

Multiculturalism and the Convergence of Faith and Practical Wisdom in Modern Society

Ana-Maria Pascal
Regent's University London, UK

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Chapter 3

Rethinking the Fact–Value Split: A Place for Religion in the Public Square?

R. Scott Smith
Biola University, USA

ABSTRACT

Multicultural, western societies are quite secular, and the secular-sacred divide has been shaped by the fact-value split. But, the fact-value split also influences many other cultures, including in Latin and South America and East Asia. On it, science yields knowledge, but religion and ethics yield opinions and values. Closely related is the public-private split: governments should act on public reasons (ones based on science), and not private ones (ones based on religious and ethical views). Such science is methodologically naturalistic, bracketing anything supernatural or non-physical. This science usually presupposes ontological naturalism: what exists is natural, or physical. But, the author will contend the fact-value split is mistaken; on naturalism, humans cannot have knowledge. At best, people only have interpretations, even in science. However, the author also will argue that people can have moral and religious knowledge. If so, there will be many practical implications for public policy and religious practice.

INTRODUCTION

At least in multicultural, western societies, people clearly live in a secular age. That does not mean that religion is no longer playing active roles in many westerners' lives, for obviously it does. But how religion should interface with the public square has changed significantly over the years, such that in these societies, the secular-sacred divide now is driven by an ideology that often functions simply at an axiomatic level. This ideology is about what counts as knowledge, for which, in this essay, the author will utilize the standard, philosophical definition of justified true belief.

This ideological assumption is the fact-value split, according to which science gives us knowledge of facts, but religion and ethics are not really subjects in which humans can have knowledge; rather, they belong to the “realm” of opinions, preferences, and values. Now, the fact-value split relates closely with the public-private split, on which governments are supposed to act on public reasons, i.e., ones that are based on what can be known from science, and not merely private reasons, which are taken to stem from

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religious and ethical views. So, by appealing to scientific findings, policy makers can be seen as grounding their decisions in knowledge that is objective and neutral, and not in sectarian, religious opinions.

The kind of science presupposed in the fact-value split is methodologically naturalistic, to say the least. Such scientific practice should bracket any religious or supernatural considerations, and anything not knowable by the senses (such as essential natures, and mental states like thoughts, beliefs, desires, and experiences), as well as immaterial causes (e.g., God, angels, and/or humans' souls as agents). But, this view also usually presupposes ontological naturalism; i.e., all that exists in the actual universe is natural, or (usually) just physical; there is nothing supernatural or immaterial. Combined, we can call this overall view scientific naturalism.

Thus, it is relatively easy to explain why the fact-value split marginalizes religious voices from the public square. They simply cannot offer knowledge, whether for policymaking on ethical issues, education, constitutional-legal interpretation, etc. Still, in public policy, societies must address several moral questions, just as a practical fact of life. To do so, it seems their basis must be scientific reasons, to which (allegedly) all people can assent. Furthermore, if policy makers were to use religious reasons for their decisions, they thereby could be endorsing the existence of various immaterial entities, which simply cannot be known to exist on the basis of scientific naturalism.

But, it is not only people in multicultural, western societies who are affected by the fact-value split and ontological naturalism. Indeed, their influences have spread to many other cultures and societies, such as in Latin and South America. There, the political and cultural patterns of the United States are followed closely. So, naturalism and the fact-value split influence academics, political elites, and those with higher levels of education and purchasing power. And, in post-World War II East Asia, western science and its attitudes were brought to former British colonies, such as Singapore and Hong Kong, as well as to Korea and Japan through U.S. led reconstruction.

However, perhaps people should reconsider the fact-value split. Though they often assume its validity, can it withstand scrutiny? The author will argue that it cannot; historically, people have made several crucial mistakes that have led to the current mindset. Indeed, the author will argue that people cannot have knowledge given the ontology of naturalism. If so, the "fact" side of the split will be undermined. But, on the "values" side, it seems there are many things people can know in ethics and even religion. These findings will require a reevaluation of public policy making, for since religiously-based arguments can give us knowledge of truth, they should not be excluded *a priori* from the public square.

To help develop this thesis, the paper will explore the rise of the fact-value split in its historical context, to help show why it arose to its present status. Then the author will use the work of John Rawls as an example of how the fact-value split can function to segregate the public from the private realms in society. Rawls (1993) develops a secular, "public" basis for political liberalism, and he relegates moral, religious, and philosophical views to private, "competing doctrines," which he thinks should not be the basis for public policy. But then the paper will shift to examine critically humans' abilities to have knowledge based on the ontology of naturalism. Indeed, a key finding will be that knowledge is not indifferent to ontology, and that a different ontology than that of naturalism is necessary for knowledge. In turn, those considerations will lead to an argument that shows humans can have knowledge in the fields of ethics and religion. Then the paper will focus upon several implications for public policy and religious practice.

In this context, the author considers epistemology to be the philosophical subject of how we can have knowledge. So, epistemology is related to, but distinct from, the "production" of knowledge, i.e.,

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the process of conducting research and disseminating those results. That production depends upon how we know things.

SITUATING THE FACT-VALUE SPLIT

While philosophically the split may usually be traced back to the work of David Hume (1711-1776) and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), there were other factors that preceded them (Hume, 1738, III.I.I; R. Smith, 2014, pp. 97-98). Until the later Middle Ages, largely there was a consensus in western thought that humans were a unity of body and soul, the latter being their essential nature. Other immaterial entities were thought to exist, such as mental states (beliefs, thoughts, experiences, etc.), moral qualities, and more. While this was not the case for all key thinkers from the ancient Greeks through the Middle Ages, nonetheless it still represented a broad consensus. But William of Ockham (c. 1285-c. 1349) argued against viewing properties, or qualities, as universals. Instead, they are particular, or nominal (Spade 1994, p. 181; Brower, 2015, n. 16). Instead of qualities being immaterial, abstract entities (real, yet not located in time and space, like Plato's forms), they tended thereafter to be seen as particulars that are spatially and temporally located. As such, it became easy to think these are sense perceptible.

