

Lotteries, Our Epistemic Goal, and Theories of Justification

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0. Introduction

In a recent paper, Igor Douven mounts an argument in favor of a class of solutions to Kyburg's Lottery Paradox.¹ In this paper, I shall present and evaluate this argument. Douven makes use of the theoretical assumption, current in epistemological literature, that there is a unique epistemic goal of true belief. Accordingly, I shall examine this assumption.

In what follows, I shall present a number of difficulties for the argument. I argue that Douven's argument either equivocates or requires a tacit, and undefended, premise. I shall further argue that accepting Douven's argument carries a dialectically inappropriate commitment to some form of doxastic voluntarism. If I am right, then Douven's argument gives us a reason seriously to reconsider the theoretical assumption of a unique epistemic goal of true belief.

1. Preliminaries

Before considering Douven's argument some stage setting is required. Douven employs several principles and technical terms. In this section I shall identify these and make them clear.

1.1 The Lottery Paradox

Douven invites us to

Suppose you own a ticket in what you know to be a fair lottery with one winner. Given the total number of tickets in the lottery, it is highly unlikely that yours is the winner. Does that justify you in believing that your ticket will lose? If it does, then it seems you are equally justified in believing of each of the other tickets that it will lose, since all tickets have the same high probability of losing. But by implication that would seem to justify you in believing that all the tickets will lose, contradicting your knowledge that the lottery has a winner.²

The above is supposed to strike us as paradoxical.³ Suppose the lottery has 20 million tickets. Apparently, we must deny one of:

- (1) One is justified in believing of one's ticket (t_1) that it will lose.
- (2) If one is justified in believing of one's ticket that it will lose, then one is justified in believing of each ticket that it will lose.
- (3) One is justified in believing that one ticket will win.
- (4) If one is justified in believing of each ticket it will lose and that one will win, then one is justified in believing that t_1 will lose, and t_2 will lose and t_3 will lose and... $t_{20,000,000}$ will lose, and one ticket will win.
- (5) One is not justified in believing a proposition one recognizes is inconsistent.

(3) is stipulated. (5) looks unassailable. Perhaps one can be justified in believing some proposition one doesn't know is inconsistent. It seems odd, though, to say that one can be justified in believing a proposition one realizes is inconsistent. Denying (4) would

amount to denying that justified belief is closed under conjunction. Douven thinks that “abandoning closure is not a viable option.”⁴ Suppose he is right to think the results of denying closure are too unpalatable. Denying (4), then, is not an option.

This leaves us with a choice: deny (1) or deny (2). Douven suggests that denying (2) is more conducive to our epistemic goal than denying (1), so we should deny (2).

1.2 NJ-solutions, NJ-accounts

Douven calls denials of (1) NJ-solutions.⁵ Some theories of epistemic justification are more amenable to an NJ-solution than others. Take, for example, a theory on which a belief’s being justified is that belief’s having a high probability of being true. Given a sufficiently large lottery, the belief that one’s ticket will lose has a high probability of being true. So, such a theory would not be consistent with denying (1) without some clause ruling out justified beliefs in lottery cases.

Douven calls theories of justification that “afford” an NJ-solution ‘NJ-accounts’.⁶ It is not apparent what he means by a theory’s affording an NJ-solution. Two natural suggestions are

Entailment: theory T affords an NJ-solution iff T entails that (1) is false.

Consistency: theory T affords an NJ-solution iff T does not entail that (1) is true.

Consistency seems a more natural interpretation of what Douven means by ‘afford’ in this context. I shall interpret him accordingly in what follows.⁷

1.3 Our Epistemic Goal

Douven assumes that we have a goal of true belief captured by one of:

(G1) We ought to aim at ‘[amassing] a large body of beliefs with a favorable truth-falsity ratio’.

(G2) We ought to aim ‘at both believing only what is true and at believing all that is true.’

