, I will
 35 argue that even if Plantinga's theory of warrant for Christian belief is
 36 generally correct, complementing it with a foundherentist conception of
 37 justification for religious belief would only strengthen it.

38 Also, since the foundherentist position I am proposing here has a
 39 volitional component, and volitionalism regarding belief faces serious
 40 objections, in the second part of the paper, I will argue for the plau-
 41 sibility of a cognitive voluntarist conception of belief.

42 1. Justification and warrant

43 In *Warranted Christian Belief*, Alvin Plantinga makes a case for the
 44 warrant of Christian belief. Following his account of warrant in *War-*
 45 *rarrant and Proper Function*³ he argues that Christian belief is formed by
 46 properly functioning cognitive faculties in a congenial epistemic envi-
 47 ronment according to a design plan successfully aimed at the truth.
 48 His position is that there is a cognitive faculty, the *sensus divinita-*
 49 *tus*, which enables us to form warranted beliefs about God (WCB
 50 172). This faculty is comparable to our other cognitive faculties, like
 51 sense perception, memory, and *a priori* intuition which also enable
 52 us to form warranted beliefs. Plantinga's general position on warrant
 53 and his position on the warrant of Christian belief places little or no
 54 significance on justification and internalist, volitionalist, or coheren-
 55 tist components.⁴ Nonetheless, I think a case can be made that such
 56 components in a theory of justification could complement a theory
 57 of warrant even as superficially distinct as Plantinga's from the one
 58 which I am proposing here.

59 Despite his criticisms of justification in the *Warrant* volumes how-
 60 ever, Plantinga does concede that it can play a significant role in
 61 epistemological considerations. For example, from the symposium on
 62 the *Warrant* volumes in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, he
 63 closes as follows:

64 Obviously justification can be of prime importance, even if it is not
 65 necessary for warrant. Furthermore, there may be certain *kinds* of
 66 knowledge such that satisfaction of intellectual duty is a necessary
 67 condition of possessing knowledge of *that* kind, even if it is neither
 68 necessary nor sufficient for knowledge in general.⁵



69 Likewise, in his article, “Prospects for Natural Theology,”⁶ Plantinga
70 conceded that natural theology may very well play a significant role in
71 increasing the warrant of religious beliefs (311). Furthermore, regard-
72 ing the role of natural theology in relation to belief in God, he admits,
73 “such arguments might increase the degree of warrant of that belief in
74 such a way as to nudge it over the boundary separating knowledge from
75 mere true belief” (312). Now I think that this could very well be part
76 of the “prime importance” of justification that Plantinga mentions,⁷ but
77 I doubt that he would agree. Since he has consigned justification to a
78 deontological role in epistemology that separates it from its playing a
79 role in what he considers to be warrant, he would probably not feel at
80 all comfortable with my interpretation.

81 My position is that Plantinga has minimized the epistemic role
82 played by justification and has exaggerated the epistemic role of
83 what he takes to be warrant. He may be right, justification may be
84 neither necessary nor sufficient for knowledge in general, but jus-
85 tification (and Plantinga grants this as a possibility) is of prime
86 importance for a certain sort or degree of knowledge. Justification
87 is of prime importance in a theory of knowledge because justifica-
88 tion is inextricably tied to what are paradigmatic instances of war-
89 ranted beliefs or knowledge; paradigmatic because these are beliefs
90 which we have the best reasons to believe are warranted. I think
91 that it is crucial in epistemology to recognize that not all of knowl-
92 edge has the same status. Such a recognition is clear in Aquinas,
93 who clearly distinguishes what he calls *cognitio* from *scientia*. A sim-
94 ilar recognition is also apparent in the theories of Ernest Sosa and
95 Richard Foley. In these views, there are two separate sub-theories of
96 knowledge, one focusing on pre-systematic or pre-organized knowl-
97 edge (what Aquinas calls *cognitio*, Sosa calls “animal knowledge”,
98 and Foley “causal-historical” knowledge) and the other focused on
99 “science” or knowledge in the systematic sense.⁸ Such a distinction
100 seems to be confirmed by the way in which we view knowledge. A
101 young child’s knowledge that dogs are animals is indeed a sort of
102 knowledge, but it is quite distinct from the knowledge that a zool-
103 ogist has of the same truth. Plantinga may be right, without war-
104 rant there may be no knowledge, but for many of the beliefs that
105 we have, and specifically for Christian beliefs, there would seem to
106 be no good reason to think such beliefs are warranted unless they
107 are also justified.

108 Plantinga’s conception of warrant is primarily externalist. According
109 to Haack, the main vice of externalist (or what she calls “extrinsic”)



110 foundationalism is that it does not adequately account for what she
111 calls the "evidentialist" intuitions about justification.

112 The exact statement of the most important argument against
113 extrinsic foundationalism – I shall call it the evidentialist objection
114 – will depend on the exact formulation of the connection between
115 the subject's belief and the state of affairs that make it true which
116 the foundationalist is offering; but the main thrust is to the effect
117 that extrinsic foundationalism violates the intuition that what jus-
118 tifies a belief should be something of which – as the etymology of
119 'evidence' suggests – the subject is aware (28).

120 Haack and Plantinga object to coherentism for similar reasons,⁹ but
121 Haack, unlike Plantinga, thinks that there is some salvageable virtue
122 in coherentism which needs to be incorporated into a theory of justi-
123 fication in order to adequately account for our evidentialist intuitions.
124 Haack thinks that extrinsic foundationalism is both too strong and
125 too weak. It is too weak because extrinsic foundationalism (and this
126 is so for Plantinga's version of foundationalism) can entail a belief to
127 be justified or warranted even when the agent has no evidence for the
128 belief; and it is too strong because it entails that unless there is the
129 proper causal connection between the belief and what makes it true,
130 e.g., Plantinga's proper function requirements, then the belief is unjust-
131 ified even when the agent has good evidence for the belief (28).

132 I generally agree with Haack about Plantinga's foundationalism's
133 being too weak, but I do not share her judgment about extrinsic foun-
134 dationalism's being too strong. However, nothing about my disagree-
135 ment with Haack on this count affects my use of her foundherentist
136 position in presenting a model of the justification of religious belief.
137 What Haack's critique of epistemological theories like Plantinga's adds
138 to my complaints is that Haack attributes the denigration of justifica-
139 tion and evidentialism in such theories to its foundationalist presup-
140 positions.

141 So I agree with Haack in thinking that there is some virtue in
142 coherentism which ought to be salvaged and incorporated into the
143 theory of justification. But we ought to first attempt to understand
144 why someone like Plantinga would object to such a strategy, and it
145 surely has to do with the fundamental picture of the structure of
146 justification with reasons which Plantinga espouses, namely, a stan-
147 dard foundationalist picture. And as Haack points out, critics of



148 coherentism assume that justification by reasons constitutes a chain
149 (23), where a reason for p would be q , and q would then be justified
150 by r , and r by s , and so on. In such a picture, it appears that justifica-
151 tion would have to end in a vicious circle. However Haack questions
152 this assumption. In her view, series of justification do not extend in
153 a chain, but rather in a loop (23–24), such that p could be justified
154 by q and s , and s is justified by w, x, y , and z , and then z is partly
155 justified in turn by p . In such a case, p and z are related by mutual
156 support, but it is hard to see why such a relation would be objection-
157 able, since the entire series of justification does not end in a circle. Of
158 course, *part* of the series of justification is circular, but why would that
159 in itself be vicious?

160 Plantinga's foundationalism is bound up with his rejection of
161 evidence as a necessary or a sufficient condition of warrant, and
162 his argument is that many of our beliefs have warrant, but are not
163 warranted on the basis of evidence (WPF 185–193). He argues that
164 memory beliefs, beliefs about the self, and *a priori* beliefs can be
165 warranted, but that the basis of their warrant is not evidential. For
166 example, this is what he says about memorial beliefs.