Soon thereafter, modern science began to gain prestige through the findings of Copernicus (1473-1543) and Galileo (1564-1642). Copernicus proposed his revolutionary heliocentric theory, for which Galileo gave experimental confirmation. Both opposed the dominant Aristotelian model, on which the earth is the center of the universe, and the cosmos has a necessary structure which is animated by a soul. Against Aristotle, Kepler (1571-1630) did not conceive of the universe as having an essence, but as being like a "celestial machine," which follows God's mathematical ideas. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) rejected Aristotle's formal and final causes. These causes were teleological, which fit with Aristotle's view that living things have essential natures. Bacon's method left scientists to focus upon Aristotle's two other causes, efficient and material ones. Efficient causes bring about an effect, whereas material causes simply are the "stuff" of which something is made. Using these, Bacon developed an inductive, scientific methodology based upon what people can observe empirically.

However, Newton's (1642-1727) *Principia* attacked the received view. For Aristotle, the "celestial realm calls for one science and the sublunar realm, another" (G. Smith, 2014). But, according to philosopher George Smith, the *Principia* was the most important factor in the development of astronomy and modern physics, for "its conclusion that the force retaining the planets in their orbits is one in kind with terrestrial gravity," which ended Aristotle's view (G. Smith, 2014).

In summary, these scientific findings reinforced the implications of nominalism, that everything is particular and located in space and time. So, scientists and philosophers tended to follow these empirical emphases, which started to marginalize the need for immaterial entities. For if the universe is more or less a machine, it is hard to see a need for immaterial essences. Of course, the same could apply to humans. And, if the universe is causally closed, then while God still could have been its creator, nonetheless it is hard to see how God could interact with it or even play any role in scientific explanations.

These empirical emphases fit with Hume's empiricism, which threatened to undermine moral and religious knowledge. Kant too held to empiricism but also affirmed a place for reason. His synthesis led him to his pivotal conclusion, that people cannot know things as they are in themselves, but only as they appear to them (Kant, 1993, ch. III). He bifurcated reality into two realms. The phenomenal realm is known by the five senses, is marked by contingency, and is studied by science using empirical

methods. The noumenal realm includes things as they truly are in themselves. Since he accepted that the senses provide the content of knowledge (with *a priori* contributions from reason), humans cannot know the *noumena*. However, he allowed one exception – morals. Due to how he conceived of morals as absolute commands, they could not belong to the phenomena, for then morals would be contingent. To make sense of morals, he posited that other entities exist in the *noumena*, including God, the soul, and its immortality. But, importantly, people cannot know these are real; instead, they have to act as if these things are so.

But, while Kant thought he had preserved a place for morals and religion, still his epistemology effectively justified philosophically the fact-value split. His work continued the train of thought that had been started at least since Ockham's time. But when Darwin's naturalistic theory ascended to dominance, there was no more perceived need for the existence of immaterial things, whether universals, essences, or God. Instead, ontological naturalism arose to ascendancy in the west, and science came to be seen as the set of disciplines that give people knowledge of reality.

The Rise of Naturalism

But with the rise of naturalism, and the rejection of God as a source of knowledge of objectively real morals, societies' constitutions that draw (purportedly) from a transcendent source must be reinterpreted or revised. Consider, for example, the Declaration of Independence of the United States: "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" (Declaration, 1776). Here, God is identified as the source of human rights, which implies that all humans have equal moral value. Since these are conferred from a transcendent source, these rights cannot be usurped or denied by humans.

Yet, given naturalism, at best such rights are a human construct and thus not unalienable. In a world in which the brute facts are natural facts, there is no room for any real, intrinsic morals, whether virtues or principles. In general, there are two broad, metaethical "camps" available to naturalists. First, there are noncognitivists, like A. J. Ayer, who deny that moral properties exist. They also deny that moral statements, such as "murder is wrong," really express a proposition; rather, they just express feelings (emotivism) or commands (prescriptivism). There are also quasi-realists, like Simon Blackburn, who affirm that moral discourse appears to make truth claims (Blackburn, 1993a, pp. 184-86). But, in actuality, it does not. He emphasizes a linguistic analysis of moral statements, for to him moral properties are not real.

Second, there are varieties of moral cognitivism, on which "moral statements are truth-apt," but proponents disagree about "what the object is that moral statements describe" (R. Smith, 2014, p. 116). On subjectivism, moral statements convey information about the speaker, whether as an individual or a culture (cultural relativism). For individuals, an allegedly moral statement actually expresses the likes or dislikes of a person. For cultures, it expresses those of a particular social group.

There is also sociobiology, on which morality is a biological adaptation that has been selected. So, social behavior, especially cooperation, "can be a good biological strategy" in the struggle for survival (Ruse, 2002, p. 651). For Michael Ruse, a subjectivist, "the meaning of morality is that it is objective" (p. 661), and so people objectify it. However, that is an illusion "thrust upon us by evolution (it is not arbitrary), [so] it is not relative" (p. 661).

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Another cognitivist view is error theory. For Richard Joyce, moral judgments are beliefs, and in moral discourse humans typically assert them as beliefs. However, there are no real moral facts, and so these assertions are systematically untrue (Joyce, 2015). Error theory allows proponents to enjoy the use of moral discourse while at the same time not asserting the literal truthfulness of such statements.

The last cognitivist view is objectivism, in which naturalists mainly can be “ethical naturalists.” Here, moral statements are about acts or objects believed to have moral value. Objectively true moral statements refer to an operationalized property that can be measured scientifically, such as (statistically) what most people prefer; what enhances survival; or what maximizes desire or interest. For example, Nicholas Sturgeon, a “Cornell Realist,” holds that all beliefs are theory-laden and are justified in light of their coherence with one’s entire web of beliefs (Sturgeon, 2002, pp. 184-211). Moral beliefs can give approximations to the truth.