Douven further assumes that our epistemic goal is unique in the following sense. According to Douven, claiming that either (G1) or (G2) capture a unique epistemic goal “is not to suggest that it cannot make sense to call anything besides (G1) and (G2) an epistemic goal, but only that there is one overarching goal, which subsumes whatever else could reasonably be called an epistemic goal.”⁸

There are a number of reasons to worry about positing such a goal. One might worry that having true beliefs isn’t a *goal* of ours. One might wonder whether talk of *epistemic* goals makes good sense. One might think that, given that such talk does make sense, neither (G1) nor (G2) capture an epistemic goal of ours. Or, one might think that there are epistemic goals more important than (G1) or (G2). I shall take up such worries later; for the moment it suffices to observe that Douven’s argument turns on taking one of (G1) or (G2) to be our unique epistemic goal.⁹

1.4 Adopting an Account

Throughout his paper, Douven uses ‘theory of justification’ interchangeably with ‘account of justification’. I shall follow his usage here. Douven introduces a technical sense of ‘adopting an account’ of justification. He says, “[b]y ‘adopting an account of justification’ I mean adopting the account as a policy of belief management, that is, as providing the criteria to determine what to believe and what not.” It is not apparent what Douven means here. What does it mean to take a theory of justification as providing the criteria to determine what to believe? If I adopt an account do I believe just what the theory *entails* I’m justified in believing? Do I believe the *negations* of the things the theory entails I’m not justified in believing? Or do I merely suspend belief or disbelief when the theory entails I’m not justified? This is not clear.

Douven talks elsewhere of theories of justification ‘allowing’ one to have certain beliefs.¹⁰ Given this usage, it seems natural to interpret Douven as introducing a term with the following sense:

S adopts an account of justification *T* iff in making up her mind whether *p*, if it is consistent with *T* that *S* is justified in believing that *p*, then *S* believes that *p* and if it is inconsistent with *T* that *S* is justified in believing that *p*, then *S* does not believe that *p*.¹¹

This might strike one as odd. For T_1 might be silent with respect to some proposition q . In that case, a belief that q is consistent with T_1 and a belief that not- q is consistent with T_1 . So, if S adopts T_1 , then when making up her mind as to whether q , she should believe q and she should believe not- q . This can't be right.

Reasonable constraints on an acceptable theory of justification, however, rule out a theory like T_1 as adequate. We shall now turn to those constraints.

1.5 Constraints on an Acceptable Account of Justification

We have seen that Douven thinks justified belief is closed under conjunction. If he is right about this, then closure imposes a constraint on theories of justification as follows:

Closure Constraint: an account of justification T is adequate only if, on T , justified belief is closed under conjunction.

Since Douven apparently does not advocate a denial of (5), it is reasonable to attribute to him the following constraint:

Consistency Constraint: an account of justification T is adequate only if, were S to adopt T , S would not be justified in believing propositions S realizes are inconsistent.

The above theory T_1 does not meet these constraints, and is therefore inadequate.

Douven introduces a further constraint based on the uniqueness of the goal of true belief:

Epistemic Goal Constraint: an account of justification T is adequate only if, were S to adopt T , then S would have mostly true beliefs.¹²

These principles provide the minimum requirements an adequate theory of justification must meet.

2. The Argument

We are now in a position to state Douven's argument. Some theories that meet the above constraints are better than others that meet them. How are we to decide which theories to prefer? When two theories are otherwise alike, Douven claims, we ought to prefer the one that best serves the truth goal. The following principle, Douven claims, should guide our theory choice:

(C^{ep}): If theories of justification J' and J'' are in all relevant respects alike except that J' is more conducive to the realization of our epistemic goal than J'' , then J' is to be preferred to J'' .¹³

Take the case of a 20 million ticket lottery. Let J_1 be some NJ-account. Douven argues that we can modify J_1 in such a way that, given such a lottery, one is justified in believing of every ticket but one that it is a loser and of the remaining ticket that it will win. Call the resulting theory J_1^* . Adopting J_1^* allows one to reap more epistemic goods, i.e. true beliefs, than does adopting J_1 . So, Douven concludes, J_1^* is preferable to J_1 . Since we haven't assumed anything about J_1 other than that it's an NJ-account, it follows that for any NJ-account there's a 'starred' account that (i) offers a non NJ-solution to the lottery paradox and (ii) is to be preferred to the NJ-account.¹⁴

Supposing ' J_1 ' names some arbitrarily chosen NJ-account, the argument is schematically as follows:

- (6) There is a theory J_1^* just like J_1 in all relevant respects except that it is consistent with J_1^* that S is justified in believing of every ticket but one that it will lose.
- (7) If (6), then J_1^* is more conducive to the realization of our epistemic goal than J_1 .
- (8) J_1^* is more conducive to the realization of our epistemic goal than J_1 .
- (9) If J_1^* is more conducive to the realization of our epistemic goal than J_1 , then, all else being equal, J_1^* is to be preferred to J_1 .
- (10) J_1^* is to be preferred to J_1 .
- (11) J_1^* provides a non-NJ solution to the lottery paradox.
- (12) For any NJ-account there is a preferable non-NJ account that provides a solution to the Lottery Paradox.

