

The Aim of Belief: A Priori Defenses

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Abstract

I consider two strategies for defending, a priori, the claim that truth is the aim of belief. The first appeals to the apparent inconceivability of beliefs not "regulated" for truth. The second appeals to the inconceivability of judgments that aren't directed at the truth. I criticize both these arguments, and offer a diagnosis of their mistake: beliefs are not artifacts (with functions or purposes derived from the intentions of their creators), nor is believing an intentional activity (whose success or failure depends on the intentions of the person acting). I argue that these disanalogies make a difference, and that we should therefore favor a non-normative conception of belief.