167 I remember having seen a friend a year ago in California; I can't
168 now really think what he looks like, and I certainly don't remem-
169 ber that it was *he* I saw then on the basis of anything like noting
170 that the phenomenal imagery involved looks a lot like an image of
171 Paul. I certainly don't note the phenomenal imagery, and then see
172 the resemblance to Paul, thus forming the belief that it is Paul I
173 saw there in California. There is a phenomenal imagery involved;
174 but my memory belief isn't formed *on the basis of* that imagery.
175 The relation between that imagery and the belief is wholly different
176 from that between perceptual imagery and perceptual belief. There
177 is nothing like that sort of highly articulate, detailed mapping from
178 sensuous imagery to perceptual belief. Here there is nothing we
179 can sensibly think of as evidence on the basis of which the mem-
180 ory belief is formed (WPF 188).

181 I agree that the phenomenal imagery is not the evidence on which
182 a memory belief like the one above is formed. But I think that Plan-
183 tinga is looking in the wrong place. If I have a memory belief of seeing a
184 friend, Paul, in California a year ago, the evidence is not the phenome-
185 nal imagery associated with such a belief, but it would rather be things



186 like my belief that I do have a friend, Paul, the evidence I have for
187 whether or not Paul may have been in California last year at the same
188 time that I was there, the evidence I have for my being in California
189 last year, etc. It would seem that these other memory beliefs and evi-
190 dence (say, my airline ticket to California, my name of the conference
191 program which I attended in California, etc.) would not be irrelevant to
192 whether or not I am warranted in my belief that I saw Paul there last
193 year. If I had *none* of this sort of evidence: no memory of even having
194 a friend Paul excepting this one about seeing this person in California
195 last year, no evidence that this person Paul or myself may have been in
196 California last year, would I be warranted in believing that I had seen
197 my friend Paul in California last year, even if my belief had been formed
198 in accordance with Plantinga's conditions of warrant? It seems to me
199 that Haack would say that without some such evidence, I would not be
200 warranted in my belief, and I would agree.

201 Plantinga's argument against *a priori* beliefs being based on evi-
202 dence seems to me to fare no better. In a similar vein to his argu-
203 ment that the phenomenal imagery associated with a memory is not
204 evidence upon which the memory belief is based, Plantinga argues
205 that the phenomenal imagery associated with my belief in *modus pon-*
206 *ens* is not the evidence upon which my belief in *modus ponens* is
207 based (188–189). I would agree that the phenomenal imagery here
208 is not the evidence which warrants my belief in *modus ponens*, but
209 once again, I would say that Plantinga looks for evidence in the
210 wrong place. Now I believe that *modus ponens* is a valid rule of infer-
211 ence, but I have all sorts of evidence besides my phenomenal imag-
212 ery associated with the rule. I have memory beliefs of using *modus*
213 *ponens* countless times in the past, both in making actual inferences
214 and teaching students logic; I remember seeing the rule (sometimes
215 called not *modus ponens* but detachment or conditional elimination)
216 in many logic texts; I remember proving *modus ponens* using what I
217 take to be other valid rules of inference. Is this evidence irrelevant to
218 the warrant of my belief that *modus ponens* is a valid rule of infer-
219 ence? Plantinga would, I think, insist that it is irrelevant, at least
220 such that I can be warranted in my belief even when I have no such
221 evidence as long as my belief was formed or maintained according
222 to the conditions of his proper function account. But imagine that
223 my belief in *modus ponens* was formed according to the conditions
224 for proper function but I had none of this other sort of evidence: I
225 have never seen the rule in any logic text, cannot prove it *via* what
226 are taken to be other valid rules of inference, have never heard any



227 logician or someone else who knows logic cite any such rule. Would
228 we want to say that my belief in *modus ponens* in these circumstances
229 is warranted? I doubt it.

230 The last sort of presumably warranted belief which Plantinga
231 denies is based on evidence is beliefs about the self. My belief that
232 *I am having an experience of X* is not based on evidence that I, rather
233 than someone else, is having the experience. His reasoning is that “it
234 is part of the idea of evidence that there be...differential response
235 to different inputs” (WPF 190) and when it comes to knowledge
236 about the self, there is no differential response to different experien-
237 tial inputs. However, even though it is the case that there are usually
238 differential responses to different inputs, it does not follow that this
239 is part of the idea of evidence. Perhaps what is distinctive about evi-
240 dence about the self is that there is no differential response. Plantinga
241 does admit that beliefs about the self are “formed in *response* to expe-
242 rience”(190) but it is unclear why these experiences to which beliefs
243 about the self are responses wouldn't be the evidence for such beliefs.

244 I conclude that Plantinga's arguments against incorporating inter-
245 nalist, coherentist and evidentialist conditions in a theory of knowl-
246 edge are unsuccessful. I have no quarrel with his arguments for the
247 insufficiency of any of these sorts of theories to be adequate as a
248 theory of warrant or justification by themselves, but I do not think
249 that he has successfully rebutted them as necessary conditions of war-
250 rant for our beliefs which constitute systematic knowledge. A satisfac-
251 tory theory of warrant needs to be supplemented with evidential and
252 internalist components, and if it has these components, a coherentist
253 component will also follow.

254 2. The case for cognitive voluntarism

255 In this part of the paper, I wish to argue for a version of volition-
256 alism or cognitive voluntarism regarding belief. This position goes
257 against the grain of some of the best current scholarship, but for
258 the foundherentist position I will present, a volitional component is
259 necessary. Also, a volitionalist position regarding belief follows the
260 tradition of Catholic philosophers and theologians from Augustine,
261 through Aquinas, to Newman. For example, in his “Dialogue on
262 Truth,” St. Anselm discusses the truth of sentences, actions, and the
263 will, and for each, concludes that truth is a “rightness.”¹⁰ One of the
264 things that I think is illuminating about his discussion is the con-



265 flation of topics which contemporary philosophers usually separate,
 266 viz., the rightness of belief (what we usually just think of as truth)
 267 with the rightness of action and the will. One tendency to separate
 268 the discussion of the truth of belief from discussions of the right-
 269 ness of action is, I think, due to anti-volitionalist conceptions of
 270 belief. But if, contrary to the anti-volitionalist position, “faith is an
 271 act of the intellect moved by the will,”¹¹ there is good reason for the
 272 Anselmian conflation.

273 I am not going to argue that all belief is brought about by the will.
 274 It does seem that very often, we just find ourselves believing without
 275 any apparent voluntary effort and we cannot will any alternative. For
 276 example, beliefs which one takes to be properly basic or for which we
 277 have proof or conclusive evidence are the sorts of beliefs which do not
 278 require, nor may even allow for, voluntary control. Consider, however,
 279 beliefs that p , where p has the following properties:

- 280 (1) there is no proof of p and there is no proof of not- p ;
- 281 (2) neither p nor not- p are epistemologically basic nor follow from
 282 basic beliefs;¹²
- 283 (3) there is some evidence or grounds less than sufficient for believing
 284 p ;
- 285 (4) p is not unreasonable.

286 In sum then, p is not unreasonable and there is no sufficient evidence
 287 for p 's truth. One could argue that these are the only sorts of beliefs
 288 which those in the tradition contend are volitional. As St. Thomas
 289 says, “Belief cannot refer to something that one sees; and what can be
 290 proved likewise does not pertain to belief.”¹³ In any case, I will argue
 291 for a position of volitionalism for beliefs that p for propositions which
 292 meet the above set of conditions.

293 Determining whether or not belief is voluntary is contingent upon
 294 the issue of just what it is to believe something, and if the anti-
 295 volitionalist position is plausible, it would be grounded in a distinc-
 296 tion between belief and acceptance.¹⁴ This distinction is detailed and
 297 defended by L. Jonathan Cohen. According to Cohen, “to accept that
 298 p is to have or adopt a policy of deeming, positing, or postulating
 299 that p .”¹⁵ But “belief that p , on the other hand, is a disposition to
 300 feel it true that p whether or not one goes along with the proposi-
 301 tion as a premise.”¹⁶ Cohen goes on to say that “You answer the ques-
 302 tion whether you accept that p by making or reporting a decision.