(12) follows from universal generalization. Since J_1^* affords an account that is not consistent with a denial of (1), it looks like J_1^* provides a non-NJ solution the lottery paradox, so (11) is true. (10) follows from *modus ponens*. (9) is an instance of Douven's principle (C^{cp}) which he takes to be "incontrovertible".¹⁵ (8) follows by *modus ponens*. (7) looks plausible given that S 's adopting J_1^* apparently results in a better truth ratio than her adopting J_1 . Since we are supposing that the only difference between J_1 and J_1^* is the addition of a clause permitting lottery beliefs in sufficiently large lottery cases, (6) looks plausible.

Douven does not take this argument to be decisive against NJ-accounts. Rather, it "pose[s] a clear challenge to the advocates of the NJ-accounts to proffer reasons for believing that their accounts are preferable" to the 'starred' accounts.¹⁶

Douven seems to think the likeliest NJ-theoretic reply is to deny (6). Douven suggests several ways one might reject (6) on the grounds that there is a relevant difference between J_1 and J_1^* . He rejects these suggestions. Below, I shall suggest a reply along different lines.

3. The Threat of Equivocation

Suppose that C^{cp} is true. All things being equal, we should prefer theories more conducive to our epistemic goal. According to Douven, saying that T is more conducive to our epistemic goal than T^* means that by adopting T we stand a better chance of realizing the epistemic goal than by adopting T^* .¹⁷ What is not clear, however, is the

sense in which we should *prefer* theories that perform better with respect to our epistemic goal. Douven is aware that “it seems at least conceptually possible to adopt an account” of justification in his sense “while not adopting it in the sense that one accepts it as the correct account of justification and vice versa”.¹⁸ Let us call the latter sense ‘accepting’ an account. It is not clear whether by ‘preferable’ Douven means:

Practical Sense: a theory of justification T is preferable to a theory of justification T^* iff (all things being equal) we should adopt T rather than T^* .

or

Theoretical Sense: a theory of justification T is preferable to a theory of justification T^* iff (all things being equal) we should accept T rather than T^* .

If we have a unique goal of true belief, then (C^{cp}) looks most plausible when ‘preferable’ is meant in the Practical Sense. After all, to adopt a theory that better served our goal would be in our interests, so we should, all things being equal, adopt it. It is not clear that (C^{cp}) is true if ‘preferable’ is meant in the Theoretical Sense. Since adopting a theory and accepting it come apart conceptually, we need some argument to show why one theory’s being more adoptable with respect to the truth goal should count towards that theory’s being more acceptable.

So what? Why should it matter if (C^{cp}) is false in the theoretical sense? I take it that Douven's argument loses some of its dialectical force if 'preferable' in (12) is given the Practical Sense. Why should NJ-theorists regard the argument as posing a "challenge" to their views? People should adopt, perhaps, a non-NJ theory. This doesn't mean that a non-NJ theory is likelier to be *true*. If the argument is to have any weight in theory selection, then 'preferable' in (12) must be given the Theoretical Sense. But, if we suppose that 'preferable' in (12) is given the Theoretical Sense, then it looks like the argument equivocates. For (C^{cp}) is most plausibly understood as employing the Practical Sense.

There appears, then, to be a missing premise. Such a premise would provide a link between a theory's adoptability with respect to the truth goal and that theory's acceptability. Such a premise might look like the following:

P: If we should adopt a theory T rather than T^* in light of the truth goal,
then (other things being equal) we should accept T rather than T^* .

