PRIVILEGE AND POSITION

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Abstract: Having good epistemic attitudes is hard. Some-
times, it's really hard.

How does being a woman affect one's epistemic life? What about being
black? Or queer? Standpoint theorists argue that such social positions
can give rise to otherwise unavailable epistemic privilege. Through that
privilege, those who occupy standpoints gain access to evidence, group
knowledge, *sui generis* ways of knowing, or some other distinctive epis-
temic good. Whatever form this privilege takes, it has far-reaching impli-
cations for our epistemic communities, especially where their inquiries
concern the social groups associated with these standpoints. In particular,
standpoint theorists argue, we have an obligation—epistemic, moral, or
both—to include occupants of these standpoints in such inquiries.

"Epistemic privilege" is a murky concept, however. Critics of stand-
point theory argue that the view is offered without a clear explanation
of how standpoints confer their benefits, what those benefits are, or why
social positions are particularly apt to produce them. Standpoint episte-
mology, argue Longino (1993) and Hekman (1997), risks conflating justice
with truth or indulging in relativism. Others worry that the view is trivial,
merely overstating the observation that what we know is shaped by the
lives we live. Either way, it needs clarification. Absent such clarification,
the central questions of standpoint epistemology are difficult to formulate
precisely, much less answer. As a result, standpoint theory has had little
uptake outside of feminist epistemology. Since standpoint epistemology's
aim is to change the norms of our broader epistemic communities, this is
a problem, but it need not be so.

The goal of this article is to articulate a minimal version of stand-
point epistemology that avoids these criticisms, supports the normative
goals of its feminist forerunners, and provides tractability with which
to explore the details of standpoint epistemologists' claims in a formal
model. In the first part of this article, I draw on the work of Collins (2002)
and Harding (1992), arguing that expert evidential support relations cap-
ture central and essential elements of the epistemic privilege gained by
occupying a standpoint. As I'll show, we can account for the force of
standpoint theorists' normative conclusions in purely epistemic terms on

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this view, thereby evading discomfort with assigning normative significance to political, moral, and other non-epistemic forms of value.[1] This shift in focus toward expert evidential support relations also opens the door to modeling techniques that track the influence of standpoints (and standpoint-based testimony) on an agent's beliefs. The second half of this article develops such a model and demonstrates how it can be used to precisify and explore some of standpoint epistemology's core questions: What does occupying a standpoint involve? How does it affect an agent's other doxastic states?

We'll proceed as follows. §1 takes a closer look at standpoint epistemology and its critics. Standpoint epistemology has a rich history of different approaches, so the goal of this section is to narrow our sights, clarifying the assumptions we'll adopt and focusing our attention on a particular subset of standpoint epistemologies. §2 explains the goal of inclusivity and introduces a worry about whether standpoint epistemology can support a convincingly feminist version of that goal. As we'll see, this seems to depend, at least in part, on the kind of privilege with which standpoints supply their occupants. We turn to the task of characterizing that privilege in §3. With an eye toward supporting an obligation of Stable (rather than Opportunistic) Inclusivity, I argue that expert evidential support relations are a natural, plausible candidate for the task. Building on this account, §4 develops our model, drawing on van Benthem and Pacuit (2011b) dynamic logic for evidence-based belief. §5 focuses on agents' interactions with standpoints, demonstrating how we can apply this model to questions of what it means to occupy a standpoint. This discussion shows that the notions of standpoint and occupancy can be modeled and studied formally—an epistemology that incorporates the social positions of its agents need not be beyond the scope of formal techniques.

1 Standpoint Epistemology

Standpoint epistemology begins from the observation that our social situations shape our interactions with evidence, belief, and knowledge. To an extent, this idea is uncontroversial. An auto mechanic, for example, may take the evidence gained from listening to an engine to support very different conclusions from those likely to be drawn by someone without the same training and experience. An oncologist will take their observation of a CAT scan to support different conclusions than you or I might

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[1] This is not to suggest that such political and moral justifications are any less compelling. Nor is it to suggest that there is no basis for moral encroachment into the epistemic (see Basu 2019). Rather, the goal is to provide an adequate, purely epistemic basis for the normative force of standpoint epistemology's central normative observations and render important aspects of the notion of a standpoint tractable within a conventional framework. Happily, this is a case in which our epistemic, moral, and political obligations go hand-in-hand.

gather from the same observation. Both of these experts will know which evidence is consequential and which to ignore. They will know when to be confident in their conclusions and when more evidence is necessary. And, given that their training and experience make both experts more likely to be right, these facts have clear normative implications: if you want to know more about that lump or that strange rattling, you should talk to a professional. Or, more generally, good epistemic agents should defer to experts.

It is not only auto mechanics, oncologists, and other obvious experts to whom we owe epistemic deference, however. Standpoint theorists argue that occupants of social positions such as gender, race, and other socially salient categories can—under certain circumstances—demand a similar kind of recognition. We owe deference to those who occupy the standpoint of women on matters for which occupying that standpoint makes them more likely to be right, such as how sexism manifests in the workplace and whether certain behaviors are threatening or offensive to women.

Being an expert and occupying a standpoint are also similar in that inhabiting the social position associated with them—being employed as an oncologist, being a woman—is not a sufficient condition for either status. The former requires education and training, while the latter, standpoint theorists argue, requires attending to the prevailing, hierarchical social conditions. While some early variants of standpoint epistemology, such as Rose (1983), appear to advocate automatic privilege in virtue of social location, we will adopt the more robust, more common approach taken by Harding (1992), Smith (1997), Collins (2002), and others, which requires that standpoints be achieved rather than given.[2] A key advantage of this kind of view is that it suggests a distinctive kind of content for the epistemic privilege conferred by occupying a standpoint and, in doing so, grounds our analogy with expertise. According to (Wylie, 2013, 5), achieved standpoints "put the critically conscious knower in a position to grasp the effects of power relations on their own understanding and that of others." As we'll see, this kind of restriction is essential to the goal of providing epistemically motivated inclusivity norms. Without it, the vast variation among those within particular social groups—think of Janet Mock and Ann Coulter, both members of the group *women*—makes it difficult to see what kind of unified epistemic incentive could possibly justify group-specific inclusivity norms.

For this reason, it will be useful to make explicit the distinction between *inhabiting a social position* (or *location, role, group, etc.*) and *occupying the standpoint* associated with such a position. The former merely describes

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[2] As Wylie (2013) points out, both Harding (1992) and Smith (1997) explicitly reject characterizations of their early work on which standpoints are reduced to social location.

the social situation of the agent, whereas the latter involves (at least) a claim about their attitudes toward that social situation.[3]

This claim—that social categories can generate standpoints that provide their occupants with particular, legitimate epistemic goods—is one of three key claims to which standpoint theorists generally adhere.[4] The second is that the social hierarchies in which these categories are embedded incentivize dominant groups to devalue or ignore testimony arising from subordinate standpoints (Mills, 2005). Whether through outright prejudice, motivated reasoning, structural exclusion, or some other epistemic shortcoming, dominant social positions and the epistemic communities created by them devalue the epistemic products of subordinate standpoints, unduly discounting the unfamiliar epistemic practices and contributions of those groups. Together, the first two commitments provide context for the last: obligations of inclusion and deference. Standpoint theorists argue that epistemic (and moral) normativity requires inquirers to include occupants of relevant standpoints in their epistemic communities and to treat the contributions of those standpoint occupants with deference. Excluding them, they argue, ensures a less objective, less successful inquiry. As to why, however, views diverge.

1.1 Relativism in Early Standpoint Theories

For early standpoint theorists, this claim was based on the idea that the standpoints of the oppressed reflect reality, whereas ideology clouds and confounds the epistemic practice of those in dominant social positions. On one interpretation, this is a natural extension of the previous point, with the thought being something like this: having an understanding of oppressive social relations allows one to experience their oppression through that lens. In virtue of this, they can gain an otherwise elusive understanding of how that position shapes their experiences and outcomes. We will take up a view along these lines below. The early standpoint theorists paint a rather different picture, however. For example, Hartsock (1983) argues that certain social locations *themselves* foster more accurate beliefs, not only concerning one's own social position, but also the social and natural world more broadly. With a Marxist background in place, she writes,

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[3] There's a question in the background here about whether those in relatively dominant social positions can occupy a standpoint in the relevant sense. Although I will speak as if standpoints do exist for these positions, this is not necessary. For reasons that will become clear later, both views are compatible with the relatively minimal account described herein.

[4] Views vary on the questions of whether and to what extent epistemic goods associated with a standpoint are exclusive to standpoint occupants. Many argue that (at least some) of these goods may be extremely difficult for non-occupants to achieve, but not impossible. This is true on the view developed later as well.

> there are some perspectives on society from which, how-
> ever well-intentioned one may be, the real relations of
> humans with each other and with the natural world are
> not visible. (Hartsock, 1983, 285)

On Hartsock's view, the standpoint of women is a product of sexual divi-
sion of labor, by which she means both the institutionalized expectations
about women's work and the fact that (currently) only those who are as-
signed female at birth are capable of child-bearing. These factors generate
epistemic privilege because they focus women's attention on

> a world in which the emphasis is on change rather than
> stasis, a world characterized by interaction with natural
> substances rather than separation from nature, a world in
> which quality is more important than quantity, a world in
> which the unification of mind and body is inherent in the
> activities performed. (290)

These features form an epistemic practice that allows women to cut
through the ideological fog, leading them to better overall beliefs. So, the
way women's lives are lived is *itself* responsible for Hartsock's very broad
form of epistemic privilege. The reason that inquiries lacking women
inquirers are less successful, therefore, is simply that they are composed
entirely of sub-par inquirers.