303 You answer the question whether you believe that p by introspecting
304 or reporting what you are disposed to feel about the matter".¹⁷ Now
305 Cohen agrees that one often believes what he accepts and accepts
306 what he believes, but that "certain general differences are undeni-
307 able"(368). And the difference which is most relevant to my concern
308 is that acceptance that p is voluntary, while belief that p is not (369).
309 And in application of the distinction between belief and acceptance
310 to religious faith, Cohen states that faith that God exists is a belief
311 (386). Hence as Cohen maps it, the distinction between belief and
312 acceptance clearly supports the anti-volitionalist conception of reli-
313 gious belief. For example, after introducing the distinction between
314 belief and acceptance, Plantinga says that even though belief may not
315 be under direct voluntary control, acceptance can be.¹⁸

316 Now I do think that there is some distinction which obtains
317 between what Cohen and others call "believing" and "accepting."
318 There is, in some cases of belief, a difference between the feeling that
319 a proposition is true and one's accepting it as a premise in one's or
320 another's proofs, deliberations, inferences, argumentations, etc. (368).
321 But is this a distinction between what ought to be called "believing"
322 and "accepting"? Take, for example, the proposition that "It is snow-
323 ing out now" as I now gaze outside my window. In this case there
324 is a characteristic feeling that it is true that it is snowing. Is not this
325 feeling, however, just my *seeing* that it is snowing? In fact, in this
326 case I would be hesitant even to say that I *believe* that it is snow-
327 ing, for I would say that I *know* that it is snowing. Similarly, take
328 the feeling associated with my contemplation of the proposition that
329 $2 + 2 = 4$. There is also a feeling that it is true, but is not this just
330 *seeing* that it is so? Of course this is not a perceptual seeing, but a
331 sort of analogue in introspection. There is a feeling-that-true associ-
332 ated with these and other sorts of propositions which are taken to
333 be immediately warranted, like my being hungry now. This feeling-it-
334 true seems to be more vivid and lively in these cases than my feel-
335 ing when it comes to beliefs I have which are not what I take to be
336 immediately warranted. Now there may also be a residue of feeling-
337 that-true for these beliefs as well, but frankly, I do not think that
338 the feeling is what we ought to identify as belief. For if I try to
339 abstract from my belief that these propositions are true, my taking
340 them for premises in my deliberations, inferences, arguments, deci-
341 sions, bets, stories, etc., I do not know if there is anything of signifi-
342 cance left. How is this feeling characteristic of belief in Cohen's sense
343 distinct from my feeling like I am seeing red widgets when I know that



344 it is only because they are under a red light? In this case, I of course
345 do not believe that they are red widgets. Does not my not believing
346 in this case amount to my not taking this as a premise in any of my
347 decisions, deliberations, etc? In any case, if there is a feeling that p is
348 true, I do not think that we ought to carve it out and call it “belief.”
349 Cohen admits that in practice, we do often use “I believe that ...”
350 to declare acceptance rather than what he calls “belief,” but that “the
351 choice of vocabulary to mark the difference is relatively unimportant”
352 (382). However, this is not so if the vocabulary imbeds a misleading
353 equivocation. For Aquinas and others within the volitionalist tradi-
354 tion, “belief” applies only to those things which are not known or
355 cannot be “seen” to be so. If the feeling that p is true is merely a
356 property of known or evident beliefs, or a perceptual or introspec-
357 tive texture, Cohen’s insistence that beliefs cannot be chosen does not
358 apply to the volitionalist tradition’s conception of belief.

359 There is however a more telling problem with Cohen’s distinction.
360 He states that we can decide to believe a friend (369). As he says, to
361 believe a friend is to trust his word. What is it to trust his word? Is
362 it to believe his word in Cohen’s sense? What if my friend tells me
363 something and I do not use what she has told me as a premise in
364 any of my deliberations, decisions, inferences etc. Do I believe her?
365 Surely, for reasons of confidentiality I may not confess my belief to
366 others, but if I do believe my friend, would it not have to be active
367 in at least some of my private deliberations and inferences? Let us
368 say that Cohen would still maintain that believing the friend does
369 not entail any acceptance. Then I think that he owes us an apology
370 for saying that we can *decide* to *believe* a friend. For according to
371 Cohen, beliefs in his sense cannot be chosen and hence cannot be a
372 matter of decision. According to Cohen, I could not choose to believe
373 that p because my friend, or anyone else, tells me that p ; I could only
374 accept it. It seems to me that there is no clear distinction between
375 acceptance and belief. Consequently, arguments against volitionalism
376 which presuppose such a distinction ought to be rejected as question-
377 begging.¹⁹

378 Perhaps there is a more promising route for the anti-volitionalist
379 however. Louis Pojman presents the most elaborate and clear argu-
380 ments against volitionalism in his book, *Religious Belief and the Will*.
381 What he calls his “logical argument” is the most significant argument
382 he offers and captures what is common in attacks upon the volition-
383 alist position. However, the argument is based on a misconception
384 of the distinction between belief and action and does not distinguish



385 between a pure volitionalist view with more moderate forms of direct
386 volitionalism.

387 Pojman's logic of belief argument, which he claims to be an
388 improved version of an argument offered by Bernard Williams, is an
389 argument that has some force against the position that beliefs can be
390 brought about solely by an act of the will. As Pojman comments, a
391 person cannot hold or sustain a belief "simply by willing to believe
392 the proposition"(172) and that "at least, she will not be able to believe
393 that the will alone is causing her to believe *p*, but that it is the evi-
394 dence that is the deciding factor"(172). Pojman construes this position
395 as "direct volitionalism," the situation is not as clear-cut as he makes
396 it out to be. There are not only two alternatives: one where the belief
397 is caused *solely* by the will and the other where the *only* deciding fac-
398 tor is the evidence. There is a middle position possible which includes
399 consideration of the evidence in conjunction with a will to believe.

400 Following Williams's lead, the intuition behind Pojman's argument
401 is that belief aims at the truth, but what determines whether a belief
402 is true or not is not in any way contingent upon the will, but upon
403 objective states of affairs. I do not disagree. Consequently, according
404 to Pojman to adopt a belief via an act of the will is to commit "dox-
405 astic suicide" (189–190) and except for cases of self-deception or self-
406 creating beliefs (the non-standard cases, where full consciousness is
407 not present), beliefs are not chosen. Pojman's attack against volitional-
408 ism regarding beliefs is based upon the premise that there is a crucial
409 distinction between choosing an action and choosing a belief. Accord-
410 ing to Pojman, actions can be chosen because they are not truth con-
411 tingent.

412 Contrary to Pojman, I think it can be shown there is no criti-
413 cal distinction between choosing an action versus choosing a belief.
414 Although Pojman is right in claiming that beliefs are truth contingent
415 whereas actions are not, the relation between actions and the good is
416 similar to the relation between beliefs and the truth. As Anselm might
417 express it, just as the true (in our sense) is rightness of belief, the good
418 is rightness of action. And Aquinas says that truth is the good of the
419 intellect – and I would add that the good is the truth of the will. We
420 choose to perform certain actions or we make certain choices in order
421 to bring about the good. Within a libertarian conception of choice, it
422 seems that we then get the following parallel schema for the choosing
423 of action and the choosing of belief.