For all these naturalistic metaethical options, there are no intrinsically moral facts. Blackburn clearly explains the moral task for naturalists: “The problem is one of finding room for ethics, or placing ethics within the disenchanting, non-ethical order which we inhabit, and of which we are a part” (Blackburn, 1993b, p. 49). Or, as Gilbert Harman thinks, moral facts are humans’ constructs from their interaction with natural facts, which in turn is affected by their psychology and upbringing (Harman, 1977, pp. 131-33).

Now, as an example of how the fact-value split can be employed to segregate the public from the private realms in society, the author will turn to consider the work of John Rawls.

The Fact-Value Split Employed in Structuring Societies

It should not be a surprise, then, that in these times, a political theorist like Rawls would resort to a more naturalistic basis for a democratic society. Unlike the American framers, who appealed to a transcendent, religious basis as the ground for human rights and the formation of a democracy, Rawls instead utilizes a Kantian-like thought experiment to devise from reason two universalizable principles of justice. In his *Political Liberalism*, he addresses the fact of an irreducible plurality of “comprehensive doctrines,” or worldviews, embraced by different people of a nation. These groups are marked by their philosophical, religious, and/or moral perspectives, such as what is the good, the highest good, the meaning of life, and more, and it may be virtually impossible to adjudicate between them.

Given this pluralistic starting point, Rawls asks: “how is a just and free society possible under conditions of deep doctrinal conflict with no prospect of resolution?” (Rawls, 1993, p. xxviii). He appeals hypothetically to a veil of ignorance, behind which people would stand in an “original position.” They would be equals, being ignorant of various contingent factors, such as wealth, status, health, and perhaps even race, class, and gender. Rawls thinks that they would form a social contract that free, self-interested, and rational persons would accept in that original position.

The two principles of justice he thinks such people should devise as their universalizable maxims are the equality and difference principles. The former states that “each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic rights and liberties, which scheme is compatible with the same scheme for all; and in this scheme the equal political liberties, and only those liberties, are to be guaranteed their fair value” (Rawls, 1993, p. 5). The difference principle maintains that “social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: first, they are to be attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and second, they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society” (Rawls, 1993, p. 6).

But why couldn't Rawls appeal to the conception of justice of a particular comprehensive doctrine? To him, the Kantian-like experiment allows us to legislate universally (and neutrally) what should be the case for all. Such a political basis can serve as a public, objective rationale for a society composed of people from an irreducibly pluralistic set of multicultural, religious, moral, and even philosophical frameworks. As Rawls tells us, the "political conception is to be, so to speak, political and not metaphysical," for a metaphysical view of the nature of justice comes from a competing doctrine (Rawls, 1993, p. 10). His public basis for justice is neutral and largely procedural, whereas the private is religiously, morally, and philosophically biased. Since all people could not endorse a given, private conception, he thinks people must reject them all for a neutral, public basis for the social contract.

Importantly, Rawls also embraces a version of epistemic coherentism. He tells us that "no one level, say that of abstract principle or that of particular judgments in particular cases, is viewed as foundational" (Rawls, 1993, p. 8, n. 8). He rejects epistemic foundationalism, on which some beliefs can be grounded in, and justified by, reality itself, and knowingly so. Instead, all beliefs are theory-laden. Since the metaphysical, religious, and moral views of the competing doctrines are justified by their internal coherence in their own webs of belief, people cannot appeal to them to arrive at epistemically neutral grounds for a social contract. In light of this, Rawls thinks that the competing doctrines can examine their principles, see which ones they happen to share in common (such as slavery is wrong), and then use that consensus to develop a thicker conception of the public good (Rawls, 1993, p. 8). But, Rawls eliminates attempts to have public, metaphysical discussions about the nature of justice. So, Rawls has rejected knowledge claims about the nature of reality regarding justice, as well as morality and the good life. That is, he has accepted the public-private distinction based upon the fact-value split.

Christine Korsgaard also takes a Rawlsian-Kantian approach to ethics. Yet, she ties this more explicitly to naturalism. For her, the scientific worldview accurately describes brute reality: "the world is not first and foremost form. It is matter... The real is no longer the good. For us, reality is something hard, something which resists reason and value, something which is recalcitrant to form" (Korsgaard, 1996, p. 4). Yet, there also exist things that humans construct, including morals. Since there are no intrinsic morals, value comes from the imposition of form onto the "world of matter" (Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 4-5). For her, "this is the ... work of obligation, and it brings us back to Kant... For it was Kant who completed the revolution, when he said that reason – which is form – isn't in the world, but is something we impose upon it" (Korsgaard, 1996, pp. 4-5). This "revolution" was the rejection of Plato and intrinsic moral properties, and the embrace of humans' construction of what is moral.

Thus far, the author has surveyed various historical, scientific, and philosophical factors that gave rise to naturalism, and how the current public-private split is motivated strongly by the deeply assumed fact-value split. But, is the fact-value split really valid? Does science uniquely give us knowledge, or can people also have knowledge in morality, religion, and even philosophy? If so, what are the practical implications that would ensue?

ASSESSING THE "FACT" SIDE OF THE SPLIT

Is it really true that the constituents of reality are basically just natural, or physical? One way to approach this question is by examining the ontological resources available in naturalism to enable people to know reality. Arguably, the neurophilosopher Daniel Dennett takes the implications of naturalism

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very consistently. By considering the implications of his views for knowledge of reality, it is possible to assess the prospects for knowledge on the basis of naturalism, and thus test the “fact” side of the split.