Perhaps Douven has something like P in mind in order to fill the gap between adoptability and acceptability.¹⁹ If this is the case, then, his argument is acceptable only if something like P can be defended. What sort of argument might one give for P? Many believe that a goal of true belief is central to accounts of justification. If this is the case, then it might seem to follow that if adopting an account would yield more true beliefs (or a better truth-falsity ratio), then we ought to accept that theory.

Such an argument would apparently require the claim that the truth goal is unique in the sense that Douven maintains. For if there is an epistemic goal, g_i , that can trump the truth goal, then some theory T might be more acceptable than some theory T^* in light of T 's being more adoptable with respect to g_i than T^* . Is there such a goal? It might be argued that we have an epistemic goal of being rational.²⁰ What it is rational to believe and what is true sometimes come apart. If there is such an epistemic goal, it might compete in some circumstances with the truth goal. Some theory might be more acceptable in light of rendering those who adopt it more rational than those who adopt some competing theory.

What reasons apart from an epistemic goal of being rational are there to reject the claim to a unique truth goal? One might reject this claim on the grounds that talk of an epistemic goal of true belief is somehow unintelligible. It seems there are two routes to take here. One might say that it makes no sense to say true belief is a *goal* of ours, or one might say that it makes no sense to call such a goal an *epistemic* goal. Let's start with the former. I can make sense out of what it means to say that I have certain goals: writing a good paper, losing some weight, earning more money, etc. Believing the truth will help me to achieve those goals. But in what sense is believing the truth a goal of mine? Perhaps I only want the truth so I can fulfill my practical aims.²¹

To take the latter: I can make sense out of calling a goal practical or moral, but what does it mean to call a goal epistemic? If there is no meaningful sense in which the goal is an *epistemic* goal (rather than a practical goal or some other kind of goal), what reason do we have to think that the goal is unique? It seems we have many goals. Why take a goal of true belief to be the most important of these?

Supposing talk of an epistemic goal of true belief makes sense, another reason one might give for rejecting the uniqueness claim is that a goal of true belief is insufficient for explaining the way we acquire and modify our beliefs. If it turns out that positing a unique goal of true belief is not sufficient for explaining why we seek justification or how we conduct our epistemic lives, then perhaps the truth goal is not an overarching epistemic goal. Ernest Sosa invites us to

Suppose you enter your dentist's waiting room and find all the magazines missing. Deprived of reading matter, you're sure to doze off, but you need no sleep. Are you then rationally bound to reach for the telephone book in pursuit of truth? Were you not to do so, you would forfeit a chance to pluck some desired goods within easy reach.²²

The idea that we are rationally bound to reach for the telephone directory is supposed to strike us as absurd. So, one might conclude that a goal of true belief is insufficient to explain our epistemic behavior.

Sosa's thought experiment may not convince, however. Other goals we have seem to explain why we would not reach for the telephone directory. We might have the goal of avoiding boring activities like memorizing phone numbers, for example. Also, it is unclear in what sense random phone numbers are "desired goods within *easy reach*". Could we remember many of these numbers easily?²³ Perhaps not.

Can a unique goal of true belief explain why we seek grounds or justification? Douven supposes that the only motivation one could have for seeking beliefs that are adequately grounded is success with respect to the truth goal.²⁴ Might one, however, seek

grounds for one's beliefs, not out of a desire to believe the truth as such, but rather because one wants beliefs that are *stable*? Such a motivation for seeking adequate grounds is suggested in the *Meno*. Not only do we want our beliefs to be true, but also we want them to be such that it is difficult to be argued out of them. We do not wish to be easy prey for sophists and politicians. When we seek adequate grounds for a belief, sometimes we want those grounds in order that our belief is strong in this way. That the belief be true is indeed a desire of ours, but it is not our primary reason (at least in some cases) for seeking justification or grounds.

If this line of thinking is right, then there is room to deny uniqueness. If we were to form the beliefs about the lottery suggested by starred accounts, then it would be relatively easy to argue us out of those beliefs. Consider a simple case: a ten ticket lottery. Smith believes of tickets t_1, \dots, t_9 that they will lose. Suppose Jones, a critic of Smith's lottery beliefs, says, "Smith, you have just as much reason to believe of *these* tickets that they'll lose as you have to believe of tickets t_2, \dots, t_{10} that *they* will lose." It seems like it would be fairly easy for Jones to argue Smith out of his belief. Indeed, if Smith obdurately persisted in his original belief that t_1, \dots, t_9 were losers, he would be behaving irrationally. To suppose otherwise would be to conflate epistemic rationality with practical rationality. It seems clear that when one must act, rational choice without evidential preference is possible. This does not seem clearly to be the case when it comes to belief.²⁵ Smith needn't form *any* belief about the lottery. On Smith's evidence, it is rational to suspend judgment about which tickets are losers.