424 It seems to me that the schema on the left presents a logical problem
425 for the choosing of an action which is similar to Pojman's problem of



Free action	Volitional belief
An action aims at the good A free action is undetermined. There is no set of sufficient conditions which determine the choice of X or non- X	A belief aims at the truth A volitional belief is undetermined by the evidence
A free action is from an informed choice. There are rational grounds upon which the choice of action is based	A volitional belief is an informed belief. There are rational, but insufficient evidential grounds upon which the belief is based
There is no intrinsic connection between choosing X and its being good. My choosing X cannot determine X to be good	There is no intrinsic connection between believing p and p 's being true. My believing p cannot bringit about that p is true

426
 427 “the logic of belief.” Since actions aim at the good, but there is
 428 no intrinsic connection between the choosing of an action and the
 429 action’s being good (for neither does my choice determine it to be
 430 good nor does the good determine my choice), in what way are free
 431 actions distinct from random events? The problem of the apparent ran-
 432 domness of free choice is what provides much of the motivation for
 433 a deterministic conception of action. The determinist holds that there
 434 must be some set of antecedent sufficient conditions which determine
 435 choice, even though we cannot specify just what these conditions are.
 436 But although the retreat to determinism negates the randomness of
 437 choice, it does not help at all in establishing an intrinsic connection
 438 between choice and the good. So whether libertarianism or determin-
 439 ism is true, there is a remoteness that exists between choice and the
 440 good. In choosing X , I choose it to obtain the good, but my choos-
 441 ing X cannot bring it about that X is good.
 442 The parallel schema for choosing belief is on the right. Like
 443 the action determinist, the belief determinist can avoid the problem
 444 of the randomness of choosing belief, but cannot avoid the problem of
 445 the remoteness of belief from the truth. Whether a belief is chosen
 446 or is caused by other factors, unless the other factor is sufficient



447 evidence, there is no good reason to believe that the belief is brought
448 about by truth-relevant means.

449 What I am suggesting is that the important problem the opponent
450 of the volitionalist conception of belief is raising about “the logic of
451 belief” applies just as forcefully to his own position. The problem of
452 “the logic of belief” is not a problem with volitionalism’s apparent
453 randomness of belief adoption, but a more generic problem of the
454 determinant of belief, whether it be choice or some determined cause
455 besides pure evidential or truth-warranting considerations. If the anti-
456 volitionalist admits that some beliefs occur in the absence of sufficient
457 grounds or evidence, then the problem of “the logic of belief” applies
458 to his position as well. Pojman does admit that some beliefs do occur
459 in the absence of sufficient evidence or grounds.

460 Now there may be a real problem here, but then again there may
461 not be. The fact that many of our beliefs are determined by non-truth-
462 relevant causes is a sobering, but it seems to me, unavoidable fact
463 about the human condition. And although it is sobering, it need not
464 be depressing, because the recognition that such causes are operative
465 does not have to lead us to reject truth as the aim of belief. Surely
466 belief aims at the truth, but what makes the belief true is never, or
467 very rarely,²⁰ what causes a belief to be believed. A volitionalist about
468 belief is not committed to the absurd position that willing to believe is
469 what makes a belief true, anymore than an action volitionalist is com-
470 mitted to the position that choosing to act is what makes an action to
471 be good. However, just as the libertarian is committed to the position
472 that the will is what causes the action, the volitionalist about belief
473 can be rationally committed to believing that willing to believe is what
474 causes the belief.²¹

475 I have argued that a non-volitionalist view of the occurrence of
476 belief is no better suited for dealing with the problem of the cause of
477 belief than is volitionalism. If volitionalism is true, then some beliefs
478 are chosen by the will, and this surely is a non-evidential or non-
479 truth-relevant cause of belief. But if the non-volitionalist view is cor-
480 rect, and there are some beliefs which are not determined solely on
481 the basis of evidence, then just as in the volitionalist position, there
482 are non-truth-relevant causes of belief. It then seems to me that the
483 anti-volitionalist fares no better when it comes to the logic of belief.
484 The dispute, as I have construed it, is parallel to the dispute between
485 libertarians and determinists when it comes to the freedom of action.
486 Neither seems to be able to refute the other, and the phenomeno-
487 logical evidence is at best murky. Libertarians generally recognize the



488 problem of making clear the logic of free choice and distinguishing
489 it from randomness, but are nonetheless convinced by introspection
490 that choices are indeed non-determined. The determinist, on the other
491 hand, offers very little phenomenological evidence, and for evidential
492 circumstances that appear to be contrary to a determinist view, hidden
493 causes are postulated. Nonetheless, the failed attempts of libertarians
494 to produce a satisfactory “logic of action” convince the determinist of
495 their position. But determinism, whether of action or of belief, solves
496 the logical puzzles surrounding belief and action no better than the
497 volitionalist view. Hence I see no reason for rejecting a voluntarist or
498 volitionalist account of belief.

499 There is one more objection to cognitive voluntarism I need to
500 answer. Let’s grant that it is not impossible to choose beliefs, and
501 also grant that Pojman’s logic of belief argument is unsuccessful and
502 that choosing belief does not amount to doxastic suicide. The final
503 objection to cognitive voluntarism is one grounded in an evidential-
504 ist position. An evidentialist will argue that one ought always to base
505 one’s beliefs merely on one’s evidence, and this is what being ratio-
506 nal entails.²² Hence, whenever one chooses to believe in the absence
507 of what his evidence supports, he is being irrational. In the absence
508 of sufficient evidence, one ought to withhold belief. I am sympathetic
509 to evidentialism, as my picture of justification will confirm, but do
510 not think that evidence ought to be the *only* determinant of belief:
511 there is room for the will to exercise some aspect of control over belief
512 which goes beyond the mere consideration of evidence. Here is the
513 argument for such a position. The epistemic end of belief is truth and
514 this implies at least that it is epistemically better to know what is true
515 rather than it is to believe what is false or not know what is true.
516 According to the evidentialist, what should be one’s cognitive posture
517 if there is sufficient evidence for p ? Well, just what constitutes “suffi-
518 cient” evidence may be vague, so let’s consider *conclusive* evidence, for
519 conclusive evidence would surely be sufficient. Evidence for a proposi-
520 tion p is evidence for the truth of p , and where there is then conclusive
521 evidence for the truth of p , one ought to believe p . However, if the evi-
522 dence for p is inconclusive, then p may very well be false. If p fits the
523 evidence that I have better than not- p , but the evidence for p is incon-
524 clusive, and if p is in fact false, then it is epistemically better for me to
525 believe not- p than it is for me either to believe p or not believe not- p .
526 Since it is epistemically better for me to know the truth than it is to
527 believe what is false or not know the truth, when the evidence for p is
528 inconclusive and not- p is in fact true, my believing not- p rather than



529 believing p or withholding belief in p puts me in the best position to
 530 come to know the truth. Hence, in such cases it is epistemically better
 531 for me to believe not- p . Whatever it is epistemically better for an agent
 532 to believe is what it is rational for an agent to believe. Hence, even if
 533 p fits the evidence I have better than it does not- p , then as long as
 534 the evidence for p is inconclusive, then if I will to believe not- p and
 535 not- p is in fact true, I am rational in believing not- p rather than p or
 536 withholding belief in not- p . As Augustine states:

537 The true reasoning by means of which we understand what we
 538 believe is to be preferred to false reasoning, but that very faith in
 539 things not yet understood is undoubtedly to be preferred too, since
 540 it is better to believe in what is true but not yet seen than to think
 541 that you see something true which is really false. (*Epistula* CXX ii
 542 8; 711.11–16)

543 Since he takes it to be “better to believe in what is true *but not yet*
 544 *seen*” than to believe in something false, I take it that he also implies
 545 that he does not take it that withholding assent is preferable in all
 546 cases where evidence is insufficient.

547 The non-controversial truth of evidentialism is that if I will to
 548 believe not- p , even if not- p is in fact true, if I then encounter *conclu-*
 549 *sive* evidence for p , I ought to reject not- p and believe p . However, if
 550 not- p is in fact true, then I will never encounter evidence which is con-
 551 clusive for the truth of p ; and if not- p is true, and if I am evidentially
 552 conscientious, I will in all likelihood encounter mounting evidence for
 553 not- p , which is not the case if not- p is false.

