

Normativity and Epistemic Intuitions

Jonathan M. Weinberg
Indiana University

Shaun Nichols
College of Charleston

Stephen Stich
Rutgers University

I. INTRODUCTION

In this paper we propose to argue for two claims. The first is that a sizable group of epistemological projects—a group which includes much of what has been done in epistemology in the analytic tradition—would be seriously undermined if one or more of a cluster of empirical hypotheses about epistemic intuitions turns out to be true. The basis for this claim will be set out in section 2. The second claim is that, while the jury is still out, there is now a substantial body of evidence suggesting that some of those empirical hypotheses *are* true. Much of this evidence derives from an ongoing series of experimental studies of epistemic intuitions that we have been conducting. A preliminary report on these studies will be presented in section 3. In light of these studies, we think it is incumbent on those who pursue the epistemological projects in question to either explain why the truth of the hypotheses does not undermine their projects, or to say why, in light of the evidence we will present, they nonetheless assume that the hypotheses are