Since Smith wants true belief that is likely to endure criticism, it is reasonable for him to seek adequate grounds for his beliefs. But, there are no adequate grounds in the

offing that would shore up his belief against Jones' above criticism. The goal of having stable beliefs, it appears, can trump the truth goal in lottery cases.

It might be objected that we desire stable beliefs simply because those beliefs are likely to be true. This is not clearly the case. Reflection on some very firmly held false beliefs suffices to show that stability and truth do not always go hand in hand. Perhaps we pursue stability in our beliefs because we *believe* that stable beliefs are likely to be true. This doesn't seem to get things right either. Reflection on certain beliefs our ancestors held (e.g. that the Earth is the center of the solar system) suffices to show that we believe that firmly held beliefs have often turned out to be false.

Of course, since Douven is assuming that (G1) or (G2) capture our unique epistemic goal of true belief, one might argue that, on this assumption, his argument goes through. This assumption, however, is highly controversial. Not even theorists who agree that there is a unique goal of true belief agree on its proper formulation. I have given some reasons to suspect that there is not such a unique epistemic goal, and even supposing that there is, whether (G1) or (G2) adequately express that goal is not apparent.

I do not take these considerations to be decisive against Douven's argument. What they do show is that some argument needs to be provided in order to show why adoptability with respect to the truth goal should be a guide to acceptability. If no link can be provided, then (C^{cp}) gives us no reason to prefer the starred theories in the Theoretical Sense. This, I take it, would render Douven's argument against the NJ-accounts a *non sequitur*.

4. Starred Theories, Epistemic Arbitrariness, and Doxastic Voluntarism

Suppose that A were to adopt a starred theory. S would then be justified in believing of every ticket save one in a sufficiently large lottery that it will lose. Which tickets should A pick as the losers? It looks like, on A's evidence, each ticket is just as likely to lose. In order to adopt a starred theory, then, A must randomly select a ticket and believe of it that it is the winner and of the rest that they are losers. Surely such behavior is irrational.

There are several worries here. First, it looks like starred theories require behavior that is epistemically arbitrary. Second, insofar as it is irrational to form some beliefs b_1, \dots, b_i , it looks like one is not justified in believing b_1, \dots, b_i . Finally, it appears that if it is possible to adopt a starred theory, some form of doxastic voluntarism must hold. I shall consider these worries in turn.

Douven anticipates the first worry. He takes it that the charge of epistemic arbitrariness is designed to show that starred theories differ relevantly from NJ-theories. Interpreted as such, the epistemic arbitrariness objection counts as a denial of premise (6). Douven offers two lines of reply. First, he suggests that avoidance of epistemic arbitrariness does not seem to be “an epistemic imperative”.²⁶ There doesn't appear to be, Douven maintains, any obvious argument from “any plausible principles, epistemic or otherwise” for the claim that arbitrariness of the sort required by starred theories is objectionable.²⁷ Douven claims that the unacceptability of epistemic arbitrariness is not obvious or self-evident. So, lacking an argument for such a claim, the objection doesn't go through.

Is this right? Isn't it just obvious that arbitrary belief formation is irrational? I think we would criticize A for believing arbitrarily, say according to the results of a coin

toss or other arbitrary decision procedure. It seems clear that arbitrary choice about what to *do* can sometimes be rational. But in the case of believing, one who arbitrarily believes is properly subject to criticism.