554 Now, by a voluntarist account, I mean a direct volitionalism. Anti-
 555 volitionalists like Pojman and Alston are content with an indirect voli-
 556 tionalism, but on the basis of the arguments presented above, I see no
 557 reason for the volitionalist to retreat to the position of indirect voli-
 558 tionalism. What I suggest is rather a partial long range direct voli-
 559 tionalism.²³ Arguments like the ones offered by Williams, Pojman and
 560 Alston seem to me to be sufficient for the refutation of a strict voli-
 561 tionalist account of the adoption of belief. By a “strict volitional-
 562 ist” account, I mean an account of the adoption of belief by a sheer
 563 act of the will which is in no way supported by evidential consider-
 564 ations.²⁴ If the arguments of Williams, Pojman and Alston are meant
 565 to show that strict volitionalism is false, I would agree, for the same
 566 reasons as I would agree that we ought to reject the view that a free



567 action is determined solely by the will. But why ought this force us
 568 into an indirect volitionalism? It does not. We can hold that beliefs,
 569 like actions, can be *determined directly* by the will, but if informed, are
 570 *based not solely on the will*, but also on evidence or grounds.

571 And if faith is chosen, it is more plausible to view faith as a vir-
 572 tue. Perhaps one may argue that since faith is a gift from God, it does
 573 not involve choice as do the non-theological virtues. As Aquinas states
 574 in *Summa Theologiae* IIa IIae q. 6. a. 2, “faith, as regards the assent
 575 which is the chief act of faith, is from God moving man inwardly by
 576 grace.” But although grace is a necessary condition of the virtue of
 577 faith, it is not sufficient. Grace is a gift from God, but a gift of this
 578 sort, like most gifts, must be accepted freely in order to benefit the
 579 recipient. Hence an act of will by the recipient of faith is also neces-
 580 sary, as St. Thomas himself seems to suggest in the same article at ad
 581 3 when he states that “to believe does indeed depend upon the will of
 582 the believer. But man’s will needs to be prepared by God with grace.”

583 I began this section with references to Anselm and Aquinas. What
 584 I think both saw clearly was that faith, as a virtue, is a function of
 585 both the intellect and the will. Faith is rightness of belief, but the vir-
 586 tue of faith is not produced by the involuntary movement of theoret-
 587 ical reason. The intellect must be moved toward rightness of belief by
 588 the will.

589 In Part I of this paper, I criticized Plantinga’s replacement of justi-
 590 fication with warrant. In this section I have defended cognitive volun-
 591 tarism. These issues are not entirely separate. In *Warranted Christian*
 592 *Belief*, Plantinga criticizes Alston for sticking with the concept of jus-
 593 tification given Alston rejects volitionalism concerning belief (104). He
 594 returns to the criticism later in *Warranted Christian Belief*, questioning
 595 whether or not a Christian can choose to participate in belief-forming
 596 practices which yield distinctly Christian beliefs.

597 ...it isn’t up to me whether I form beliefs in those ways. I can
 598 try as hard as I like, but (apart from such draconian measures as
 599 mind-altering drugs) I doubt that I could seriously alter my basic
 600 belief-forming proclivities. Offer me a million dollars to believe
 601 that I live in Wyoming or that I am really the president of the
 602 United States. I can strain my outmost, but I won’t be able to col-
 603 lect (122).

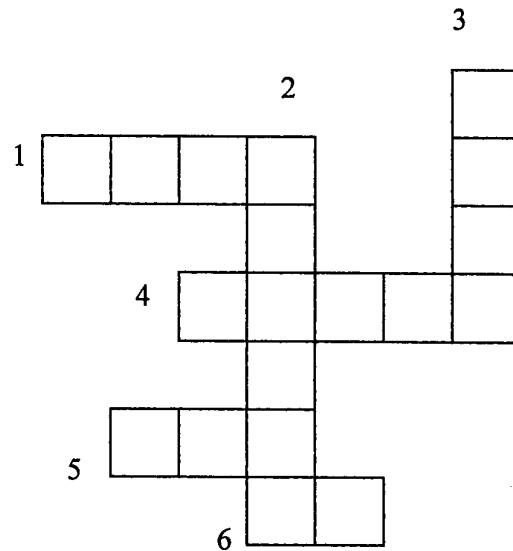


604 But notice that Plantinga, as is typical of anti-volitionalists, appeals to
605 the sorts of beliefs I have argued that the tradition of cognitive vol-
606 untarists admit are not within control of the will. The fact that we
607 have no control over beliefs which we know to be false does not show
608 that there are no sorts of beliefs over which we have volitional control.
609 Hence, the arguments offered by the anti-volitionalists fail to under-
610 mine cognitive voluntarism.

611 3. A foundherentist picture of the justification of religious belief

612 I now want to suggest an alternative conception of justification which
613 I think adequately accounts for our intuitions regarding justifica-
614 tion and evidence, and illustrates the proper relation between faith
615 and reason. The picture will be fundamentally foundherentist. I think
616 Haack's foundherentist position best satisfies our intuitions concern-
617 ing justification, it is able to successfully incorporate both internal-
618 ist and externalist, and foundationalist and coherentist conditions of
619 knowledge, and does not seem susceptible to the kinds of problems
620 which plague pure versions of any of these epistemological positions.
621 However, although the picture I wish to present fundamentally follows
622 Haack's foundherentist conception of justification, there are some
623 important differences. First, in the second part of this paper, I argued
624 in defense of a volitionalist conception of belief. I will therefore incor-
625 porate volitionalism into my picture of the justification of religious
626 belief. Haack's foundherentist position does not incorporate any voli-
627 tionalist elements, but it does not entail anti-volitionalism, so I do not
628 think that incorporating a volitionalist component into a fundamen-
629 tally foundherentist position is implausible.²⁵ Second, Haack's found-
630 herentism is a theory of empirical justification. As a theory which
631 includes consideration of the justification of religious belief, my pic-
632 ture will of course include non-empirical beliefs. However, this does
633 not seem to be a problem since there is nothing about foundher-
634 entism which makes it necessarily just a theory of justification for
635 empirical beliefs. So the two main differences between the foundher-
636 entist conception which I am proposing and Haack's conception is
637 that my version of foundherentism is volitionalist (i.e., it includes
638 a volitionalist component, not that it construes all beliefs as voli-
639 tional – as should be clear from Part II above) and includes non-
640 empirical as well as empirical beliefs. These two differences are not
641 totally unrelated, for the way in which volitionalism is incorporated





642 into my version of foundherentism has to do with the justification of
 643 non-empirical beliefs.

644 In representing my picture of justification, let me borrow and mod-
 645 ify here Susan Haack's metaphor of the crossword puzzle (85).

646 **Across:**

647 1.

648 4. The skeleton of the head

649 5. A writing instrument or a small enclosure for animals

650 6. The opposite of stop

651 **Down:**

652 2. A good form of outdoor exercise for cardiovascular health and
 653 strength of the legs

654 3. Who hath said in his heart that there is no God

655 As in Haack's use of the metaphor, the clues are the pieces of evi-
 656 dence, and in this case the given clues as the evidence (whatever you



657 think that that is) which we appeal to in philosophical, scientific of
 658 any other inquiry based solely upon what Thomists call “natural rea-
 659 son”, namely that which reason can discover in its natural deployment
 660 without reliance upon faith. Think of the entire crossword puzzle as
 661 the whole of knowledge, and this section of the puzzle to be a sec-
 662 tion where some of the answers (beliefs) from reason butts-up against
 663 some of the answers (beliefs) of the faith. The answers in this section
 664 of the puzzle will represent our non-theological knowledge, and to the
 665 extent that the answers are the same will be the extent to which there
 666 is a common body of knowledge accessible without the aid of faith.
 667 As can be seen, there is a clue missing from the puzzle; and because
 668 of that, there is no determinate solution to the puzzle; and in particu-
 669 lar, no determinate solution for #2 down: it is indeterminate whether
 670 *hiking* or *biking* should be the entry. The missing clue is not acces-
 671 sible to all and is available only to those who have faith; but if you
 672 have faith, this part of the puzzle is then determinately resolvable. The
 673 missing clue is:

674 A cartoon image of a good idea is a light_____.

675 With the addition of this clue, the puzzle is determinately resolvable:
 676 the entry for #1 across is *bulb* and therefore #2 down is clearly *biking*,
 677 not *hiking*.