There is a fundamental tension in this version of the project, however.
As Longino (1993, 106-107) points out, if the claim is that epistemic success
in general depends on the correctness of the standpoint from which one
engages with the world, then this must be true of our judgments about
standpoints, too. On this view, however, such judgments are the product
of a particular social theory. But, knowledge of such theories also requires
that one approach the question from the correct standpoint. So, we need
a way to identify that correct standpoint. Unfortunately, we will need
to identify a correct social theory in order to identify that standpoint.
And so, the project traces a rather small, rather vicious circle. Even if
there is a unique correct standpoint (or collection thereof), a convincing
means of identification is elusive. If we are to convince those in power to
change their ways, it will be of little help to present circular justifications,
correctness notwithstanding.[5]

Suppose then, Longino continues, that standpoint theorists abandon
the ranking of different standpoints' epistemic capacity. This, too, raises

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[5] An anonymous referee points out that there is at least something to be gained in this
case: we have shown that those occupying marginalized standpoints are in fact more likely
to have better beliefs. I am sympathetic to this. However, I worry that phenomena like
hermeneutical injustice (Fricker, 2007) and gaslighting (Ivy, 2017) are significant threats to
the stability of those epistemic gains if standpoint occupants have only circular justifications
for their certainty. Nevertheless, standpoint theorists of an externalist bent may find this a
satisfying position.

problems. Without committing to the existence of objectively privileged standpoints, standpoint theorists face a dilemma. Since standpoints generate conflicting doxastic commitments, we must either adopt a kind of relativism, so that the beliefs and knowledge arising from a particular standpoint are judged according to the standards thereof, or we must find a way of integrating these possible conflicts (*ibid.*). The kind of relativism identified by Longino is characterized by what Ashton (2019, 2) refers to as "non-neutrality" rather than "equality," meaning that standpoints might still be ranked against one another, but like every other epistemic attitude produced from a particular standpoint, that ranking would have to be judged according to the epistemic standards of a particular standpoint—there is no neutral ground.

Relativism of any kind is difficult to square with the epistemic and political projects at hand, however. Standpoint epistemology has a goal: transforming our epistemic communities. Accomplishing this requires that standpoint theorists convince those who are already in these communities—especially those in power who, for the most part, do not occupy marginalized standpoints—that broadening their communities would be (epistemically) good. But, if we adopt a relativism according to which the only justificatory standards are those set by an individual's own social location or standpoint, it's difficult to see how this political project can be carried out. Those who need to be convinced occupy a standpoint that will not provide support for the beliefs of which standpoint theorists mean to convince them. And, since those are the only relevant standards, there will be nothing faulty about their beliefs. On this horn of the dilemma, there is no clear route to an epistemic incentive for inclusivity. So, this article will set relativist approaches aside. There may be other reasons to adopt such approaches, but they are neither essential to standpoint epistemology nor conducive to our goals.[6]

So, we must pursue the second horn of the dilemma: finding a way to integrate the conflicting epistemic products of different standpoints. We'll take an approach closer to those of Harding (1992) and Collins (2002), both of whom provide a more modest rendering of standpoints' epistemic privilege. These accounts suggest that privilege is the product of a particular way of understanding experiences that are (largely) unavailable to those who do not inhabit the relevant social location. So, standpoints are not a universal epistemic criterion with the power to determine the nature of ideal epistemic agents on this kind of view. The role of a social theory changes here, too. Instead of explaining which standpoint is the

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[6] It is worth noting that Ashton argues, to the contrary, that standpoint epistemology generally is relativist. While I disagree, largely for reasons related to those mentioned below in response to the circularity worry, space does not permit pursuing this argument here. It is worth noting, however, that Ashton shares the worry that a relativist outcome may be politically unsatisfying to standpoint theorists (though, on her view, it ought not be) (Ashton, 2019, 11).

most correct, the role of social theory (as we'll see) is to explain why the epistemic resources that certain standpoints can offer their epistemic communities are so easily ignored.

This brings us back to Longino's original worry about circularity. On univeralist accounts, according to which the epistemic role of a correct standpoint is pervasive, we need a correct standpoint in order to identify a correct social theory. And without that correct social theory, we cannot identify correct (i.e., marginalized) standpoints. On non-universalist views, this is not the case. As of 2014, just 1.32 percent of professional philosophers in the United States were Black (Botts et al., 2014). One does not need a particular standpoint to understand that this means that the perspectives of Black philosophers are marginalized. Facts about the marginalization of different social groups are reflected in the world in ways that are available to all. Our epistemic communities need standpoint occupants in order to *understand* that marginalization—its nature, extent, phenomenology, ramifications, and so on—but its mere existence is baldly written. And so, when standpoint theorists of this variety exhort us to listen to those who occupy marginalized standpoints, there is no excuse in ignorance. We can identify those marginalized standpoints, regardless of our social location. So, once we set aside universalist standpoint theories, Longino's well-foundedness worry can be answered. Nevertheless, because this picture abandons the idea that standpoints are a universal epistemic criterion, it does imply that there is no unique "correct" or "best" standpoint. So, we remain saddled with the task required by the second horn: integration.

Returning to the question with which we began this digression, views along these lines also provide a clear, if very different, explanation of when and how the concept of epistemic superiority relates to the privilege standpoints provide. On these less universalist views, an inquiry excluding standpoint occupants will be less objective and less successful when those individuals have access to relevant, otherwise unavailable epistemic goods. We return to the question of exactly what those epistemic goods look like and how they support inclusivity in §3. For now, we turn to inclusivity itself.

2 Inclusivity as a Normative Goal

The goal of standpoint epistemology is to provide an argument for the claim that inquiry in the social sciences, if not beyond, must proceed from and include the perspectives of women, racial minorities, and other subjects of research whose voices are likely to be marginalized as a result of their social location (Harding, 1992, Ch. 2). Articulating this goal involves setting out two kinds of norms: individual-level norms concerning deference to standpoint occupants' testimony and our present

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concern, community-level norms about inclusivity. These are norms governing how our epistemic communities ought to be organized. After all, norms about how to interact with standpoint occupants are somewhat inconsequential if our epistemic communities systematically exclude such individuals. So, what does it mean to include someone in an epistemic community?

Generally, including someone in an epistemic community means that they are able to contribute to knowledge production—that their testimony is received by that community and influences its course.[7] While anything fitting this description is better than outright exclusion, it allows for a worryingly weak, opportunistic form of inclusivity:

> **Opportunistic Inclusivity.** Include occupants of a particular standpoint only when you believe (a) that their testimony is likely to be relevant, and (b) that its content is otherwise inaccessible.

While this consultation-like approach may be appropriate to certain tasks, it is nevertheless inadequate to feminists' aims. For the target cases— stable epistemic communities in the social sciences —rectifying the problem requires a more substantive endpoint. A community that only interacts with standpoint occupants when it believes it must not only misses the instances when those beliefs are mistaken, but also risks poor communication with standpoint occupants because the two groups are not habituated to one another's modes of communication. Those who are excluded ought to be brought in, considered part of the inquiry, and given the opportunity to play an ongoing role:

> **Stable Inclusivity.** Include occupants of relevant standpoints throughout the inquiry, regardless of whether (a) or (b) holds.

Adequate inclusivity is not achieved by merely taking epistemic goods from those who continue to be excluded.[8] For this reason, the obligation to "study up" from marginalized lives, as Harding (2009) explains the demands of standpoint epistemology, seems under-specified, involving no standing obligation to maintain that standpoint as an ongoing influence. In order to merit the name, an account of feminist standpoint epistemology ought to require Stable—not merely Opportunistic—Inclusivity. Communities that practice Stable Inclusivity will, by doing so, capture

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[7] While the nature of epistemic inclusivity is somewhat under-theorized, notable references include Dotson 2014, Langton 2009, and Fricker 2007.

[8] Additionally, Opportunistic Inclusivity presents a significant risk for the kind of testimonial injustice Miranda Fricker explores in *Epistemic Injustice*. Continuing to exclude marginalized individuals from the epistemic community leaves their status as knowers dubious and, as a result, provides an obvious means by which prejudice might infect the community's response to their testimony.

the cases that communities practicing Opportunistic Inclusivity while also solving the issues the latter raises.[9]

With this goal of Stable Inclusivity in mind, however, new questions arise. If we assume that the epistemic benefit of a standpoint is encapsulated entirely by the knowledge produced in virtue of occupying it, however, it seems as if those benefits are available to anyone willing to harvest them opportunistically. As a result, such accounts may be unable to justify the stronger norm, thereby falling short of feminists' moral and political aims. So, our question is two-fold: what kind of epistemic privileges do standpoints create and does an epistemically appropriate response to such privileges involve Stable Inclusivity?

3 An Account of Epistemic Privilege

Epistemic privilege is at the heart of standpoint theorists' arguments for inclusivity and deference. Exactly what it means to say that standpoints confer privilege is often unclear, however. We saw, and saw issues for, the kind of Marxist, universalist account of privilege proposed by early standpoint theorists like Hartsock (1983) in §1.1.[10] But what about the less universalist accounts we're targeting? What kind of privilege do standpoints provide? How do they provide it? What is its scope?

At the very least, standpoints provide access to a certain kind of evidence—the experience of what it's like to occupy the social location associated with that standpoint (henceforth, WIL-evidence).[11] For example, only women can experience being a woman and, therefore, only women have access to that kind of phenomenal evidence. This is the same kind of privilege bats have with respect to phenomenal evidence concerning what it's like to be a bat (Nagel, 1974). In this form, the privilege thesis is relatively uncontroversial for conventional epistemologists. Moreover, access to distinctive experiential evidence is widely regarded as a fundamental aspect of privilege among standpoint theorists (Fricker, 1999, 201), but it can't be the full story.

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[9] In its emphasis on broadening epistemic communities, Stable Inclusivity also echoes Scheman's (1996) notion of 'epistemic largess' and Fricker's (1999) discussion of how standpoints confer epistemic benefits.

[10] It is worth noting here that there are other universalist accounts, such as Medina's (2012), according to which the primary benefit of occupying a standpoint is the development of epistemic virtues like humility. Constraints of space prevent a full discussion of this view, which is somewhat far afield of more common content-focused, non-universal standpoint epistemologies like those of Collins and Harding. I do not mean to suggest that what follows is the only plausible characterization of standpoint privilege. Rather, I take it to be a formally tractable account that captures a minimal version of essential, central aspects of these content-focused, non-universal standpoint epistemologies.

[11] See Bowman and Cook (forthcoming) for an extended discussion of "what it's like" knowledge.

Our discussion so far has laid out several desiderata for an adequate (and adequately feminist) account of the standpoint-privilege thesis. Such an account should (1) provide a plausible story about what privileges standpoints confer and how they do so, (2) distinguish inhabiting a social position from occupying a standpoint, (3) explain how privilege provides epistemically-grounded support for Stable Inclusivity, and (4) support careful, precise exploration of standpoint epistemology's central questions. To meet these goals, I'll argue, it will be helpful to characterize the privilege derived from standpoints in terms of otherwise unavailable (or unlikely) expert evidential support relations.[12] By this, I mean to pick out relationships between the evidence one acquires and the propositions they take that evidence to support. For example, someone occupying the standpoint of U.S. Muslim women is well positioned to learn to recognize religiously motivated microaggressions, coming to understand that *that look* indicates a certain kind of subtle prejudice (see §3.2 for further discussion). This is not to suggest that evidential support relations encapsulate every aspect of what it means to occupy a standpoint, however. Rather, the goal of this section is to explicate a plausible, tractable, and relatively minimal characterization of the privilege associated with occupying a standpoint.