Douven's second line of reply makes reference to the literature on choice without preference.²⁸ Douven maintains that choice without preference is sometimes rational when an arbitrary decision procedure is introduced. I tend to agree. The literature on choice without preference, however, is irrelevant to whether epistemic arbitrariness is acceptable. Believing something, that is, taking it to be *true*, doesn't seem to be a matter of choosing to *act* in some way.²⁹ Douven thinks that the presumption in favor of rational choice without preference together with the absence of an argument against epistemic arbitrariness places the onus on those who prefer the NJ-theories. I do not think this is the case. One who arbitrarily believes is properly subject to criticism. The proper criticism to make is that such a person is behaving irrationally. Deciding what to believe is not analogous to deciding which of two equally appealing choices to make. I am here taking rationality to be, broadly speaking, a property of cognition. Some evaluations of rationality are particular to the formation and maintenance of beliefs. Such evaluations are evaluations of *epistemic* rationality. Some evaluations of rationality pertain to deliberations about how to act. Such evaluations are evaluations of *practical* rationality. Douven's line of reply appears to conflate epistemic and practical rationality. We ought to be suspicious of such a move.

Douven seems to think that the onus rests on the NJ-theorist to argue against the permissibility of epistemic arbitrariness. I think this gets the dialectical landscape wrong. Insofar as permitting epistemic arbitrariness is counterintuitive, it is the starred theorist

who owes us an explanation. Mere success with respect to the truth goal is not sufficient to discharge this responsibility.

The second worry is that starred theories do not properly capture the extension of ‘justified belief’. On starred theories, lottery beliefs formed by means of an arbitrary decision procedure are justified. This doesn’t seem right. In general, it looks like believing against one’s evidence is irrational. In lottery cases, though, one’s evidence does not favor one group of lottery beliefs over another. Insofar as what it is *epistemically* rational to believe just is what one is justified in believing, starred theories get the extension of ‘justified belief’ wrong. To the extent that this is the case, these theories are unacceptable. Presumably, some NJ-theories align what it’s rational to believe with what one is justified in believing. If this is the case, then there is at least one NJ-account we should prefer over its starred cousin. So, Douven’s argument fails.

The third worry is that insofar as starred theories require arbitrary belief formation, they require some thesis of doxastic voluntarism. If A adopts a starred theory, given a sufficiently large lottery, A believes of some tickets that they will lose. There is no principled way for A to choose which tickets are losers, so A must pick some randomly. But, once A has picked the tickets, how does she get herself to believe that they’re losers? It’s clear A doesn’t marshal any further evidence in support of their being losers. She believes on the basis of an arbitrary decision procedure. But this seems to imply that in some sense it’s up to A which beliefs she has. Some of A’s belief formation is optional; A may choose, in some cases, which beliefs she has independent of her evidence. Starred theories require, and Douven admits that they require, some form of voluntarism.

Admittedly, the voluntarism required by starred accounts is very weak.³⁰ Even the requirement of weak doxastic voluntarism may strike some as too much to swallow. A theory of justification's commitment to voluntarism is clearly relevant to theory selection. Since some NJ-accounts, presumably, do not carry a commitment even to weak doxastic voluntarism, it follows that there is at least one NJ-theory that is relevantly different from its starred cousin. Is the relevant difference sufficient for preferring the NJ-theory over the starred theory? I think so. Doxastic voluntarism is, at the very least, a highly contentious thesis. It should give us pause if some theory of justification is committed to such a thesis in order to provide a solution to the lottery paradox.

These considerations do not show that Douven's argument is beyond repair. They do, however, suggest some very serious problems that require attention. I do not want to reject doxastic voluntarism out of hand. Instead I maintain that it is dialectically inappropriate to presuppose such a thesis when arguing in favor of a non-NJ solution to the lottery paradox. Again, insofar as the starred theorist requires a contentious thesis the NJ-theorist does not, the onus is on the former to provide a defense of this thesis rather than upon the latter to undermine it.³¹

5. Concluding Remarks

I do not take myself to have refuted Douven's argument. Instead I take myself to have presented a challenge. In order to defend Douven's argument, one must accomplish the following tasks. First, one must provide an argument that connects adoptability in the technical sense with acceptability. Second, one must provide good reasons to accept the

permissibility of epistemic arbitrariness. Third, one must give good reasons to think that weak doxastic voluntarism is true.

Douven's argument presupposes the existence of an epistemic goal of true belief. To my mind this is a rather abstruse concept. It seems more plausible to claim that starred theories are objectionable than to claim we have a unique truth goal. There are good reasons to think that a unique epistemic goal of true belief is insufficient to explain our epistemic behavior.