678 If we use the analogy of the crossword puzzle for the relation
 679 between faith and reason, we get that both faith and reason are
 680 insufficient sources of knowledge: neither naturalism nor biblicalism
 681 are warranted. Not only is it the case that neither faith nor reason
 682 are sufficient sources of knowledge, but faith and reason are comple-
 683 mentary. Faith perfects reason and reason perfects faith. Reason is
 684 an autonomous discipline in the sense that it considers distinctive evi-
 685 dence (has its own clues). The same should be said of faith. However,
 686 neither faith nor reason can constitute a complete science (crossword
 687 puzzle) and there are no clear boundaries as to where reason ends and
 688 faith begins. There is also no clear distinction between “philosophical”
 689 questions and “theological” propositions. Another feature of the anal-
 690 ogy of note regarding the relation between faith and reason is that a
 691 clue (evidence) is given for faith, *not* a dictated answer; and hence the
 692 believer or community of believers, using other evidence and beliefs
 693 from faith and reason, must figure out or interpret the meaning of the
 694 evidence provided by faith. What Scripture and the Tradition entail
 695 itself requires the use of unrestricted reason.



696 From my adaptation of Haack's crossword puzzle analogy, we get
697 a view of the relation between faith and reason and a conception of
698 warranted or justified belief which has the kinds of features which I
699 think we are looking for. There are coherentist and foundationalist,
700 internalist and externalist, and volitional and non-volitional elements.

701 Such a view is coherentist in the sense that the entirety of knowl-
702 edge is viewed as a network of beliefs. No belief is wholly justified
703 on its own, but is in some respects justified because of its relations
704 to other beliefs. For example, part of the justification of my answer
705 (belief) that #4 across is *skull* is its relation to my answer (belief) for
706 #2 down, which of course in turn depends on my answers for #1
707 and #5 across. Even for #1 across, which represents a faith belief,
708 although its clue (evidence) is unique in being from a source distinct
709 from reason and common beliefs, part of its justification will depend
710 upon its relation to my other beliefs. In the first part of this paper, I
711 criticized Plantinga's foundationalism for not incorporating such ele-
712 ments into his conception of warrant.

713 However, the view is not strictly coherentist because it provides
714 for the kind of input from outside of our network of beliefs as evi-
715 dence as well as the network of beliefs. Each of the answers (beliefs)
716 has some clue (evidence) from outside of the network of beliefs
717 (other answers in the puzzle). As Haack has noted, the advantage
718 of a foundationalist view over a coherentist view of justification is
719 that it allows for non-propositional evidence (27). And in my view,
720 non-propositional evidence may be of many different sorts. I have
721 no theory about the general criteria for evidence. There is room for
722 the evidence of the senses, introspective evidence, testimonial evidence,
723 and even the evidence of mystical experience. Obviously, in the view
724 which I am proposing, the evidence of faith (i.e., the clue for #1
725 across) is something distinctive from the more common modes of
726 evidence, such as evidence from the senses, introspective evidence,
727 or human testimonial evidence. Some of the plausible candidates for
728 viewing the clue or the evidence for #1 across are divine testimony or
729 mystical experience. The reason why the clue for #1 is not included
730 with the other clues is that the evidence of divine testimony and mys-
731 tical experience, even granted that there are such types of evidence, is
732 not the sort of evidence which all have access to, and in fact perhaps
733 just a few have access to. However, even though the foundational evi-
734 dence for #1 is not public, there nonetheless is evidence for #1 and
735 the answer (belief) for #1, in order to be justified, must cohere with
736 my other beliefs.²⁶ In other words, in order to be justified, faith must



737 cohere with reason. Below, when I consider the place of volitionalism
738 in the picture, I will offer a reason why the evidence of the faith is not
739 common.

740 So I think it is clear why such a view of justification is foundher-
741 entist and as such incorporates conditions of evidence and justifica-
742 tion which, in the first part of this paper I argued for as necessary
743 components of an adequate theory of knowledge. Each of the answers
744 (beliefs) has their own clues (evidence) but the answers (beliefs) are
745 interdependent. The fact that each of the answers has their own clues
746 represents the foundationalist aspect of the theory; the interdepen-
747 dence of the beliefs of course represents its coherentist aspect.

748 The picture of justification offered by the crossword puzzle clearly
749 incorporates internalist elements, but also allows for externalist ones
750 as well. The way in which beliefs are formed on the basis of its foun-
751 dational evidence is left unspecified by the puzzle analogy. If I believe
752 that there is a notebook computer in front of me now and this belief
753 is based upon the evidence of my senses, there are presumably many
754 facts about the formation of my belief on the basis of the evidence
755 which I do not have access to and upon which the justification of
756 my belief depends. Perhaps Plantingan conditions of warrant are those
757 justificatory conditions, and if so, then these conditions are external-
758 ist in nature.²⁷ As noted above, Haack criticizes externalism as both
759 too strong and too weak of a theory of justification; and as I said, I
760 generally agree with her concerning externalist theories like Plantinga's
761 as being too weak. However there may be some items of knowledge
762 concerning which internalist conditions are not necessary for warrant.
763 I have in mind here what Sosa calls "animal knowledge" and Foley
764 calls "causal-historical" knowledge.²⁸ Perhaps a young child's belief
765 that *here is my food*, like my dog's belief that *here is my food*, is war-
766 ranted in the absence of any significant internalist conditions. How-
767 ever, even if there are such warranted beliefs, they would not be the
768 norm and, more importantly, are not types of beliefs like the beliefs
769 of the faith. And I do not follow Haack in the judgment that exter-
770 nalist theories, particularly Plantinga's, are too strong. Something like
771 Plantinga's proper function conditions may well be necessary for war-
772 rant.

773 Here is the way in which volitionalism concerning beliefs enters
774 the picture. The clue for #1 is not available to all and is only avail-
775 able to some. Why? Well, the main reason is that some don't want
776 or accept the clue and others do. The evidence of the faith is evi-
777 dence that a person must *choose* to accept. The way in which the



778 anti-volitionalists like Pojman, Plantinga, and Alston present the
779 truths of the faith is that one just happens to believe such truths. As
780 I mentioned already, the way in which Plantinga talks about Chris-
781 tian belief is the same way in which he talks about mundane beliefs,
782 such as his belief that he does not live in Wyoming, or is not the
783 president of the United States. As he says I “find myself” (WCB 172,
784 175) believing such things, and that, of course, is why he has such
785 a hard time with cognitive voluntarism and basically just dismisses it
786 out of hand. Now as the picture of the crossword puzzle makes clear,
787 once one has the clue for #1, coming up with an answer is basically
788 the same as coming up with an answer for the other entries. So, in
789 other words, once one *accepts* the evidence of the faith, one’s response
790 to that evidence is pretty much indistinguishable from one’s response
791 to the evidence of reason. Hence a person of faith may view this as
792 just “finding oneself” believing. But my use of the crossword puz-
793 zle analogy makes clear, there is a step prior to the consideration of
794 the evidence for the belief, and that is the acceptance of this other
795 evidential mode. This, I suggest, is the way in which we can view
796 the faith such that its volitional aspect is maintained. For someone
797 to believe something as divine testimony on the basis of the Scrip-
798 ture or the Church, one must first accept the Scripture or the Church
799 as a source of such evidence. Likewise, coming in contact with the
800 divine through mystical experience and forming beliefs in accordance
801 with that contact is much more likely if one first believes that there
802 can be such a thing as mystical experience. We should first open our-
803 selves to the consideration of such evidence. The difference between
804 the believer in Scripture and the non-believer is really not on the basis
805 of what the evidence of Scripture provides regarding God’s will: there
806 does not seem to be any disagreement between the believer and non-
807 believer that Christian Scripture entails that God has forbidden mur-
808 der and that Jesus is the messiah. The difference is whether or not one
809 takes the Scripture as divinely inspired or whether anything like this is
810 possible. If one does not, then the evidence provided by Scripture is
811 inconsiderable. One can just ignore it, and whether one ignores it or
812 not is a matter of choice, not something which is determined by other
813 considerations, either rational or non-rational.