3.1 On Evidential Support Relations

Evidential support relations (ESRs) refers to the relationship between a piece of evidence—some testimony, an observation, an experience[13] —and the hypotheses it supports. This is sometimes meant in an objective sense, referring to the hypotheses that the evidence *really does* make more likely.[14] For our purposes, it will also be useful to talk about subjective evidential support relations, which are the relationships agents themselves accept. If Flatley the Flat Earther takes the fact that *the bottoms of clouds appear flat* to support the hypothesis *the Earth is flat*, this is among the ESRs he accepts, regardless of the fact that this evidence does not actually support the hypothesis that *the Earth is flat*. At a minimum, an agent's ESRs shape how they will respond to new evidence: upon learning that *the bottoms of clouds appear flat* (or, already knowing this, upon accepting ESRs relating it to *the Earth is flat*), Flatley will become more confident in *the Earth is flat*. His confidence in other propositions will likely change as well. He might reduce his confidence in the hypothesis that *the Earth is round*, while

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[12] While beyond the scope of this discussion, the absence of knowledge as an explicit element of this characterization is noteworthy, given the prominent role of knowledge in the literature on standpoint theory.

[13] For our purposes, we can be fairly agnostic about the nature of evidence. However, see Kelly 2016 for discussion.

[14] This is in keeping with Achinstein's (2001) conception of veridical evidence.

raising his confidence in related propositions such as *the Earth is nearly, but not quite, flat* or *the Earth is a cube*.

These subjective evidential support relations clearly bear on the question of expertise. For example, it seems to follow from the fact that Flatley's ESRs do not resemble the objective ESRs concerning geology that he is not an expert on the subject.[15] Intuitively, the same goes for someone like Rounda, for whom *the bottoms of clouds appear flat* does not support *the Earth is flat* but who has relatively little else in the way of ESRs, knowledge, or any other epistemic attitude concerning geology. Similarly, if your aunt takes small, raised red spots on someone's skin to be evidence that it will rain later (rather than, say, that they have chicken pox), her ESRs are rather far from any objective ESRs and she is far from being a medical (or meteorological) expert. While a full account of expertise is beyond the scope of this article,[16] I take it that the point these examples are meant to draw out is relatively uncontroversial: relative to a particular epistemic community, being an expert about a topic involves having subjective evidential support relations concerning the topic that are both more comprehensive and closer to the objective evidential support relations than those broadly held within that community.[17]

3.2 Why Evidential Support Relations?

With this in mind, we can now ask: How well does this kind of account meet the desiderata above?

On this view, the privilege conferred by standpoints is a matter of the expertise gained from inhabiting one's social location while possessing a certain understanding of that location. Just as the car mechanic's experience and expertise teach him that *that noise* indicates that your serpentine belt needs to be replaced, someone occupying the standpoint of U.S. Muslim women might learn that *that look* indicates a certain kind of subtle

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[15] Two caveats. First, this assumes not just that we take Flatley's ESRs to be off the mark, but that they *in fact are* off the mark. Second, were Flatley's geological ESRs otherwise impeccable and comprehensive, a more nuanced evaluation of his expertise might be called for.

[16] And there is significantly more to be said. Experts know when to seek more information, when evidence is important, when it can be ignored, and so on. A full development of the role of expert ESRs would delve into these aspects, examining how the relationships between different conditional credences reflect these features by capturing not only the balance of one's evidence but also its specificity and weight. For development of the notions of specificity and weight in a Bayesian framework, see Joyce 2005. For present purposes, however, I'll focus on ESR as a proxy for this broader epistemology of expertise. Thank you to an anonymous referee for pressing this point—it merits fuller development elsewhere.

[17] I do not mean to suggest that this is the extent of expertise or that there is no general, context-independent concept of expertise. Additionally, this should not be read as suggesting that there is necessarily an objective 'Ur' credence function to which all expert credence functions must adhere. While this is compatible with such a view, that is far more restrictive than what is meant here. See Luntley 2009 for a general discussion of the nature of expertise.

prejudice. Without the combinations of experience and expertise each possesses, they might never come to understand that these relationships exist.[18] In other words, when combined with the experience of living with them, phenomenal knowledge and expertise generate new understandings of the relationships between evidence and the world that are unavailable without them (or, at least, difficult to acquire). So, in occupying her standpoint, the Muslim woman gains a strong, likely accurate ESR between *that look* and the proposition *that person is prejudiced against me*. To take another example, suppose Malia and Mel, a lesbian couple, notice that when they are out together they are sometimes the subject of unfriendly, too-long stares. The regularity of these events and their correlation with appearing as lesbians might be enough to teach them that there are people who treat them poorly for this reason, but statistical regularity alone doesn't get as far as we might think. If, for example, they live in a rural, largely white, religiously conservative town, the mere statistical regularity of their experience does not discriminate between, for example, white people disliking public displays of affection like holding hands and religious people being prejudiced against them for being gay. Discriminating between these possibilities requires an understanding of their social location and the oppressions they face, this is about the extent of what they learn. This understanding also allows them to interpret and unify other experiences, predict when and how they'll experience homophobia, and see when others are affected by it. With this story about the nature of privilege, we satisfy the first desideratum.

Since developing the expertise in question requires an understanding of social locations and how they can affect one's experience, occupying a standpoint is not an automatic consequence of inhabiting a social location. So, desideratum (2) is met.

The account meets our third desideratum—providing epistemically-grounded support for Stable Inclusivity—as well. While the role of social expertise in generating privilege is plausible, one might worry that this account only supports Opportunistic Inclusivity because the results of those privileged ESRs, once acquired by standpoint occupants, can simply be plucked from the them. Your mechanic can tell you to listen for *that sound* and explain what it means; your friend can point out *that look* and tell you what's going on. This doesn't necessarily undermine the need for Stable Inclusivity, however. Standpoints allow their occupants to discover new relationships between their evidence and the world *continually*—the locus of their privilege is not that they already know all of these relationships, but rather that they are in a better position to learn them than those who do not occupy their standpoint. So, including occupants in inquiries

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[18] Independently, Luntley (2009) offers an account of the nature of expertise that leans heavily on this kind of fruitfulness as a distinguishing feature.

concerning their expertise allows them to discover new, relevant evidential relationships. And this isn't so strange. That very inquiry might include social scientists for the same reason—someone with expertise and experience in the area is apt to see new relationships that wouldn't be obvious to someone without the same epistemic advantages. The only difference is one we've seen before; while most anyone can, with time and training, gain expertise and experience with social science, it is far from clear that the same can be said for occupying a standpoint. This is because of the prominent role of social experience—of being treated as a member of a particular group—in gaining the relevant expertise. This, then, provides a basis for the target community organization norm: Stable Inclusivity.[19] Additionally, as mentioned in §2, it often takes expertise to know that expertise is needed. Where expertise is the privilege provided by occupying a standpoint, then, we have further reason for Stable Inclusivity.[20]

Focusing on evidential support relations also coheres well with the projects many standpoint theorists describe. For example, Collins's (2002) central example in "Black Feminist Epistemology" concerns the gulf between the interpretations of single motherhood in the Black community that are offered by conventional social science, on one hand, and those offered by Black women themselves, on the other. Black women, she notes, focus on the social conditions encumbering single mothers, while conventional social science focuses on "welfare queens" and character defects (Collins, 2002, 273). This, combined with the dominant role of the white male standpoint in the academy, undermines Black women's participation in and contribution to social research (along with the breadth and accuracy of conventional research):

> Black women scholars may know that something is true—
> at least, by standards widely accepted among African-
> American women—but be unwilling or unable to legiti
> mate our claims using prevailing scholarly norms. (273)

That is, in virtue of having a social location importantly similar to that of Black single mothers, Black women scholars who, through their understanding of oppression, come to occupy the standpoint of Black women relate differently to evidence about rates of social assistance, outcomes for their children, and so forth. From their standpoint, this evidence supports hypotheses concerning the damaging consequences of racism, inadequate social support systems, and under-valued labor. Crucially,

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[19] While this form of inclusivity will not ensure the affective results one might hope for from inclusivity—a felt sense of inclusion, a sense of being welcome—it nevertheless meets the epistemic goal set out in §2.

[20] Thanks to David Ripley for this point.

this relationship between evidence and the world is not shared by dominant standpoints—it does not fit with conventional social science's view of Black women.

It must be noted that, because this is a general view of the privilege that standpoints provide, the ideas presented here are not meant as a characterization or explanation of Collins's project, which concerns not only standpoint epistemology, but also centering and exploring the epistemic practices of Black women.[21] The purpose of drawing on her work is to illustrate that evidential support relations capture important aspects of the privileges Collins identifies, such as unique *knowledge validation processes*, *worldviews*, and *ways of knowing*, and to show that this provides an epistemic incentive for inclusivity. As we saw in the passage quoted previously, knowledge validation processes are a matter of what kind evidence can support a proposition. Evidential support relations contribute to determining which inquiries agents pursue and how they respond to new evidence, both of which are crucial aspects of Collins's use of worldviews. They also encapsulate the kind of evidence an agent will take to be relevant to a question, meaning that they provide a structure within which to represent the idea of distinctive ways of knowing. For example, Collins points to the role of emotion as demarcating a distinctive way of knowing, writing that, "connected knowers see personality as adding to an individual's ideas," (2002, 283). This kind of influence might be represented as the difference between evidential support relations that interpret testimony univocally and take into account evidence about the speaker's personality. This kind of structural view will not supply the content of such privileges, and it should not be understood as a substitute for it—that being work done by focused accounts like Collins's—but it

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[21] Out of respect for Collins's work, this point merits further emphasis. While Collins engages with standpoint epistemology in *Black Feminist Thought*, her aims are very different from those of this discussion. This article's project involves finding an abstraction amenable to the peculiarities of different standpoints and ensuring that it is tractable within conventional epistemology; neither is Collins's concern. *Black Feminist Thought* and, more generally, Black feminism center and study the lives of Black women. From this study, they draw what Collins (2016) calls *oppositional knowledge*. These projects aim to do "serious, diligent, and thoughtful intellectual work that aims to dismantle unjust intellectual and political structures" (134). I believe the aims of this article—showing that we can and should make space for this kind of oppositional knowledge within our epistemic communities—support this work, if indirectly. Nevertheless, this is a general account, and far removed from the rich, distinctive epistemic practices of the group Collins focuses on, Black women. Just as a general account of what it is to be a painting will not do much to illuminate, say, Khalo's *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*, this discussion should not be understood as an effort to capture Collins's account of Black feminist epistemology. For this, please see Collins 2002. And, for discussion of the institutional and individual roles of oppositional knowledge, see Collins 2016.

does demonstrate the applicability and flexibility of evidential support relations.[22]

In *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?*, Sandra Harding surveys many other ways feminist standpoint theorists explain the idea that standpoints grant their occupants' epistemic privilege. She includes not only Collins, but also Hartsock's (1983) focus on the consequences of gender-segregated labor practices, Aptheker's (1989) concern for the ways subordination shapes the meaning and significance women assign to their work, and many others (approximately 121-132). Common to all these, she argues, is the idea that the subordinated experience of women grounds their privilege and "makes strange what had appeared familiar" (150). Beliefs that seem incontrovertibly supported by the evidence according to a dominant standpoint may lose their apparent inevitability when examined from the perspective of a subordinate standpoint. When coupled with the experience, justificatory practices, and worldviews that come with occupying such a standpoint, the same evidence may seem to support very different hypotheses. The standpoint theorist's claim is that, where that difference is the result of occupying a standpoint, the occupant's expertise makes their response more likely to resemble the objective evidential support relations. Different (and better) knowledge may be the result of including standpoints, but the reason for this is the distinctive evidential support relations brought about by the factors that create standpoints. So, in formalizing the dynamics of inquiry, access to these expert evidential support relations is a useful and, as we'll see, tractable focus for our model. With that, we move on to demonstrating that desideratum (4) is met.