Dennett’s starting point is the “‘third-person point of view’ of science” (Dennett, 1994, p. 236). This stance considers the world of the physical sciences as objective and materialistic (Dennett, 1990, p. 5). For him, “philosophy is allied with, and indeed continuous with, the physical sciences” (Dennett, 1990, p. 5). While he is not attempting to establish first principles for this choice, he thinks it will lead to more fruitful discoveries and predictions than if one were to start elsewhere.

Dennett thinks brains are “syntactic engines,” which address and structure inputs, such as words and phrases, to make well-ordered sentences. Brains then “can mimic the competence of semantic engines,” which address the meanings of those inputs and sentences (Dennett, 1994, p. 237). Furthermore, “the only thing brains could do was to approximate the responsiveness to meanings that we presuppose in our everyday mentalistic discourse” (p. 237).

So, Dennett treats mental phenomena as beliefs, desires, thoughts, and experiences, and their mental content functionally. That is, there are no real such things; instead, “all attributions of content are founded on an appreciation of the functional roles of the items in question in the biological economy of the organism (or the engineering of the robot)” (Dennett, 1994, p. 239). Humans, robots, and chess-playing computers are intentional systems that should be understood by using a tactic, the intentional stance (IS). That is, he treats them as systems with mental content and real intentionality, which simply is the ofness, aboutness, or directedness of mental states. Using the IS, people interpret an entity by presupposing it is “an approximation of the ideal of an optimally designed (i.e. rational) self-regarding agent” (239).

There are no intrinsically mental states, but treating intentional systems as if they have them allows efficiency in predicting behavior. Consider how the Enterprise’s computer in Star Trek plays chess. When it functions as programmed, adopting the IS allows people to not have to know the details of its design or the physical composition of its parts. By treating it as a rational agent, even with beliefs about chess strategies and desires to win, people can predict the computer will make the best available move in a given context. And, while not giving certainty in predictions, the IS is quite useful.

Appealing to mental “stuff” involves making attributions and “interpretations of the phenomena,” which serve as a “heuristic overlay” (Dennett, 1994, p. 239). Still, for Dennett there exist real, objective patterns of physical forces which humans can detect and then interpret. However, these patterns (not to mention behavior) are not perfect, so there always will be gaps in interpretations. Dennett draws upon W.V.O. Quine’s indeterminacy of radical translation and applies it to subjects’ internal and external behavior (Dennett, 1990, p. 73). The reality of these “gaps” is important: it is “always possible in principle for rival intentional stance interpretations of those patterns to tie for first place, so that no further fact could settle what the intentional system in question really believed” (Dennett, 1990, p. 73).

Regarding the use of mentalistic terminology in interpretations of physical phenomena, Quine argued:

The problem is not one of hidden facts, such as might be uncovered by learning more about the brain physiology of thought processes. To expect a distinctive physical mechanism behind every genuinely distinct mental state is one thing; to expect a distinctive mechanism for every purported distinction that can be phrased in traditional mentalistic language is another. The question whether ... the foreigner really believes A or believes rather B, is a question whose very significance I would put in doubt. This is what I am getting at in arguing for the indeterminacy of translation. (Quine, 1970, pp. 180-81)

Indeed, it would not be sensible to translate the idioms and terms used in mentalistic discourse into that of the natural sciences without gaps.

But, there is a further reason why there always would be such gaps in interpretations. Dennett and Quine reject the reality of immaterial, essential natures; therefore, there are no intrinsic qualities (besides physical ones) in naturalism. As Dennett explains, “Quine’s thesis of the indeterminacy of radical translation is thus of a piece with his attack on essentialism; if things had real, intrinsic essences, they could have real, intrinsic meanings” (Dennett, 1990, p. 319, n. 8).

As a corollary, if there are real, intrinsic essences to intentional states, they really could be about something, and not something else. Additionally, if moral principles or virtues have real, intrinsic essences, then irreducibly moral properties could exist. Overall, if there are essences, there could be deeper facts, beyond just the physical, which give determinate answers to questions like, “What is he really trying to do?” “What does he mean in a passage?” or “What does he really believe?” But, since there are no essences, no “real, natural, universal ... semantic information” exists (Dennett, 1990, p. 208).

Dennett rejects the reality of intrinsic mental entities because there also is no single, unified “I” that processes all inputs and outputs. Instead of the brain operating like a central processing unit with its various inputs, “there is no place where ‘it all comes together’, no line the crossing of which is definitive of the end of pre-conscious processing and the beginning of conscious appreciation” (Dennett, 1994, p. 242). For him, mental entities that seem real and unique actually are the results of many distributed processings, which are interpretations of the phenomena.

Dennett’s naturalist views seem consistent. His starting point is in agreement with today’s orthodox, naturalistic science. Moreover, the IS is a powerful tool to predict behavior. Indeed, without essences, Dennett and Quine seem right about the indeterminacy of translation. Dennett also argues consistently that natural selection is a completely blind, unrepresenting process, for there is no real intentionality. Natural selection has no foresight, thought, or planning.

But, Dennett mentions that Samuel Wheeler has noticed important connections between Quine, Donald Davidson, and Jacques Derrida. For Derrida, everything is a text and in need of interpretation; nothing simply is given in conscious awareness. Approvingly, Dennett cites Wheeler: “For Quinians, of course, it is obvious already that speech and thought are brain-writing, some kind of tokenings which are as much subject to interpretation as any other” (Wheeler, 1986, p. 492, quoted in Dennett, 1990, p. 40, n. 2).

Since there are no real essences given naturalism, there are no intrinsically mental features in reality, including any intrinsic representations, such as intentionality. But since natural selection is a blind process, there are no real representations. Yet, Dennett seems to presuppose that feature when he assumes that people can attribute intentional qualities to humans and make predictions, for then they are forming interpretations, which themselves are about those humans’ behavior.

More importantly, as noted above, without essences, there are no deeper facts which would give determinate answers to questions like, “What is the person really trying to do?” or “What does the author mean?” Without essences, what thoughts, beliefs, intentions, and observations are about always will be indeterminate and solely a matter of interpretation.