814 A typical case might go something like this. A particular person
815 does not *see* that the Scripture is divinely inspired, but the Church
816 proclaims that it is. This person also does not have sufficient evi-
817 dence that the Church is authoritatively valid, but nonetheless makes
818 an act of faith, accepts the authority of the Church and hence believes



819 what the Church proclaims. As a result, since the Church proclaims
820 the Scriptures as divinely inspired, the person of faith takes as evi-
821 dence what a person who lacks the faith does not. In my crossword
822 puzzle example, not everyone accepts the evidence (the clue) for #1
823 across; but in the crossword puzzle example, the epistemic benefit of
824 accepting the evidence for #1 is clear. If one accepts the clue for
825 #1 across, one not only gains knowledge of what the entry is for
826 #1 across, she also discovers the truth for #2 down: accepting the
827 clue for #1 across (an act of faith) results in knowledge not just of
828 particular items of the faith, but enhanced knowledge of items out-
829 side of the realm of faith proper. In this case, she can clearly claim:
830 *credo ut intelligam*.

831 If this then is the way things go, there is an important and in fact
832 essential volitional element concerning the faith, and since the faith
833 is networked with our other beliefs which are not based on faith, to
834 the extent that there is contact, there is also a volitional element in
835 the general structure of beliefs as well. However, as is clear from the
836 puzzle, choosing or accepting the evidence of faith is not a choice
837 which is insensitive to evidential consideration: the anti-volitionalist
838 position that either belief is caused by the will or by evidence is a
839 false dilemma. My acceptance of the evidence for #1 will have sig-
840 nificant consequences for the way in which the rest of the puzzle is
841 viewed, *and* my other beliefs will also have a significant effect on the
842 way in which the evidence of faith is considered. Now, obviously, I
843 have stacked the deck in the crossword puzzle analogy in order to
844 represent the rationality of faith in the best light. The clue for #1
845 clearly gives us the answer for #1 as *bulb*. Hence if I accept the
846 clue for #1, not only will I get the answer for #1, but I will also
847 get the correct answer for #2. Without the evidence provided for #1,
848 the evidence for #2 is indeterminate. It is ambiguous whether *hik-*
849 *ing* or *biking* is correct. However, given the evidence from #1, only
850 *biking* could be correct. Now, of course the deck is stacked in pre-
851 senting the rationality of faith in the best light, and the reason it
852 is so stacked is that it is a given that the clue offered is from an
853 authoritative source of the truth. And following Augustine, Anselm,
854 and Aquinas, this is a necessary condition for faith being rational. My
855 argument for the rationality of cognitive voluntarism in Part II above
856 was an argument for the rationality of choosing to believe when what
857 is believed is in fact *true*. This does not imply that it is rational to
858 choose to believe when what is believed is false. Hence, in order for
859 the crossword puzzle to accurately represent what I take to be the



860 way in which *rational* faith and reason are related, the deck needs
861 to be stacked in just this way.

862 This deliberately incorporates what I want to say about the way
863 in which faith perfects reason. Following the analogy, faith per-
864 fects reason by providing evidence which reason on its own has no
865 access to; and once we accept the evidence of the faith, the evi-
866 dence provided by reason is in no way ignored, but dictates a differ-
867 ent response. I think that this accurately portrays the way in which
868 the truths of faith affect the truths of reason. For example, Plan-
869 tinga, in “Two Dozen (Or So) Theistic Arguments”²⁹ suggests that
870 maybe there aren’t any good proofs in philosophy, but that none-
871 theless there are still good probabilistic arguments for the existence
872 of God. But how do these probabilistic arguments succeed? The-
873 ists who read Plantinga’s paper are generally convinced by most of
874 these arguments and atheists are convinced by none of them. Why is
875 this so? Well, let’s take a look back at the crossword puzzle. With-
876 out the clue for #1, the probability that the answer to #2 is *bik-*
877 *ing* is not greater than .5, it is only in conjunction with the evi-
878 dence for #1 that the probability that biking is the correct answer
879 is greater than .5. Similarly, what I want to suggest is that for those
880 who do not accept the evidence provided by faith, the arguments
881 like the ones presented by Plantinga (and all other theistic argu-
882 ments I have ever seen), the probability for theism is not greater than
883 .5; but for those who do accept the evidence of faith, this raises
884 the probability of the arguments above .5, making them successful
885 theistic arguments.

886 However, in what sense can these be “successful” theistic arguments
887 if they only work for those who already accept the conclusion? They
888 surely are not rhetorically successful. The arguments are successful
889 because they enhance the justification of the truths of the faith. With-
890 out these arguments, faith beliefs may not be warranted; but, as Plan-
891 tinga says “such arguments might increase the degree of warrant of
892 that belief in such a way as to nudge it over the boundary separating
893 knowledge from mere true belief.”³⁰ The beliefs of faith entail belief
894 in God’s existence and many other beliefs concerning God’s nature
895 and his relation to the world. But as my picture suggests, and as I
896 argued in Part I of this paper, we would not have good reasons to
897 believe that the truths of faith are warranted and hence do not con-
898 stitute knowledge without the justification provided by the arguments
899 in natural theology. But if that is so, then knowledge as well is voli-
900 tionally dependent.³¹



901 **4. Conclusion**

902 I have argued that a theory of warrant or justification such as Plan-
 903 tinga's, which is externalist and does not include internalist and ev-
 904 identialist conditions of justification as necessary components, is at
 905 best incomplete. I have also argued that arguments against the vol-
 906 untary nature of belief are unsuccessful. I then have tried to show
 907 how a modified foundherentist theory can incorporate the kinds of
 908 conditions which are necessary and sufficient for a theory of justifica-
 909 tion which includes internalist, coherentist, evidentialist, and volitional
 910 components.

911 **Acknowledgement**

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 913 has previously appeared in the *American Catholic Philosophical Quar-*
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 917 F. Ross, and Louis Pojman. Research for this paper was supported by
 918 a sabbatical from my institution.

919 **Notes**

- 920 1. Susan Haack, *Evidence and Inquiry* (Oxford UK and Cambridge USA: Black-
 921 well, 1993), 19. Since Haack introduced foundherentism, other philosophers
 922 have followed her lead in taking a middle way through the standard dichot-
 923 omies of foundationalism/coherentism and internalism/externalism. See Earl
 924 Conee, "The Basic Nature of Epistemic Justification," *The Monist* 71 (1988):
 925 389–404.
- 926 2. Others have suggested a similar approach for religious epistemology. See e.g., Keith
 927 DeRose, "Are Christian Beliefs Properly Basic," at pantheon.yale.edu/~kd47/basic.htm
 928 and Duncan Pritchard, "Reforming Reformed Epistemology," *International*
 929 *Philosophical Quarterly* 43(1, 169) (2003): 43–66.
- 930 3. *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), hereaf-
 931 ter WCB. *Warrant and Proper Function* (New York: Oxford University Press,
 932 1993), hereafter WPF. *Warrant: the Current Debate* (New York: Oxford Univer-
 933 sity Press, 1993), hereafter WCD.
- 934 4. In his "The Internalist and Evidentialist Implications of Plantingian Defeat-
 935 ers," *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 45(3) (1999): 167–187,
 936 Michael Czapkay Sudduth argues that there is a way for internalist and eviden-