4 The Model

In developing a model capturing the idea that access to expert evidential support relations is a key epistemic privilege associated with standpoint occupancy, our goal will be to provide enough structure to explore the main questions:

- What does it mean for an agent to occupy a standpoint? How does occupying a standpoint interact with existing doxastic states?

This is important because, although expertise is a necessary condition for occupying a standpoint, it may not be sufficient. It may not be that someone who is responsive to certain expert evidential support relations

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[22] None of the foregoing should suggest that evidential support relations can provide a *complete* account of what it means to occupy a standpoint. Rather, they provide a way to characterize many of the important epistemic practices associated with standpoints. As David Ripley suggested to me, the dialogical aspect of Collins's account is an example of something not well captured in this picture.

AU: Please add Harding book on line 3 to reference list; please add more specific citation on line 9; please clarify what reference is being cited with page 150.

thereby *occupies* the relevant standpoint. This further claim—that occupying a standpoint is equivalent to being responsive to the relevant evidential support relations—is one that standpoint theorists reject. We'll return to the question of what else occupying a standpoint might involve (and how much a model like this one can capture) in §5.[23]

The question of how evidential support relations provided by a standpoint interact with other evidential support relations is central to our current investigation. To represent this, our model will build in two idiosyncratic features. The first feature is the ability to identify different viewpoints, be they standpoints, religious faiths, trusted friends, or any other distinct source of evidence interpretation. Second, we'll build in epistemic operators—*belief* and *having support*—that directly (and distinctively) depend on the interactions between the evidential support relations provided by these viewpoints. In §5, we'll see how these features can be used to illustrate the effects of coming to occupy a standpoint and coming to trust a standpoint occupant.

In this section, we'll focus on the model itself, building on the work of van Benthem and Pacuit (2011b). Like many epistemic logics, van Benthem and Pacuit's is a modal framework. The semantics for belief and evidential support are handled in terms of possible worlds and the truth values of propositions at those worlds. The main difference will be the use of *neighborhoods* to track our agent's epistemic state, rather than binary accessibility relations between worlds.

4.1 An Informal Introduction to Neighborhood-Based Models for Modal Logic (and Slugs)

Before diving into neighborhood models, a review of more familiar epistemic logics is in order. In standard modal logics for belief and knowledge, our location in the space of possible worlds is of paramount importance. In such models, the accessibility relation tells us which worlds are indistinguishable from one another, given the evidence we have. To say that w is accessible from v is to say that, for all an agent at v knows (or believes, depending on our project), she could be at either one. For example, take the proposition *slugs have four noses*. Let's call it *Slugs*. Since you probably don't know whether *Slugs* is true, the worlds you consider possible will include some *Slugs* worlds and some ¬*Slugs* worlds. For each such world, standard epistemic logics will say there is an accessibility relation between the world you occupy, which we'll call w, and those possibilities. Suppose

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[23] Questions concerning intersectional standpoints—What does it mean to occupy multiple standpoints? What is the difference, if any, between occupying multiple standpoints and occupying an intersectional standpoint?—are unfortunately beyond the scope of this article. These are important and difficult questions. While I think the model described below has interesting, distinctive things to say about them, they deserve a focused treatment.
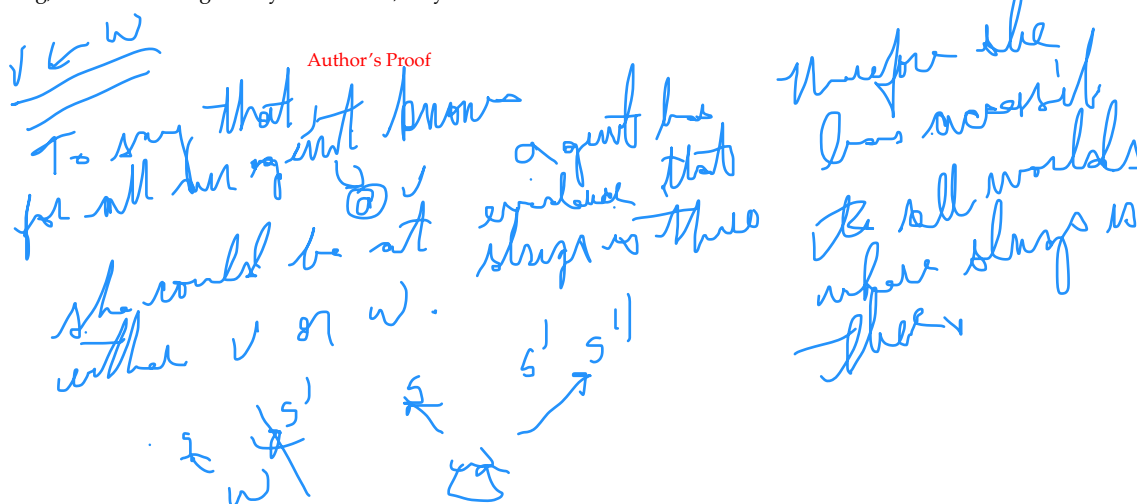
s, a *Slugs* world, and s', a $\neg$*Slugs* world, are among them. Now, we can say that the pairs $\langle w, s \rangle$ and $\langle w, s' \rangle$ are included in your accessibility relation.

As it turns out, w is a *Slugs* world! Slugs do, in fact, have four noses.[24] Having learned this, you can now distinguish between w and s' because, as you now know, s' is not the real world. That's represented in the model by removing the pair $\langle w, s' \rangle$ (along with any other that linked w to a $\neg$*Slugs* world) from you accessibility relation. But, your accessibility relation will keep the other pair we looked at, $\langle w, s \rangle$. For all you know, you could be in either w or s. More importantly, *all* the worlds you think might be the actual world are *Slugs* worlds now. So, on such models, we can say that you believe (or know) *Slugs*.

Much of this interpretation will change as we develop the neighborhood-based viewpoint model. Both in terms of formal constraints and epistemic interpretation, the accessibility relations we've been focusing on are the locus of these changes. Formally speaking, accessibility relations will be sets of pairs such as $\langle w, Slugs \rangle$, where *Slugs* picks out a set of worlds—the set of worlds at which *Slugs* is true, such as w and s. Rather than marking the indistinguishability of two worlds as they do in standard models, accessibility relations in our neighborhood model will mean that an agent at w has some evidence that supports *Slugs* (along with any other propositions that are true in all of the *Slugs* worlds). For this reason, we'll call them *evidence relations* in our neighborhood model.

After learning *Slugs* in the previous paragraph, you updated your evidence relation to include $\langle w, Slugs \rangle$ (unless you don't trust my gas-tropological testimony). On our neighborhood model, however, this update isn't enough to determine whether you believe *Slugs*. Accepting an interpretation of your evidence (my testimony about slugs) on which it supports *Slugs* (you trust me as a source of slug-related information and you don't think I was speaking in code, trying to deceive you, or whatnot) is not the same as learning that *Slugs* is true. Instead, we'll need to see how that interpretation meshes with the rest of your evidence. If it's consistent with the rest of your evidence, then we'll be able to say that you believe *Slugs*. But what if it's not? What if there's a clash?

Four paragraphs back, you probably had no views whatsoever about *Slugs*. But suppose you did. Suppose, for example, that you remember reading a *National Geographic* article several years ago, according to which slugs have *six* noses. Then, when I suggested *Slugs*, you had a conflict: by your lights, you had support for the old proposition, let's call it $Slugs_6$, and support for *Slugs*. But there are no worlds that are part of both propositions. Supposing that all of your other views about the world are consistent and independent of olfactory facts about slugs, you now have two different "theories", so to speak, about the world: a *Slugs* theory

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[24] More accurately, slugs have four olfactory organs, which are closer to tentacles than noses (Chase, 2001, 180), but let's go with noses.

and a *Slugs$_6$* theory. In our neighborhood model, what you believe is determined by what's true across all such internally consistent theories.[25] This suggests a fairly strong notion of belief: you don't need to think that every possible world is a *p*-world in order to believe *p*, but you do need to think that every consistent theory your evidence supports requires that *p*.[26] If you decide that you no longer trust your memory of the article (or me), the pair $\langle w, Slugs_6 \rangle$ (or $\langle w, Slugs \rangle$) will drop out of your evidence relation, and you'll once again have a belief about the exact number of noses that slugs possess.

The logic we'll develop for viewpoint models will also contain language for talking about having direct support for a proposition. In standard epistemic logics, we have a possibility operator (there's some accessible world, some candidate for the actual world, in which *Slugs* is true) but we don't make any distinction between having direct-but-inconclusive evidence for *Slugs* and just regarding *Slugs* as a possibility. Here, we will. In the preceding scenario, for example, we'll be able to say (1) that you have support for *Slugs* and *Slugs$_6$*, (2) that you *don't* have support for other slug-related hypotheses, say *Slugs$_3$* or *Slugs$_5$*, even if you regard them as possible, and (3) that even though you don't have *direct* support for the claim that slugs have between four and six noses (*Slugs$_{4-6}$*), you believe it because *Slugs$_{4-6}$* is true on every consistent theory you can put together.[27]

Finally, as has been suggested throughout this section, the viewpoints that agents trust—friends, religious and political affiliations, standpoints, their own intuitions, and so on—will play an explicit role in our model. Those viewpoints' interpretations of the agent's evidence (i.e., the evidential support relations they provide) are the basic building blocks of the evidence relation. In the preceding scenario, you trust both me and *National Geographic* when it comes to slugs. In the parlance that we'll develop, this means that you take my viewpoint to include *Slugs* and *National Geographic*'s to include *Slugs$_6$*. Although you're wrong about what *National Geographic* would have to say about slugs in this instance —in actuality, there's no old issue stating that slugs have six noses—we'll

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[25] These will also be maximally complete, meaning that they use as much of your evidence as possible. We'll come back to this point below.