But even the so-called “brute facts” of the natural world, as described by scientific naturalism, would be nothing but interpretations, for they too would lack any deeper facts. Indeed, for Dennett and naturalism, everything is a matter of interpretation, and not just mental, religious, or moral qualities. But, to begin a series of interpretations requires that people’s mental states have essences, and that they can access something with determinate qualities too. Otherwise, people cannot begin to make interpretations, or

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even observations. Indeed, without essences, people are left with a “reality” that is indeterminate (i.e., without any specifiable qualities).

However, there are many things people do in fact know from science. To mention but two, neuroscientists have discovered that selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors target the neurochemistry associated with depression. They also know that proton therapy can be an effective form of treatment for some cancers. So, science can give us knowledge.

Nevertheless, if naturalism is true, then no knowledge, including scientific, would be possible. This finding has serious implications: the “fact” side of the fact-value split is deeply mistaken. Due to naturalism’s ontology, people simply could not have any knowledge. Yet, humans do have knowledge; therefore, naturalism is false.

What then is needed for knowledge? For one, it seems peoples’ mental states must have real intentionality. People can notice this if they pay attention to what is before their minds in conscious awareness. For instance, consider a thought about the movie, *The Matrix*. Notice that it is about that movie. Moreover, that thought could not be the thought that is and be about something else; it seems to have its intentionality intrinsically, or essentially. A thought about *The Matrix* could not be about vanilla ice cream and still be the same thought; instead, that latter one would be a different thought. Nor does it seem that beliefs, desires, or experiences used to make observations in science could be either. Contrary to Dennett, these states seem to have an essence, a “deeper fact” that makes them what they are, and not something else.

These mental states all seem to have intentionality, and they have it as part of their nature – as part of what defines them as the kind of thing that they are. To test this, try having a thought that is not about anything. But that seems impossible. Still, some might object that intentionality is just a causal correlation between two physical states, and not something non-physical after all. In such a case, there would have to be two things that are causally related, such as an apple that causes an experience in someone, and that experience then can be explained as a brain state. While there is a causal story to be told with sense perception, nonetheless this causal explanation treats intentionality as a relation between two things that must exist. Otherwise, no relation would obtain. But, people can think about things that do not obtain in reality, like Pegasus, or the present-day king of France. So, intentionality cannot be reduced to just a causal relation.

So, mental states and their intentionality seem to have essences. This alone is highly significant, for it means that immaterial entities with essential natures exist, something that naturalism cannot countenance, and today’s orthodox scientists, using only empirical methods, cannot know. And yet, it seems humans can know these things to be real.

But, their existence might have more implications. If people pay attention to the features of their mental lives, they can become aware that people are not just a bundle of thoughts, beliefs, experiences, physical parts, and so on. Rather, they have, or own, these things. So, consider (roughly) how scientists approach their work. Often guided by a theory, they propose different studies to help confirm a hypothesis. The theory is made up of concepts (which themselves have intentionality), which can be before the mind in conscious thought. Experiments make possible certain observations, which then need to be categorized, interpreted, and then used to help confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis. These states may need to be brought before the mind over long periods of time, depending on the length of the study. Then the results and their interpretations can be compared with predicted results (held in thoughts), to help assess the hypothesis.

This potentially lengthy process requires a few features. First, people do not experience in conscious awareness just a series of mental states; rather, they can pay attention and notice that these states are owned by a person. Second, to hold these states before the mind, even over discontinuous periods of time, and reflect on them requires a unity to, and identity of, the person. But on naturalism, there is no room beyond the various physical parts and properties for something else to own and unify them, much less constitute the same person through time and change. For on naturalism, there are no essential properties or capacities that must remain the same through time and change, so there is not literally the same person that persists throughout its existence. Indeed, on modern scientific theory, human persons are bundles of physical stuff that constantly change. So, mere aggregates of physical stuff cannot suffice for maintaining one's personal identity.

This is in part why Aristotle appealed to a literal, immaterial human essence, which he called the soul (or, principle of life). For him, the soul is a primary individuated human substance that shares a universal essential to all humans, humanness. Also, the soul is the set of a human's ultimate and essential capacities and properties. Those capacities (such as for bodily development, rationality, and being virtuous) can be developed, if the proper conditions are present, but the capacities for them cannot be lost. Moreover, the soul owns and unifies all of a human's parts and properties, immaterial and material.

Consider also the evidences given so far for the existence of real, irreducible mental states and their intentionality. From persons' abilities to introspectively become aware that they own and use these states, it seems that these states could not be owned nor "had by" the brain itself. Why? If it did, naturalists would face the interaction objection, which they have raised often against dualists. How could two entities consisting of radically different kinds of "stuff" interact with each other? So, even if naturalists were to allow for the emergence of irreducibly mental states from the brain, that would not permit their interaction. Instead, it seems an immaterial essence is needed to own, unify, and use these mental states. That does not mean that the brain plays no role; as embodied beings, proper brain functioning seems necessary for proper mental functioning. But that alone does not mean the mind is nothing but the brain; rather, the mind seems to use the brain for people to think, experience, know, etc.

Instead of naturalism, it seems a very different ontology is needed for humans to have knowledge. It is beyond the scope of this essay to specify a formulation. Nevertheless, that ontology seems to require both physical stuff and immaterial entities, including essences.

ASSESSING THE "VALUE" SIDE OF THE SPLIT

Importantly, so far the author has argued that it seems there is more to what is real than is sense perceptible. While not a long list, nonetheless it seems real immaterial things exist, and humans can know them. Thus, all knowledge does not come by the five senses.

