

1. Overview

Probability: You ought to believe whatever is most likely to be true, given your total pool of evidence.

Autonomy (aka, Objectivity): You ought to base your beliefs on the objective evidence, using your own best reasoning and judgment.

Everett: (1) Probability recommends equal weight. (2) Autonomy recommends sticking to one's guns. Claim (1) is controversial, but I will follow Everett in focusing on (2).

2. Everett's case for Autonomy

Following Autonomy brings *intellectual benefits*:

(Individual benefits) a kind of *understanding* that is necessary for knowledge

(Social benefits) the proliferation of opposing views and arguments

Re: individual benefits... Doesn't bear directly on disagreement cases, and might trade on an ambiguity. Quantum mechanics vs. climate change, evolution.

Re: social benefits... These motivations bear directly on disagreement cases, but it's questionable that they give us epistemic reasons for belief.

- First problem: epistemic reasons \neq prudential reasons concerning intellectual goals

Library of Alexandria example: You will be admitted only if you believe that a Democrat will win in 2016. This is not an epistemic reason to believe that a Democrat will win.

- Second problem: zealous advocacy \neq genuine belief

Everett: You ought to zealously advocate controversial views, and doing so will lead to belief, so you ought to believe. (For conceptual or contingent psychological reasons?)

Implicit assumption: If A-ing will lead to B-ing and you ought to A, then you ought to B.

3. Concluding remarks

[C]onsidering our disagreements with peers *in general*, we can acknowledge that we are just as likely to be wrong as they are, while believing at the same time, with respect to each *particular* disagreement, that we are much more probably right.

The coherence of these attitudes seems questionable. Only options:

- (1) Believe that you are equally reliable, but by a fluke you are right in (almost) all particular cases.
- (2) Believe that you are right about roughly half of the particular cases, but believe of each one that you are right about it.