[26] Note, however, that the strength of this belief operator depends somewhat on what it means to trust or accept an interpretation of your evidence. I've left this quasi-technical term loose intentionally. Additionally, while we won't delve into conditional belief here, it is straightforward to define a notion of conditional belief on this model and, in doing so, get at weaker conceptions of belief.

[27] In their closely related framework, van Benthem and Pacuit (2011b) define operations of evidence re-organization on which the reflective agent can observe facts like this about the evidence and, from them, gain direct support for a proposition like *Slugs$_{4-6}$*. We won't review these operations here, but they can be straightforwardly translated into the framework developed below.

nevertheless say that you *trust National Geographic*. Additionally, the ability to identify collections of evidential support relations by the viewpoint that supplies them will allow us to articulate several distinctive, robust conceptions of what it means to occupy a standpoint. It's also worth pointing out that, while this was a case in which you had two distinct pieces of evidence (my testimony and your memory) that led you to your understanding of the viewpoints in question and what they claim, viewpoints can offer different interpretations of the same piece of evidence. You, your dad, and your uncle might have very different views about how to interpret the evidence your uncle provided when telling the tale of how he caught a 900-pound marlin last summer.

With this background in place, we can set marlins and slugs aside for a moment and turn to the formal details. In §4.2, we'll look at the model itself. §4.3 adds the language we'll use to interpret that model and §4.4 concerns how will can represent standpoints in this framework.

4.2 Viewpoint Models

For the sake of simplicity, we'll stick to finite models.[28] With the notable exception of evidence itself, each of the pieces discussed in the last section shows up in the definition of our model.[29]

> **Viewpoint Model.** Given a set of atomic propositions P, a viewpoint model consists of a tuple $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ with a non-empty set of worlds W, a family $\mathbb{V}$ of sets v_i, consisting of ordered pairs $\langle w, \phi \rangle$, which map worlds to formulas in $\mathcal{L}_0$, the agent's viewpoint set $A \subseteq \mathbb{V}$, an evidence relation $\mathbb{E} = \{ \langle w, \phi_{\mathcal{M}} \rangle \mid \langle w, \phi \rangle \in v_i$ for some $v_i \in A$ and $\phi_{\mathcal{M}} \neq \varnothing \}$, and an interpretation function $\mathscr{I} : P \to \wp(W)$.

Several features of this model, in particular W, P, and $\mathscr{I}$, play essentially the same role here as they do in more familiar modal frameworks. W is just the set of worlds in our model, where each possible world is a way the world could be, as far as our agent is concerned. P is the set of atomic sentences in the model, from which the logical expressions we'll evaluate will be built (along with the logical operators we'll define in the next section). $\mathscr{I}$ is an interpretation function that maps each atomic sentence in our language to the set of worlds in which that sentence is true.

On to the peculiarities. Suppressing direct representation of the agent's evidence is largely a matter of convenience. Since the changes we'll look

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[28] While much of what's said here extends straightforwardly to infinite models, details of the logic defined below, such as maximal consistent theories, will need more careful attention.
[29] The viewpoint model presented in this section builds on van Benthem and Pacuit's (2011b) model for evidence-based belief. See also Pacuit 2017 for a general introduction to neighborhood models.

at in §5 concern changes to the sources an agent trusts rather than to the evidence, directly representing the evidence is unnecessary—this version does the same work as a model directly representing evidence, but in a simpler fashion.

Instead, we have the evidence relation. As we saw earlier, the evidence relation is similar to the accessibility relation found in standard modal logics, although it will play a very different semantic role. Instead of mapping worlds to worlds, $\mathbb{E}$ maps worlds to sets of worlds, which are the propositions supported by the agent's evidence. Those mappings are drawn from the viewpoints in A, the set of viewpoints the agent trusts.

A is a subset of $\mathbb{V}$, the set of all viewpoints represented in the model. Each element of $\mathbb{V}$ represents a *particular* viewpoint—a standpoint, political affiliation, or whatnot—to which an agent might be responsive. For the sake of simplicity, this model assumes that the support viewpoints provide is binary rather than degreed. So, a viewpoint either supports a proposition or it does not. Given this assumption, we represent each proposition a viewpoint supports at a particular world as a pair $\langle w, \phi \rangle$, where $\phi \in \mathcal{L}_0$, a non-epistemic subset of $\mathcal{L}$.[30]

> **Non-Epistemic Language.** Let P be a set of atomic propositions. $\mathcal{L}_0$ is the smallest set of formulas generated by the grammar
>
> $$p \mid \neg\phi \mid \phi \wedge \psi \mid A\phi$$
>
> where $p \in P$. Additional propositional connectives ($\vee, \rightarrow, \leftrightarrow$) are defined as usual and the existential $E\phi$ is defined as $\neg A \neg \phi$.

These formulas will serve to pick out the propositions a source would support on the agent's evidence.[31] We'll make use of this broad set of viewpoints in §5, where we will look at changes in which viewpoints an agent trusts. In constructing the evidence relation, however, we'll focus on the viewpoints the agent already trusts.

The viewpoint model constructs $\mathbb{E}$ by amalgamating the viewpoints in A. To do this, we take each pair in each viewpoint in A and add the associated *interpreted pair* to $\mathbb{E}$, provided that the interpreted pair's extension is non-empty.[32] The interpreted pair is just the pair that links w to the set of possible worlds at which the sentence is true rather than the sentence itself. To return to our slugs, if $\langle w, Slugs_6 \rangle$ is a pair coming from

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[30] Why use a non-epistemic language? This is largely a technical fix; $\mathcal{L}_0$ avoids the intensional predicates that would make reconstructing $\mathbb{E}$ impossible for some of the operations we'll define in §5.

[31] To accommodate the broader notion of expertise mentioned in footnotes 16 and 17, viewpoints can be taken to act on perceptual information rather than bodies of evidence.

[32] By way of explanation, an empty extension doesn't provide positive support for any possible world, so plays no role in helping the agent figure out which world might be the actual world.

the viewpoint associated with *National Geographic*, its interpreted pair is $\langle w, Slugs_6 \rangle$. So, if the viewpoint associated with *National Geographic* is in A, we'll add $\langle w, Slugs_6 \rangle$ to $\mathbb{E}$ (as long as $Slugs_6$ isn't empty). In order to determine which worlds go into $Slugs_6$ we'll need a semantics, which we'll look at in the next section.

For convenience, we'll define two additional pieces of notation: $v_i(w)$ and $\mathbb{E}(w)$. Let $v_i(w)$ pick out the formulas associated with w according to v_i, so that $v_i(w) = \{\phi \mid \langle w, \phi \rangle \in v_i\}$. Similarly, let $\mathbb{E}(w)$ pick out the set of all sets of worlds associated with w according to $\mathbb{E}$, so that $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{X \mid \langle w, X \rangle \in \mathbb{E}\}$.

We'll also impose some constraints on viewpoints and the evidence relation. First, the agents' own viewpoint, v_A, must be included in A. Second, agents know the space of possible worlds. Since viewpoints map worlds to formulas rather than sets of worlds, we use a trivially true proposition, $p \vee \neg p$, to model this constraint.[33]

> **Triviality.** For each $w \in W$, there is some $p \in P$ such that $p \vee \neg p \in v_A(w)$.

It follows from the first and second constraints that $W \in \mathbb{E}(w)$ for all $w \in W$ in any viewpoint model.

Third, individual viewpoints are consistent. So, the intersection of all sets of worlds supported by a particular viewpoint at a world must be non-empty.

> **Consistency.** For each $v_i \in \mathbb{V}$ and each $w \in W$, $\bigcap \{\phi \mid \phi \in v_i(w)\} \neq \varnothing$.

This is not to suggest that agents can't think that there are inconsistent ways of seeing the world in a broader sense of the term 'viewpoint.' In order for an agent to trust it, however, a viewpoint must be consistent. So, our model restricts attention to these plausible viewpoints.[34]

In addition, we'll restrict our attention to *uniform* models for the sake of simplicity:

> **Uniformity.** For all $w, w' \in W$, $\mathbb{E}(w) = \mathbb{E}(w')$.

Less formally, uniform models are those in which each viewpoint evaluates the agent's evidence (which, recall, we are holding fixed) the same way across all possible worlds. So, what our agent ought to believe according to viewpoint v will be the same no matter which world they inhabit. (But this is merely a simplifying choice; across different worlds [say, one with and another without structural sexism], different evidence might well, according to the same standpoint, support different propositions.)

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[33] It's worth noting that this constraint also implies that this framework does not avoid the all-too-common problem of logical omniscience.

[34] This does not require viewpoints to be consistent across worlds. What a viewpoint supports at w might be inconsistent with what it supports at w'. Since we'll restrict our attention to uniform models, however, these situations will not arise.

The changes we'll be interested in are those arising from changes to the viewpoints our agent trusts. As with the choice to avoid directly representing evidence, it is possible to set this constraint aside, but adopting it greatly simplifies our discussion.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the absence of a common constraint: veracity. Veracity fails because, while viewpoints must be internally consistent, they need not be reliable. So, the actual world may not be among the worlds picked out by a particular viewpoint. Moreover, since consistency does not extend to other viewpoints, an agent can trust viewpoints that conflict with one another, as was the case in the olfactory dispute discussed earlier. This will be critical to the semantics for viewpoint models, to which we now turn.

4.3 A Basic, Static Logic

Our language, drawn from van Benthem and Pacuit (2011b), will remain relatively close to the standard operators for doxastic logic.

> **Evidence and Belief Language.** Let P be a set of atomic propositions. $\mathcal{L}$ is the smallest set of formulas generated by the grammar
>
> $$p \mid \neg\phi \mid \phi \wedge \psi \mid B\phi \mid \Box\phi \mid L\phi$$
>
> where $p \in P$. Additional propositional connectives ($\vee, \rightarrow$, $\leftrightarrow$) are defined as usual and the existential modality $M\phi$ is defined as $\neg L \neg \phi$.