Perhaps, then, more such things exist and are knowable, including in ethics. Consider two core moral principles: murder and rape clearly seem to be wrong. Consider also two moral virtues: justice and love clearly seem to be good. For much of the history of ethics, at least in the west, these morals have been thought to be objectively valid—these claims are true independently of any human's accepting them. Moreover, many have thought they are objectively real; they exist independently of any human's believing they are real. Though there were exceptions, there was a large consensus, including the biblical authors; Plato and Aristotle; Augustine; the Islamic, Jewish, and Catholic scholars of the Middle Ages; and

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Reformers such as Luther and Calvin who thought that these morals are objectively real, transcendent, immaterial, and universal (R. Smith, 2014, p. 107).

But after the Reformation, significant shifts began to take place. Consider these major theories. As an empiricist, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) shifted away from a view of humans as a body-soul duality to a view of them as mechanisms. He also conceived of goodness and badness as motions toward or away, respectively, from something. He also embraced rationalism in his theory of the social contract. But, a rapist or murderer moves toward their victims. So, why then would these be wrong? Also, motions can be exhausted descriptively, but morality is prescriptive. So, Hobbes's views seem to do violence to, and cannot account for, these core morals.

For Hume (1738), morality is a matter of sentiments, not reason. Statements like "murder is wrong" or "love is good" are just expressions of feelings. However, "murder is wrong" is not just a descriptive claim of how one feels. It has a normative dimension, without which it seems to lose its very moral quality. Additionally, if feelings change, so could the morality of murder or love. But, these results do not seem to do justice to these morals.

Kant, as we have already seen, held that there are universal morals. But, he seems to beg the question as to the nature of morals as categorical imperatives, due to his conception of them. But why is he right, and not Hume or others? His assignment of morals to the noumenal realm also is due to this starting point. But if that assumption is not justified, why should people accept that these four core morals are absolutes?

Later, on Jeremy Bentham's (1748-1832) utilitarianism, what is right is just a matter of how the consequences add up. There is nothing intrinsically right or wrong. John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) added a qualitative dimension, holding that people should do the act that maximizes the greatest good for the greatest number (Mill, 1867, pp. 16-17). But, murder's or rape's wrongness could turn out otherwise and even be obligatory. Also, who gets to define what are "good" and "bad" consequences, and on what basis?

On naturalism, these core morals face serious problems. First, like with Hobbes, morals lose their normative aspect. Second, if morality as objective is just an illusion of humans' genes (Ruse, 2002), then murder's being wrong could have turned out otherwise. Humans could have evolved otherwise, such that justice and love do not even exist. Third, against attempts to operationalize morals, consider counter-examples of what most people prefer, such as racial discrimination in the southern United States in the 1950s and 60s. A moral reformer like Martin Luther King, Jr. would have been immoral. But such a deeply, counter-intuitive result should show us that this view is deeply mistaken.

On moral relativism, if someone (or social group) accepts a moral as right/good, that acceptance makes that moral valid for them (Pojman, 2002, pp. 39-40). But, then, there would not be a real moral difference between Hitler, Stalin, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, or Jesus. Each would have been moral if that person was true to his or her own moral code. But surely that is false. Also, civil disobedience would be immoral because it requires protesting a society's self-justified morals. But that undermines the justice of the causes of reformers like King. And, if relativism is true, the moral status of murder and rape could have been different. But that goes against peoples' intuitive, deeply-held convictions.

Now, there could be culturally different applications of common moral principles (Pojman, 2002, p. 45). The Sawi invited neighboring tribes for dinner. Afterwards, once their guests were tired, the Sawi slaughtered and ate them. They did not see their action as murder; for them, treachery toward other tribes is virtuous (Richardson, 1975). But, suppose a Sawi male kills by stealth his male neighbor, so as to get his wife. This author highly suspects other Sawi would hold that man accountable, and outsiders would see that the Sawi agree that murder is wrong.

Finally, on postmodern approaches to ethics, there is no direct access to anything in reality, just like Derrida thought; everything is interpretation. What is understood to be real (even morally) is deeply dependent upon the language and formative story of a given community (e.g., Christian, Muslim, secularist, etc.). Now, suppose people change how they talk in a culture, such that murder no longer is wrong on their formative story. While that may change how those people tend to not interpret certain actions as cases of murder, it does not seem that really can change murder from being wrong. Or, if justice is good because it is part of a group's narrative, it is conceivable that people could find a story in which justice is denied as a virtue. Could that invalidate justice as good? If it could, it would seem that people could not hold others accountable for their actions if they make such a claim.

In summary, these proposed alternatives to what kind of thing morals are metaphysically do incredible violence to these core morals. As an inference to the best explanation, metaphysically, these core morals seem to be:

1. Objectively real (they exist mind-independently of humans);
2. Intrinsically right (or good) – they have an essence to them; and
3. One kind of thing, and yet also with many instances – that is, they are universals.

These findings seem to leave us with two main options: first, they are Platonic kinds of entities (forms) that exist as brute, immaterial features of reality. While that view can meet these three criteria, nonetheless, we have no requirement to follow them. Furthermore, if people violate these morals, why do they often have a sense of shame? That does not make much (if any) sense, if they are in the “presence” of an abstract entity.

Perhaps this argument can be augmented by appealing to people's many experiences of evil. Though some religious people may consider examples of evil to be illusions, it is hard existentially to escape evil's effects. It seems people readily can recognize examples of evil when they encounter them, such as the rape of Nanking, the slaughter of Jews by the Nazis, the rape of a loved one, or the death of a child due to cancer. But it is much harder to define what kind of thing evil is. Still, intuitively, evil seems to be the way things are not supposed to be. That understanding fits with Augustine's, who thought of evil metaphysically as being the privation of good (Augustine, 1961/1996, ch. 11). Thus, evil presupposes goodness.

What then is the best explanation for this standard of goodness? While the other moral theories all seem to fail to do justice to the intrinsic rightness/goodness of these core morals, it seems the best explanation that has been offered is that they are grounded in God's character, as was thought by many even through the Middle Ages. But to be good, God has to be love – if God were not essentially loving, then God would not be truly good. Likewise, if God were not just, God would not be truly good. So, it seems people can infer that God, as the ground of goodness, is the standard for love and justice, too. The same argument could be used for other qualities that humans clearly know are good. Taken together, these qualities help point us to which God may be the best explanation for the basis of goodness.