- 937 tialist concerns to be addressed within the basic context of Plantinga's account
 938 of warrant.
- 939 5. Plantinga, "Reliabilism, Analyses, and Defeaters," in *Philosophy and Phenome-*
 940 *nological Research* 55(2) (1995): 427–464.
- 941 6. Alvin Plantinga, "Prospects for Natural Theology," in James E. Tomberlin,
 942 (ed.), *Philosophical Perspectives 5: Philosophy of Religion*, 1991 (Atascadero:
 943 Ridgeview, 1991), pp. 287–315.
- 944 7. See Plantinga's response to Matthew Steup in "Reliabilism, Analyses and Def-
 945 eaters." *op. cit.*
- 946 8. See Ernest Sosa, *Knowledge in Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University
 947 Press, 1991), Richard Foley, *The Theory of Epistemic Rationality* (Cambridge:
 948 Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 191 and for a Thomistic view John Zeis,
 949 "Warrant and Form," *Proceeding of the American Catholic Philosophical Asso-*
 950 *ciation* 1995, 157–169.
- 951 9. See WCD, chapter 5.
- 952 10. St. Anselm, "Dialogue on Truth," *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, Vol. I,
 953 (ed.), Richard McKeon, (New York: Scribner's, 1957).
- 954 11. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* Ila Ilae q. 2 a. 1 obj. 3. For posi-
 955 tions of those who are sympathetic to the tradition, but who reject volitionalism
 956 regarding belief, see William P. Alston, "The Deontological Conception of Jus-
 957 tification," *Epistemic Justification* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Louis
 958 P. Pojman, *Religious Belief and the Will*, (New York: Routledge and Kegan
 959 Paul, 1986); Robert M. Adams, "The Virtue of Faith," *The Virtue of Faith*
 960 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). Plantinga also rejects cognitive volun-
 961 tarianism. See WCB 172,174; WCD 23–25.
- 962 See also Joseph Runzo, *Reason, Relativism, and God*, (New York: St. Martin's
 963 Press, 1986) and Bernard Williams, "Deciding to Believe," *Problems of the Self*
 964 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).
- 965 12. In foundherentism, in a certain sense there are no epistemologically basic
 966 beliefs. However, in his *Epistemology* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2003)
 967 Richard Feldman categorizes Haack's foundherentism as a modest foundation-
 968 alism.
- 969 13. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Sentences* 3 d. 24, 2, 1. Cf. *Summa*
 970 *Theologiae* III 7, 4.
- 971 14. Plantinga holds that there is a distinction between believing a proposition and
 972 accepting the same proposition. "This distinction is extremely hard to make
 973 clear but nonetheless, I think, important. Perhaps we can make an initial stab
 974 at it as follows. Consider a Christian beset by doubts. He has a hard time
 975 believing certain crucial Christian claims – perhaps the teaching that God was
 976 in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. Upon calling that belief to mind, he
 977 finds it cold, lifeless, without warmth or attractiveness. Nonetheless he is com-
 978 mitted to this belief; it is his position; if you ask him what he thinks about
 979 it, he will unhesitatingly endorse it. He has, so to speak, thrown in his lot
 980 with it. Let us say that he accepts this proposition, even though when he is
 981 assailed by doubt, he may fail to believe it – at any rate explicitly-to any appre-
 982 ciable degree. His commitment to this proposition may be much stronger than
 983 his explicit and occurrent belief in it; so these two – that is, acceptance and
 984 belief-must be distinguished." Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God," 37.



- 985 15. L. Jonathan Cohen, "Belief and Acceptance," *Mind* 98 (1989): 367–389; 368 and
 986 *An Essay on Belief and Acceptance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 4.
 987 16. Ibid.
 988 17. Ibid.
 989 18. "Reason and Belief in God," 38.
 990 19. Andrei A. Buckareff adopts Cohen's distinction between belief and acceptance
 991 in arguing against cognitive voluntarism in his "Acceptance and Deciding to
 992 Believe" (*Journal of Philosophical Research* 29(2004): 173–191). He argues that
 993 there are three differences between belief and acceptance. The first which he
 994 cites is that belief is truth-directed whereas acceptance is not. The second differ-
 995 ence is that belief that *p* entails believing or being committed to the truth of
 996 *p* (175). The third difference he states is that acceptance "can be under an
 997 agent's direct voluntary control while belief does not admit of such control"
 998 (178). In sum, Buckareff takes belief to be epistemic whereas acceptance is
 999 merely pragmatic or prudential. I admit that some forms of acceptance *can* be
 1000 distinct from belief in the way in which Buchareff details, but there are surely
 1001 some forms of acceptance which are epistemic and not merely pragmatic or
 1002 prudential, and for such forms of acceptance, the distinctions Buchareff details
 1003 do not apply.
 1004 20. The exception may be privileged access beliefs. In *Epistemic Justification*, Alston
 1005 construes them as "truth-warranted."
 1006 21. For a similar criticism of Pojman's "Logic of Belief" argument, see Nicholas
 1007 Wolterstorff's review in *Faith and Philosophy* 8 (1991): 123.
 1008 22. See Richard Feldman, "The Ethics of Belief," in *Philosophy and Phenomenolog-
 1009 ical Research* 60(3) (2000): 667–695.
 1010 23. Alston introduces what he calls "Long-range Voluntary Control" in "The Deon-
 1011 tological Conception of Epistemic Justification" and rejects it because the suc-
 1012 cess rate of control over belief formation is so low. I find his objection odd,
 1013 given he uses control of one's weight as an example of long-range voluntary
 1014 control, which seems to me to also have a very low success rate.
 1015 24. That Pojman's "logic of belief" argument is targeted toward "strict volitional-
 1016 ism" seems to be confirmed by his characterization of the volitionalist position
 1017 as "I believe that *p*, but I believe it *only because* I want to believe it." p. 172
 1018 (my italics).
 1019 25. In her "The Ethics of Belief" Reconsidered," in *Knowledge, Truth, and Duty*,
 1020 edited by Matthias Steup, (Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 21–33, Haack
 1021 considers and rejects the standard anti-volitionalist line (see p. 23). She does
 1022 not, however, go on to affirm a volitionalist conception of belief as robust as
 1023 the one I am espousing here.
 1024 26. Obviously, justification or warrant comes in degrees, and how much warrant
 1025 depends upon coherence will vary with the sort of belief it is.
 1026 27. In his argument for a foundherentist picture of justification, Pritchard argues
 1027 that such a picture needs to be filled in with a virtue epistemology. I think one
 1028 could make just as good a case for it to be filled with a proper functionalist
 1029 account or some other account.
 1030 28. For Sosa and Foley, "knowledge" is not univocal. This is also a view which
 1031 can be found in Aquinas, who distinguishes between *cognitio* and *scientia*.
 1032 See Ernest Sosa, *Knowledge in Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University



- 1033 Press, 1991), Richard Foley, *The Theory of Epistemic Rationality* (Cambridge:
1034 Harvard University Press, 1987), 191 and for a Thomistic view John Zeis, “War-
1035 rant and Form,” *Proceeding of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*
1036 1995, 157–169.
- 1037 29. Notes for a lecture, found at www.homestead.com/philofreligion/Plantinga-
1038 [page.html](http://www.homestead.com/philofreligion/Plantinga-page.html).
- 1039 30. “Prospects for Natural Theology,” in James Tomberlin, (ed.), *Philosophical Per-*
1040 *spectives 5: Philosophy of Religion* (Atascadero: Ridgeview, 1991), 287–315,
1041 p. 312.
- 1042 31. James F. Ross has defended the position of cognitive voluntarism in many arti-
1043 cles. See, e.g., his “Cognitive Finality” in Linda Zagzebski, (ed.), *Rational Faith:*
1044 *Catholic Responses to Reformed Epistemology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre
1045 Dame Press, (1993), pp. 226–255.