So, if we have p and q as atomic propositions, $\mathcal{L}$ includes $\neg p$, $\neg p \wedge q$, $B(\neg p \wedge q)$, $\neg B(\neg p \wedge q)$, and so forth. This set of formulas, $\mathcal{L}$, is the set of sentences our logic will be able to interpret.

While the propositional connectives are no doubt familiar, the modal operators B, $\Box$, and L require some explanation. Their intended interpretations are as follows:

- $B\phi$ means "the agent believes ϕ",
- $\Box\phi$ means "the agent has evidence that directly supports ϕ", and
- $L\phi$ means "the agent knows that ϕ".[35]

With the language defined, we can now give a semantics that will tie it into the viewpoint models described above.

The definition that follows describes what needs to be true about a model in order for a formula in this language to be true at a particular world in that model.

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[35] While *knows* is a natural interpretation for L, this operator can also be interpreted in alethic terms as necessity (and its counterpart M as possibility). These operators are provided mostly as a convenience; our focus will be on B and $\Box$.

Truth. Let $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathcal{I} \rangle$ be a viewpoint model. Truth of a formula $\phi \in \mathcal{L}$ is defined inductively as follows:

$\mathcal{M}, w \models p$ *iff* $w \in \mathcal{I}(p)$ $\quad$ (for all $p \in P$)

$\mathcal{M}, w \models \neg\phi$ *iff* $\mathcal{M}, w \not\models \phi$

$\mathcal{M}, w \models \phi \wedge \psi$ *iff* $\mathcal{M}, w \models \phi$ and $\mathcal{M}, w \models \psi$

$\mathcal{M}, w \models \Box\phi$ *iff* there exists an $X \in \mathbb{E}(w)$ such that for all $v \in X$, $\mathcal{M}, v \models \phi$

$\mathcal{M}, w \models B\phi$ *iff* for all maximal consistent theories[36] $\mathcal{X} \subseteq \mathbb{E}(w)$ and all $v \in \bigcap \mathcal{X}$, $\mathcal{M}, v \models \phi$

$\mathcal{M}, w \models L\phi$ *iff* $v \models \phi$ for all $v \in W$

The truth set of ϕ is the set of worlds $\phi_{\mathcal{M}} = \{w \mid \mathcal{M}, w \models \phi\}$. Standard logical notions of satisfiability and validity are defined as usual.

This deserves a bit of explanation. Let's look at $\Box$. Recall that $\Box\phi$ is meant to be true just in case the agent has evidence that directly supports ϕ. The truth condition for support states that $\Box\phi$ is true at a world just in case there is some set in $\mathbb{E}(w)$ such that all of the worlds in that set are ϕ worlds. Since viewpoint models define the value of $\mathbb{E}(w)$ as the set of propositions supported at w by at least one of the viewpoints the agent trusts, this means $\Box\phi$ will be true at w whenever the truth set for some proposition supported at w by a viewpoint the agent trusts entails ϕ. So, if you trust *National Geographic* and, therefore, add $\langle w, Slugs_6 \rangle$ to $\mathbb{E}$, then $\Box(Slugs_6)$ will be true at w because $Slugs_6$ will be in $\mathbb{E}(w)$ and $Slugs_6$ will, of course, be true at every world in $Slugs_6$. You'll have direct support for many other propositions, too. For example, since every world in $Slugs_6$ is a world at which $Slugs_6 \vee Slugs_5$ is true, $\Box(Slugs_6 \vee Slugs_5)$ will be true at w as well.

The condition for B is less straightforward. The truth condition for belief requires that a proposition is true across all the different maximal consistent theories an agent can piece together according to the viewpoints they trust. Suppose, for example, that we have an agent who isn't sure about whether the atheists or the Catholics are right about the existence of God. Even so, both viewpoints support evolution. So, despite the fact that this agent can't put all of the evidence together consistently (there's no world in which God both exists and doesn't exist), all the ways the evidence *can* be put together consistently are theories on which evolution is true. Absent any trusted anti-evolution viewpoints, then, this agent will believe that evolution is true. With that in mind, here's the formal definition for maximal consistent theories:

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[36] Defined later.

(Relative) Maximal Consistent Theory. Given a viewpoint model $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ and a world $w \in W$, a family of sets X is a maximal consistent theory relative to w just in case

1. (Relative) X is a (finite) subset of $\mathbb{E}(w)$,
2. (Consistent) The members of X a non-empty intersection, and
3. (Maximal) For any $x \in \mathbb{E}(w)$ such that $x \notin X$, $\{x\} \cup X$ violates (2).

So, if $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{X_1, X_2, X_3\}$ and $X_1 \cap X_2 \neq \emptyset$, then $\{X_1, X_2\}$ satisfies (2)—there is at least one world that both X_1 and X_2 regard as possible. If the intersection of X_3 with $X_1 \cap X_2$ is empty, then $\{X_1, X_2\}$ satisfies (3) relative to $\mathbb{E}(w)$—it's a maximal consistent theory relative to $\mathbb{E}(w)$. (For all we've said, however, one of $\{X_3, X_2\}$ or $\{X_1, X_3\}$ might *also* be a maximal consistent theory.)

A few more examples will help to clarify how B and $\square$ work. Let $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ be a viewpoint model, let $W = \{w, z\}$, and let $\mathscr{I}(p) = \{w\}$ so that p is true only at w. Our viewpoints will be $\mathbb{V} = \{v_1, v_2, v_A\}$. Since we're working with uniform models, I'll describe $\mathbb{V}$ and $\mathbb{E}$ only in terms of the formulas and sets of worlds supported rather than in terms of the pairs linking worlds to those elements, as doing so simplifies the presentation. Let $v_1(w) = \{p\}$, and $v_2(w) = \{\neg p\}$. In keeping with the Triviality constraint, the agent's viewpoint, v_A, contains a pair $\langle w, p \vee \neg p \rangle$ for each $w \in W$, ensuring that each evidence relation contains the set of all worlds in our model. The rest of the elements of $\mathbb{E}$ will be constructed from A, per the viewpoint model definition above. Here are a few situations that might obtain.

Figure 1: $A = \{v_A\}$, $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{W\}$
This is the naive agent. This agent neither has evidence for p nor believes it, and the same goes for $\neg p$.

The agent in Figure 1 does not have direct support for p because the only viewpoint she trusts, $\{w, z\}$, includes z and $\mathcal{M}, z \not\models p$. So, $\mathcal{M}, z \not\models \square p$. The same goes for $\neg p$, *mutatis mutandis*. So, $\mathcal{M} \not\models \square \neg p$. In addition, they believe neither p or $\neg p$ because their only maximal consistent theory is $\{w, z\}$, and it doesn't settle whether p is true.

The agent depicted in Figure 2, on the other hand, does have support for p. In trusting v_1, this agent adds p, the set of worlds in which p is
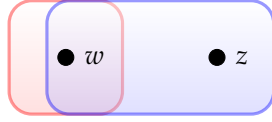
Figure 2: $A = \{v_1, v_A\}$, $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{\{w\}, W\}$
Adding v_1, our agent now has evidence for p and believes p.

true, to the evidence relation. Additionally, the agent believes p. They still have exactly one maximal consistent theory, but this time there's just one world in the intersection of the support relations in that theory: w. Since p is true at w, this means $\mathcal{M}, w \models Bp$.
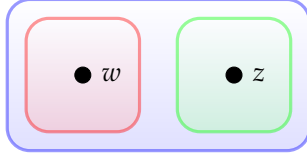

Figure 3: $A = \{v_1, v_2, v_A\}$, $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{\{w\}, \{z\}, W\}$
Since v_1 and v_2 disagree about whether the evidence supports p, the evidence relation depicted here contains conflicting support relations. So, the agent has evidence for p and $\neg p$, but believes neither.

The case for $\mathcal{M} \models \Box p$ in Figure 3 is the same as it is for Figure 2. This time, however, the agent has a second maximal consistent theory—the one consisting of $\{z\}$ and W. So, what goes for p goes for $\neg p$, *mutatis mutandis*. Looking at the relationships between the evidence, it's clear why our agent doesn't believe either proposition: they trust two distinct theories about the way the would could be, $\{\{w\}, \{w, z\}\}$ and $\{\{z\}, \{w, z\}\}$, and those theories disagree about p. So, $\mathcal{M} \not\models Bp$. This demonstrates the fact that having evidence for p does not imply believing p on viewpoint models.

Belief also doesn't require that an agent have evidence for p in the direct sense defined here. Consider a model on which $W = \{w, z, u\}$, $\mathscr{I}(p) = z$, and $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{\{w, z\}, \{z, u\}, \{w, z, u\}\}$, such as Figure 4. Since none of these sets is one on which p is true at each world, $\mathcal{M} \not\models \Box \neg p$. However, since there is just one maximal consistent theory, $\{\{w, u\}, \{w, v\}, \{w, u, v\}\}$, and p is true at the one world in the intersection of those sets, $\mathcal{M} \models Bp$. So, although no individual piece of evidence supports p *directly*, taken together, the evidence gives the agent reason to believe p.[37] To make this

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[37] For an axiomatization, completeness results, and other logical details, see van Benthem and Pacuit 2011b.
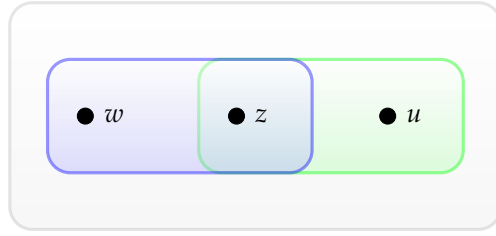
Figure 4: $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{\{w,z\}, \{z,u\}, W\}$
A case in which an agent believes p but has no direct support
for p.

more concrete, suppose you're trying to decide whether to start reading *The Hobbit*, *1984,* or *Jurassic Park*. You have two friends who've read all three, both of whom you trust to know your tastes. However, when you ask which of the three novels you'll like best, your friends give you different answers: Damian tells you it'll be either *The Hobbit* or *1984* and Boris tells you it'll be *1984* or *Jurassic Park*. According to our model, you should believe you'll like *1984* best, given this state of affairs, although neither friend gave you direct support for this.

4.4 Viewpoints and Standpoints

So far, viewpoints haven't played a direct role in the logic we've developed. This will change as we turn to the dynamics of standpoints—coming to occupy a standpoint and interacting with occupants—in the next section. These dynamics depend on identifying standpoints with particular viewpoints in $\mathbb{V}$. The Latina standpoint, for example, might be a particular $L \in \mathbb{V}$. Occupying the Latina standpoint, then, will be a matter of bearing a particular relationship to L. Before looking at that relationship, however, a few points about this are worth noting.