Notice that these factors are things people can seem to know by using rational arguments, and not by mere, blind “faith.” There are some core morals that people seem to know to be valid. It also seems people can know that these are grounded in God (R. Smith, 2014, pp. 312-26). These lines of evidence, together with the ones the author developed in the previous section for the reality of various immaterial entities, strongly suggest that the fact-value split is false.

SEVERAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SPLIT'S DEMISE

The implications of these arguments are sweeping for societies that have been influenced significantly by the fact-value split. In particular, the implications for religious practice are vast, and they can be considered under two main rubrics: public policy, and religious practices themselves.

Public Policy

For public policy, the predominant understanding of the separation of church and state is fallacious. There is no *a priori* reason why religiously-based views should not participate in the public square, using rational argumentation to persuade people of their views. It bears repeating: religious views are not intrinsically non-rational, or irrational. They should, however, offer rational appeals, to give others reasons why they too should accept as true those beliefs. Nor is there any reason *a priori* why the state should not adopt a religiously-based view on some policy matter as its own. The goal should be to accept the basis for policy good, rationally justified beliefs about some matter. It simply is false that a state must accept only “neutral” reasons for a given policy position, especially since, at best, secular, naturalistic thought is just another interpretation, and is not neutral.

So, there are many applications to public matters, such as in applied ethics. There is not a good reason *a priori* that the state must adopt a physicalist view of humans from today’s scientific orthodoxy. Furthermore, views that maintain that humans are a unity of a physical body and a non-physical soul should not be bracketed by default from consideration for policy making, since they appeal to an immaterial entity on the basis of philosophical or religious views.

This discussion has immediate applications to beginning and end-of-life issues. With abortion, it seems by default secular appeals to the mother’s autonomy and definitions of human persons trump religiously-inspired views. For Peter Singer, for example, there is a distinction between a human and a person. Biologically, all humans are members of the same species. But, for him, it seems illogical and speciesist that humans deserve moral protection simply due to their species membership. Instead, persons are subjects of moral protection and rights because they have self-consciousness, a life plan that a person considers valuable and therefore is worth living, and/or autonomy (Singer, 1993, pp. 88-109).

Similarly, end-of-life issues also surface the basis for the moral worth of humans. Following James Rachels, humans do not have moral worth on the basis of just their biology. But, they can have worth based on their biographical life, i.e., a set of life plans and ambitions that individuals consider to make their lives worth living (Rachels, 1986, ch. 2). Clearly, biographical life is a personal construct which gives one’s life moral value, even dignity. If someone possesses biographical life, then others may be obligated to abide by the principles of justice, nonmaleficence, autonomy, and beneficence toward that human. But if people do not count themselves as having biographical life, then those people can, and perhaps even should, be assisted in ending their lives.

However, the author already has argued there are reasons to reject naturalism and naturalistic morality. Instead, intrinsic moral properties seem to be immaterial and universal. But views that support morals as such also ground those qualities in a substance, such as the soul, which can account for humans being not only intrinsically worthy of moral protection, but also persons (Moreland & Rae, 2000, pp.17-48). Many who hold religious views, such as Christianity, have argued precisely along such lines for the protection of the unborn and terminally ill patients (Moreland & Rae, 2000, pp. 231-62).

Other implications involve government funding for scientific research programs, such as transhumanist and embryonic stem cells studies. There is no basis to discriminate *a priori* against funding for religiously or philosophically-informed scientific research proposals, for the fact-value split is mistaken. Instead, all research proposals need to be considered on the basis of their own rational merits and projected benefits.

Still, some may object that this argument presupposes that people can gain a neutral vantage point and adjudicate between competing, conceptual frameworks. But, humans always work from the standpoint of their frameworks, and they cannot take off their “lenses” by which they interpret reality. But this objection is mistaken. If there is no direct access to reality, to things as they really are, then they always are working with their interpretations. Worse, there is no way to get started and know anything. Nonetheless, paradigms still are important; they are helpful in guiding research and interpreting reality. In terms of situatedness, they function as habituated ways of paying attention (or inattention) that people have cultivated. But that does not mean that people cannot modify their habits to pay attention to other things (Moreland, 2006).

With public education, there is no *a priori* reason to withhold funding from religiously-based institutions. They can be assessed in terms of how well they meet their stated learning outcomes and prepare graduates for life after college, and by established criteria of discipline-specific accrediting bodies. Moreover, there is no *a priori* reason to bracket the study of religions to just sociological and historical matters. Rather, each religion’s views should be presented on its own merits and assessed by the best evidence available, including the foregoing kinds, but not limited to them. Philosophical, scientific, and other kinds of reasoning can be brought to bear, to see to what extent (if any) a particular religion’s claims are justified.

Religious Practices Themselves

What are some implications for religious practices? Since there are many different religions, and even differing groups within major religions, it becomes challenging to speak generally of religious practice *per se*, rather than specifically. But, it is important that religions are not defined by the fact-value split’s categories. Rather, they need to make their own cases for themselves, “competing” for adherents in the “marketplace” of ideas and truth-claims.

However, not all religions focus upon being true, in terms of a correspondence with reality, whether historically, ontologically, epistemologically, morally, scientifically, or otherwise. And, at least in the United States, there also can be a strong, pragmatic emphasis to religion. Nevertheless, even those religions that do not focus upon giving people knowledge of reality still make truth claims which can be assessed.

A typical way to help assess truth-claims is on the basis of internal and external problems for a view. Internal ones arise from the religion’s own criteria. For instance, is it internally consistent? Or, does it violate the law of identity or non-contradiction (perhaps while denying “western” logic, yet presupposing it)?