Some work must be done in order to make voluntarism look appealing, to answer the threat of equivocation, and to make plausible the assumption that the truth goal is unique. If this work can be successfully brought off, then perhaps Douven's argument will go through. I find the prospects of this occurring less than hopeful.

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¹ Douven, Igor; “The Lottery Paradox and Our Epistemic Goal.” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 89: 204-225 (2008).

² Douven 2008: 204. Douven attributes the paradox to Kyburg (Kyburg 1961; 1970).

³ I have met at least one philosopher who does not find it to be paradoxical, however.

⁴ Douven 2008: 205. Many philosophers opt to deny closure, Douven mentions Foley 1979, Foley 1992, Klein 1985, and Achinstein in this connection.

⁵ For ‘Not Justified’, Douven 2008: 205.

⁶ Douven 2005: 205.

⁷ It is unclear what Douven means by an ‘account’ of justification. If what he has in mind is some set of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for a belief’s being justified, then Entailment and Consistency amount to more or less the same thing. For the present discussion I wish to leave it open that an account of justification might not provide necessary and sufficient conditions. Douven may deny this. Nothing crucial to my argument, however, depends on whether we read Douven as meaning Entailment or Consistency.

⁸ Douven (2008), pg. 218 (note 5).

⁹ Douven argues at some length that it makes no practical difference which we take to express the epistemic goal of true belief. In his paper, he seems to suppose that we aim at maximizing our truth-falsity ratio. Accordingly, I shall use this formulation throughout. None of my criticisms of Douven’s argument depend on which formulation we take as expressing our alleged goal of true belief.

¹⁰ Douven 2008: 211.

¹¹ Where ‘*S* does not believe that *p*’ is not read as entailing that *S* believes that not-*p*.

¹² Douven 2008: 208.

¹³ Douven 2008: 209.

¹⁴ Douven 2008: 210-211.

¹⁵ Douven 2008: 210.

¹⁶ Douven 2008: 205.

¹⁷ Douven 2008: 209. One might worry that, in order to adopt a theory *T*, one must be justified in believing that theory to be correct. If so, then according to what *theory* is one justified in believing *T* is correct? *T* itself? This is not apparent. Thanks to Stewart Cohen for this point.

¹⁸ Douven 2008: 218.

¹⁹ In light of the alleged constitutive relationship between the truth goal and theories of justification, P may not appear strong enough. Some might suggest turning P in to a biconditional. Something like this may be what theorists friendly to a unique epistemic goal of true belief have in mind. I shall work with the weaker version here.

²⁰ Thanks to Stewart Cohen for this point.

²¹ It may be claimed that attributing only practical, rather than epistemic, goals is not always sufficient to explain our practices. For, frequently we seek the truth when doing so does not aid some practical endeavor. There are many things that could be said here. Perhaps we implicitly understand that, in principle, any proposition whatever can be of some practical use. So, even when there is no immediate practical goal of ours to be served by a true belief that *p*, nevertheless it serves our practical aims to believe *p* just in case *p* is true, for a true belief that *p* may become useful later.

²² Sosa, Ernest (2000). “For the Love of Truth?” *Virtue Epistemology: Essays on Epistemic Virtue and Responsibility*. Oxford University Press: 49-62.

²³ Thanks to Steven Reynolds for these points. We might, however, restructure the above case in such a way that eliminated these worries. Suppose that one would not be bored, that one could easily remember the phone numbers, and so on. Would one be rationally bound to look through the phone book? It seems not.

²⁴ Douven 2008: 213.

²⁵ More on this below.

²⁶ Douven 2008: 216.

²⁷ Douven 2008: 216.

²⁸ Douven 2008: 216.

²⁹ Perhaps some pragmatists would object, but I take it Douven’s argument would be dialectically unsound were it to presuppose pragmatism.

³⁰ Douven calls such a form of voluntarism ‘modest’ voluntarism. Douven 2008: 222 (note 27).

³¹ Douven cites van Frassen (1984; 1988) and Ginet (1985; 2001) as providing some reason to accept a version of voluntarism. I do not mean to suggest that the arguments provided by van Frassen and Ginet are not successful, merely that the starred theorists’ need for such arguments set their accounts apart in a relevant way from those offered by the NJ-theorists.