First, a bit more about what standpoints look like from the perspective of the model. I'll make no effort to dictate the content of the propositions standpoints support. The goal here is merely to capture the structure of standpoints in a way that makes them formally tractable. In addition, while standpoints will support particular propositions on this model, this does not imply that agents who trust standpoints will necessarily *believe* those propositions. Someone who trusts a standpoint may be in the kind of situation depicted in Figure 3, in which they are best described as trusting two viewpoints that contradict one another regarding the propositions the standpoint supports. This possibility will be critical to our discussion of what it means to occupy a standpoint.

Second, as we've seen before the notion of the standpoint of a particular group is misleading. So, it will be more accurate to characterize the

Latina standpoint as a set $\mathbb{L}$ of closely related viewpoints. Occupying this standpoint, then, will be bearing the relevant relationship to some $L \in \mathbb{L}$. For the most part, this is a technical detail for our purposes, but it's worth bearing in mind.

Finally, agents may not be able to assess whether they occupy a given standpoint accurately. That is, an agent may be mistaken about what a particular standpoint says about their evidence. The same goes for any other source that has agent-independent standards for evidential support relations. Someone who takes the Catholic faith to provide support for the proposition *Jesus never rose from the dead* is simply mistaken about the tenets of the Catholic faith. This distinction between evidential support relations from an agent's perspective and from an agent-independent perspective will be important to keep in mind as we look at agents' interactions with standpoints in the next sections.

At long last, we have real progress on desideratum (4) from §3. We have shown that this view support careful, precise exploration of standpoint epistemology's central questions. With our model in place, we can now turn to the core questions. What does it mean to occupy a standpoint? How should agents interact with standpoints? Along the way, we'll need to add some dynamic operators to our model. As we'll see, there are many ways to characterize these changes, often marking points of contention within standpoint theory. So, deciding between them will mean settling on a particular kind of standpoint theory. Some of these decisions will turn out to be irreducibly political, rather than epistemic, as they ought to be for this hybrid theory. By looking at candidate characterizations of these dynamics in logical terms, however, we'll get a clearer sense of their normative consequences and the nature of the political commitments necessary to support them.

5 Occupying a Standpoint

What does it mean for an agent to occupy a standpoint? How does coming to occupy a standpoint affect one's other doxastic states? At first blush, it might seem as if there's a simple answer here. Why not treat coming to occupy a standpoint in the same way that one would treat coming to trust any other viewpoint?

> **Adoptive Occupancy.** Occupying a standpoint means trusting a viewpoint associated with that standpoint. In terms of our model, an agent occupies a standpoint $\mathbb{L}$ just in case there is some $L \in \mathbb{L}$ such that $L \in A$.

If that's right, coming to occupy a standpoint would involve a straightforward change: upon adding a viewpoint associated with a standpoint to the set of trusted viewpoints, an agent could be said to occupy a

standpoint. We can model this change as an instance of a more general update.[38]

> **Viewpoint Addition.** Let $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ be a viewpoint model and v a viewpoint in $\mathbb{V}$. The model $\mathcal{M}^{+v} = \langle W^{+v}, \mathbb{V}^{+v}, A^{+v}, \mathbb{E}^{+v}, \mathscr{I}^{+v} \rangle$ has $W^{+v} = W$, $\mathbb{V}^{+v} = \mathbb{V}$, $\mathscr{I}^{+v} = \mathscr{I}$,
>
> $$A^{+v} = A \cup \{v\}, \text{ and}$$
> $$\mathbb{E}^{+v}(w) = E(w) \cup \phi_{\mathcal{M}} \text{ for all } w \in W \text{ and all } \phi \text{ s.t.}$$
> $$\langle w, \phi \rangle \in v \text{ and } \phi_{\mathcal{M}} \neq \varnothing$$

Here, the only changes from $\mathcal{M}$ to $\mathcal{M}^{+v}$, the updated model, are to the list of viewpoints the agent trusts, A, and, correspondingly, to the evidence relation, $\mathbb{E}$. We can then define the modality $[+v]\psi$, meaning "ψ is true after the agent comes to trust viewpoint v" to describe this change:

> **(VA)** $\mathcal{M}, w \models [+v]\psi$ *iff* for each $\phi \in v$, $\mathcal{M}, w \models \phi$ implies $\mathcal{M}^{+v}, w \models \psi$

On this proposal, a college freshman who starts to take the feminist analysis she's learned seriously—trusting the viewpoint and adding it to A—counts as occupying a feminist standpoint. As a result of this update to her evidence relation, everything she believes will be consistent with the propositions supported by that viewpoint, because the belief operator requires anything she believes to be true on every maximal consistent theory. Once she's added the feminist standpoint to the viewpoints she trusts, any proposition that cannot be true according to that standpoint can no longer be true on every maximal consistent theory of hers (even if its true on many of them). This is a positive feature of the proposal. Nevertheless, it is too weak to serve as a model of standpoint occupancy for at least two reasons.

First, it leaves propositions inconsistent with the standpoint exactly as well supported as they were before she came to occupy the standpoint. To see this, recall our definition for the support operator:

> $\mathcal{M}, w \models \Box\phi$ *iff* there is some $X \in \mathbb{E}(w)$ such that for all $v \in X$, $\mathcal{M}, v \models \phi$

If a standpoint supports $\phi = $ *sexism affects women's employment prospects in the United States* at every world, the agent who believes $\neg\phi$ to begin with will not adopt the belief ϕ as a result of trusting the standpoint. As described, she'll lose the belief $\neg\phi$, but she won't come to believe the opposite. And, since support only requires that there be *some* set of worlds in the agent's evidence relation that are all $\neg\phi$-worlds, she'll still have support for $\neg\phi$. Figure 5 depicts this kind of situation. While this

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[38] Viewpoint Addition and $[+v]\phi$ closely resemble (van Benthem and Pacuit, 2011b, 9) Evidence Addition and $[+\phi]\psi$, which define a similar process for a single proposition.

is appropriate for coming to trust a viewpoint in general, the notion of occupying a standpoint seems to require a more robust response.

$$\mathcal{M}$$

$$\mathcal{M}^{+v}$$
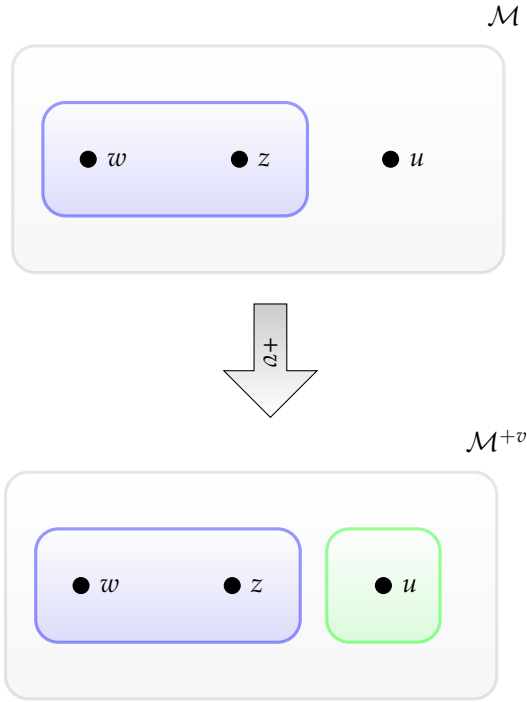
Figure 5: Adding a source v to $\mathcal{M}$.
Suppose ϕ is true only at world u and that the viewpoint being added, v, contains support for ϕ. In this case, the belief $\neg\phi$ is lost at $\mathcal{M}^{+v}$, but the agent does not believe ϕ because there are two maximal consistent theories and they disagree about ϕ.

Second, this result also implies that the proposal would allow agents who come to occupy a standpoint to hold *none* of the beliefs central to it. Given the claim that the privilege associated with occupying a standpoint involves developing genuine expertise with respect to the effects of social hierarchy on one's lived experience, this seems like the wrong result. In §3, I argued that that expertise should be understood in terms of evidential support relations—as a way of responding to evidence. The model we constructed in §4 construes those ESRs as one among many viewpoints to which an agent might be responsive. As this kind of example illustrates, however, having expert ESRs among those with which you form your beliefs may not be enough to count as an expert (even setting aside other issues, such as the kind of access you have to those ESRs). For example,

under Adoptive Occupancy, our college freshman might still trust her conservative upbringing, according to which housekeeping is a woman's most important duty. So, when asked about this, she would respond with the uncertainty befitting having contradictory ESRs on the matter. Despite knowing how the feminist standpoint would interpret her evidence, her inability to distinguish between a good interpretation and a bad one suggests that she is not, in fact, an expert with respect to understanding how social structures affect her life as a woman. Being an expert requires knowing what to discard as well as what to keep.

Nevertheless, this is an important epistemic state. We often consider only those who occupy standpoints and those unacquainted with it. But, this kind of relationship with a standpoint—mere acceptance, perhaps— marks an important distinction between ways *not* to occupy a standpoint. This agent is quite different from an anti-feminist, for example. While she might still be "on the fence," she is taking seriously the views she would have if she were to occupy the standpoint. In virtue of including it among the viewpoints she trusts, she is neither against it nor is she ignorant of it.

So, interesting though it may be, Adoptive Occupancy won't work. This problem of laxity suggests its own solution, however.

> **Strict Occupancy.** Occupying a standpoint requires reject-
> ing possibilities inconsistent with that standpoint.