External problems can be conceptual questions from a different discipline, such as science, ontology, epistemology, morality, etc. For example, ontologically, suppose a view denies that there is anything about a human being that remains the same through change. Instead, a human is just a bundle of properties at any given time. But any time there is a change, even morally or spiritually, there is not a continuity of person; rather, a new person came to be, for the bundle of properties has changed. The first person perished. If so, how could a person grow morally and spiritually on such a view? So, good, well-justified

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philosophical principles (such as the law of identity) can be used to challenge religious (and scientific, historical, and other) claims (Yandell, 1999, chs. 8-13).

But, external problems also can challenge truth claims, such as about a religion's historical claims. For instance, many have challenged the Christian Scriptures' claims Jesus was dead and buried, but arose bodily on the third day thereafter. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, Christianity is false.

Moreover, the major monotheistic religions (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism) do compete on the basis of truth claims about reality. In addition to examining internal and external conceptual challenges, what should their adherents do, especially given the nature of this essay? First, in general, religious groups need to teach their people how to think well, including how to think carefully about the knowledge claims of various religions, including one's own.

Second, they need to teach their people to think rationally about at least four key extensions of the fact-value split. First is the proper relationship between science and religious teaching. Religious views should be advanced and defended, but then tested along the lines of their internal and external problems. Which view (including non-religious) has the greatest explanatory power, internal coherence, and best matches up with reality?

Third, these religions' leaders need to help their people think carefully about moral relativism (MR), especially in light of their claims about moral truths. On MR, people should be tolerant of each other's moral views because they are just opinions and constructs, and there are no universally valid moral truths. But, as argued above, MR is mistaken. Moreover, suppose some people do not accept the value of tolerance. On MR, there is no reason why they should be tolerant. Thus, MR is a poor justification for tolerance.

Related, leaders need to help their people think through the premises and conclusions of religious pluralism (RP). On RP, there is no objective truth to be known about the various religious claims. Following Kant's epistemology, John Hick claims there just are various perceptions of religious reality (the "Real"), which inevitably are filtered by people's conceptual frameworks (Hick, 1996, pp. 46-51). The religions are just their responses to their perceptions of the Real, and there is no objective vantage point from which they can know the religious facts of the matter.

However, the author has argued that people can have direct access to reality, so people need to test religious claims by examining them carefully. Religious leaders need to help educate their people to see at least that Hick's own claim, that humans cannot access religious reality directly, but only as they interpret it, results in an infinite regress of interpretations, without a way to start.

Fourth, leaders need to teach their followers about the reality of the immaterial in order to help counteract the effects of the split. This does not mean that every claim they make is valid; they need to be tested. Still, they need to help their people realize that there are immaterial, non-physical aspects to reality.

Fifth, religious instruction can counter naturalism's influences by arguing for the intrinsic value of humans. On naturalism, there is no such value for humans, and there is not any real value other than what they construct. But if some people are not considered valuable by those in powerful positions, they can be treated mainly as means to an end, even such that they are encouraged to commit suicide and not burden society, or even be eliminated. Or, if people do not see themselves as valuable, on a naturalistic view it can become relatively easy to resort to suicide. But merely teaching that according to a particular religion that humans are intrinsically valuable will not suffice; such views will need to be supported with good reasons so that people can accept that claim as true.

As an additional, specific implication, consider the case of conservative, evangelical churches in areas deeply influenced by the fact-value split. Not only do leaders need to teach their people about the corrosive effects of the split, they also need to illuminate how historically, Christians (particularly in the United States) embraced naturalistic ideas which helped pave the way for the reception of naturalism in the academy. Following a mechanistic view of human beings, those earlier Christians adopted views of how people should live as Christians that were naturalistic in that they treated God as basically irrelevant (Marsden, 1991, p. 130). And, those kinds of views have been passed on to their heirs today. For instance, evangelicals often can practice “discipleship” methods that basically involve the right “inputs” that yield the right “outputs” – which uses a very modern, functionalist view of humans and their spiritual growth. They can engage in certain practices (worshipping, witnessing, giving, serving, etc.) without truly needing to live what they preach – that apart from the living God, they can do nothing in their own abilities (John 15:5). This mindset basically is preternatural; if they are to live consistently with what they preach and teach, they need to examine carefully how deeply their views of the “normal” Christian life have been naturalized. Of course, that alone would not guarantee the truth of their many supernatural claims. But, if they are true, then according to their own criteria (e.g., Acts 1:8), this change would help prepare them to live supernatural lives, ones dependent upon the manifest power and presence of God.

Surely there are many more implications of the demise of the fact-value split for religious practice, but these aspects for public policy and private practice could have major effects. And, it seems that even the public-private distinction itself (as now conceived) should collapse.

CONCLUSION

Even so, practically speaking, many religious practitioners and organizations will not be prepared for the major changes for which this author has argued. That is, they have been conditioned to practice their respective religions in light of the influences of the fact-value split. But if the author’s argument is sound, then these people will need to prepare to give reasons to others why they too should believe a given religion’s claims and embrace its practices. Moreover, people in leadership positions in secular society (e.g., in government and public education) will have to engage in argument why their views should be preferred over religiously informed ones. Indeed, it would be a new day for religion and religious practice in these societies.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Empiricism: The view that all knowledge comes by way of the five senses.

Essential Nature: The immaterial quality (or qualities) that define something as the kind of thing it is.

Fact-Value Split: The view that the empirical sciences give us knowledge of the facts, whereas religion and ethics give us opinions, preferences, and opinions.

Intentionality: The ofness or aboutness of people’s observations, thoughts, beliefs, etc.

Knowledge: Justified true belief.

Methodological Naturalism: A method for doing science by bracketing any supernatural, immaterial causes.

Naturalism: The view that only the natural (usually understood as the physical) exists; there is nothing supernatural or immaterial.