We can model this with the following update:[39]

> **Viewpoint Scrubbing.** Let $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ be a
> viewpoint model and v a viewpoint in $\mathbb{V}$. The model
> $\mathcal{M}^{!v} = \langle W^{!v}, \mathbb{V}^{!v}, A^{!v}, \mathbb{E}^{!v}, \mathscr{I}^{!v} \rangle$ has $\mathbb{V}^{!v} = \mathbb{V}$,
> $$W^{!v} = \bigcap_{\langle w, \phi \rangle \in v} \phi_{\mathcal{M}}$$
> $$A^{!v} = \{v\} \cup A,$$
> $$\mathbb{E}^{!v}(w) = \{X \mid \varnothing \neq X = \phi_{\mathcal{M}} \cap W^{!v} \text{ for all } \phi \text{ s.t.}$$
> $\langle x, \phi \rangle \in v_i$ for some $v_i \in A^{!v}\}$, and
> $$\mathscr{I}^{!v} = V(p) \cap W^{!v}$$

The change to W reduces the set of possible worlds to those within the intersection of the propositions supported by the standpoint, while the updates to $\mathbb{E}$ and $\mathscr{I}$ render the model consistent with that change. On this characterization, occupying a standpoint means taking it as a kind of fundamental worldview that defines the boundaries of any other epistemic endeavor. Rather than removing inconsistent viewpoints entirely, this operation just scrubs away the possibilities that allow those viewpoints to be inconsistent with the standpoint in the first place. This solves both of the potential problems for Adoptive Occupancy: agents who occupy a

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[39] $\mathcal{M}^{!v}$ is closely modeled on van Benthem and Pacuit's (2011a) $\mathcal{M}^{!\phi}$ for public announce-ment in evidence models.

standpoint accept no evidence directly supporting propositions that con-
tradict the standpoint and they believe all of the propositions it supports.
So, our college freshman can keep her conservative viewpoint around.
The only difference is that many of the propositions it supports will have
an empty truth set because there's just no way for them to turn out true by
her lights. As a result, those propositions won't make it into her evidence
relation. Looking back at Figure 6, this situation cannot arise because v,
the $\neg\phi$ world that caused the problem, will be removed by scrubbing for
the standpoint that provides $\{w, u\}$.

This may seem too strong, however, because Strict Occupancy comes at
the cost of preventing agents from so much as entertaining the possibility
that a proposition supported by the standpoint is false. Standpoints are
infallible on this view, which seems far too strong.

There is a great deal of space between the Strict and Adoptive View-
point versions of occupancy, however. We might, for example, take a
more targeted approach on which occupants view their standpoint as
fundamental, but do not foreclose other possibilities:

> **Promoted Occupancy.** Occupying a standpoint requires
> rejecting direct, but not indirect, support for propositions
> inconsistent with that standpoint.

To model this, we'll define an operation that removes direct support for
propositions inconsistent with those supported by the standpoint, leaving
everything else intact:

> **Viewpoint Promotion.** Let $\mathcal{M} = \langle W, \mathbb{V}, A, \mathbb{E}, \mathscr{I} \rangle$ be a
> viewpoint model and v a viewpoint in $\mathbb{V}$. The model
> $\mathcal{M}^{*v} = \langle W^{*v}, \mathbb{V}^{*v}, A^{*v}, \mathbb{E}^{*v}, \mathscr{I}^{*v} \rangle$ has $\mathbb{V}^{*v} = \mathbb{V}$, $W^{*v} = W$, $\mathscr{I}^{*v} = V$,
> $$A^{*v} = \{v\} \cup A, \text{ and}$$
> $$\mathbb{E}^{*v}(w) = \{\phi_{\mathcal{M}^{*v}} \mid \langle w, \phi \rangle \in v_i \text{ for some } v_i \in A^{*v}$$
> and $\phi_{\mathcal{M}} \cap \bigcap_{\langle w, \psi \rangle \in v} \psi_{\mathcal{M}} \neq \varnothing\}$

The condition on $\mathbb{E}$ removes the individual evidential support relations in-
consistent with the standpoint. That is, rather than removing inconsistent
viewpoints entirely, this operation promotes the possibilities supported
by the standpoint by removing direct support for propositions inconsis-
tent with them. In doing so, it leaves in place support for propositions
that are neutral with respect to the standpoint, in the sense that they can
be true regardless of whether everything the standpoint supports is true.
So, this is another case in which our college freshman need not entirely
forego her conservative upbringing, instead just ignoring the parts that
support propositions like *women ought to raise families rather than joining
the workforce*. The difference between this and Strict Occupancy is that she
can still consider the possibilities outside the standpoint.

As a result, the following situation can arise. Notice that removing inconsistent viewpoints does not imply that our agent comes to believe the propositions the standpoint supports. This is because of the gap between support for a proposition and belief in our model. To be eliminated by this operation, a viewpoint must support, say, $\neg\phi$ where the standpoint in question supports ϕ. However, a viewpoint that passes this test may still support propositions consistent with $\neg\phi$, so that $\neg\phi$ worlds are included in its evidence sets. For example, if two viewpoints each include the same $\neg\phi$ world but different ϕ worlds, $\neg\phi$ will be true on the maximal consistent theory consisting of those two viewpoints, as in Figure 6.

Figure 6: $\mathbb{E}(w) = \{\{w,z\}, \{z,u\}, \{w,u\}, W\}$
Suppose ϕ is true only at w and u. The viewpoints providing $\{w,z\}$ and $\{z,u\}$ could survive viewpoint promotion with a viewpoint supporting ϕ (in red here), allowing the agent to end up in a state like this one, in which they have a maximal consistent theory between $\{w,z\}$ and $\{z,u\}$ on which $\neg\phi$ is true.

As a result, it won't be the case that ϕ is true on all maximal consistent theories. Since $B\phi$ depends on having only ϕ worlds in all of the maximal consistent theories the agent can put together, we can't guarantee that the agent will believe ϕ.

So, this option answers our earlier question—Must standpoint occupants believe everything the standpoint supports?—in the negative. This may be warranted, however. The agent in this situation has support for mutually incompatible propositions, all of which are compatible with the standpoint they occupy. Upon realizing that they have incompatible maximal consistent theories, questioning the troublesome proposition supported by that standpoint (ϕ in Figure 6) seems only reasonable. Whether this realization calls for modifying views about the standpoint, investigating the viewpoints providing support for the now-uncertain propositions, or simply being content with uncertainty and acknowledging that the

evidence lacks a clear, univocal interpretation on the viewpoints the agent trusts, none of these options need to constitute a betrayal of the occupied standpoint.

Between Strict Occupancy and Promotion, I take the latter to be the more plausible characterization of how occupying a standpoint affects an agent's epistemic state, at least for the kind of standpoint epistemology I've defended here. While both involve elevating an expert viewpoint, Strict Occupancy appears a form of dogmatism. This goes beyond what's necessary of an expert—an expert need not be incapable of considering the possibility that their views are false. In fact, one might worry that such dogmatism renders the agent *less* of an expert than a counterpart who hasn't scrubbed the incompatible possibilities. The dogmatic agent cannot meaningfully abandon, let alone question, the standpoint because scrubbing the incompatible possibilities means that the agent will continue to believe those propositions even if they eliminate all direct support for them. This hardly seems to support the kind of deliberate adjudication an expert should be able to engage in. By contrast, the Promoter's choice to bring the standpoint's evidential support relations to the fore can be reversed. This agent does prioritize the standpoint's verdict about the evidence, but nevertheless remains engaged with the possibility that the standpoint is incorrect. Moreover, Promotion is far more responsive to the possibility of changing one's views. As we've seen, there are many distinct sets of evidential support relations that "count" as part of any standpoint. Plausibly, an agent who occupies a standpoint can (and will) shift among these as they gain experience. Promotion just requires making the same change, this time with the new version of the standpoint. Under Strict Occupancy, however, any proposition that contradicts a proposition supported by the initial standpoint will have an empty truth set, regardless of its being supported by a different instantiation of that same standpoint. So, support for such propositions cannot make it into the revised evidence relation. This, too, is a reason to worry about whether Strict Occupancy can reasonably be said to let the privilege of being a standpoint occupant—access to these expert evidential support relations—support treating the occupant themselves as an expert.

Nevertheless, Strict Occupancy does leave room for a stridently political understanding of what it means to occupy a standpoint. The version of occupancy I've argued for is largely a matter of employing the expertise developed as a result of being in a position to occupy a standpoint. To motivate a more politically charged conception, however, consider a case in which most of the viewpoints an agent might trust undermine belief in their own capacity to participate in that epistemic community, Strict Occupancy might be necessary—being uncertain of whether you are fit

to participate can be silencing, even when you are invited to do so.[40] So motivated, concerns about Strict Occupancy being dogmatic or otherwise epistemically suspect may seem less immediately pressing. Even if occupancy is purely a matter of politically motivated adherence to these ESRs, however, the resulting norms must still pass epistemic muster. In terms of both organizational and individual norms, the fact that Strict Occupancy makes individuals poorer candidates for being experts is worrisome.

5.1 What Feminist Epistemology and Logic Can Offer One Another

Much of this section's discussion has focused on how to formalize the notion of occupying a standpoint. My goal has been to show that these formal tools are fruitful in generating new questions to explore, can provide insight into the structure of standpoints, and can help us to understand how they relate to other formalized epistemic concepts.

I think this is valuable and interesting in its own right, but, more importantly, it serves the standpoint theorist's aims, too. If we are to convince those beyond feminist epistemology of the importance, coherence, and relevance of standpoint epistemology to our broader epistemic communities, it will help to be able to converse in their language. And, for better or worse (and I do think better, though readers may disagree), much of that language is formal logic.

This speaks, also, to what feminist epistemology can offer epistemic logic. In their "The Logic of Knowing-What-it-is-Like", Bowman and Cook (Forthcoming) put the point this way:

> Formal logic – especially formal work in epistemology – often presupposes that we need not distinguish between different reasoners or different sorts of reasoner. In other words, it is generally assumed that what is epistemically possible for or epistemically accessible to one individual will also be epistemically possible for or accessible to any other individual if they were "plugged into" the same situation (e.g., had access to the same propositional knowledge or information). As is suggested by the [foregoing] discussion [. . .], however, it is not clear that this is the case. (29)

The model developed here provides a means of capturing not just the reasoner, but also their epistemic context. In so doing, it complicates but also enriches our epistemic logic, and it has the potential to bring it closer to the epistemic lives and practices of real reasoners

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[40] See, in particular, Dotson 2011. This is also common in the history of racialized belief about intellectual capacity (Mills, 2012).

Conclusions

We began with the goal of finding an account of standpoint epistemology that could not only avoid common pitfalls and support sufficiently robust normative conclusions, but also provide enough structure to explore clear, precise theses about how agents ought to interact with standpoints. The account we've developed, on which agents' distinctive ways of relating to their evidence constitute the epistemic privilege that standpoints provide, meets these criteria. Moreover, we can arrive at this kind of view without arguing that oppression or social location automatically endows anyone with epistemic superiority. While this account (and the formal model associated with it) leaves out many important aspects of what it is to occupy a standpoint—affect, practical consequences, etc.—it captures much of the central epistemic phenomenon, doing so in a way that preserves individuals' distinctive experiences. Moreover, this account allows us to apply familiar formal modeling techniques and to understand how we can integrate standpoints into such systems. This continuity provides a path forward for future work on the relationship between standpoints and other epistemic notions—regarding deference to experts, in particular.

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AU: Please add issue number to Hartsock 1983 and author's full first name in Longino 1993 (E. Potter)

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