Non-Akrasia Constraint: It can never be rational to have high confidence in something like $P$, but my evidence doesn’t support $P$.

Sleepy Detective: Sam is a police detective, working to identify a jewel thief. He knows he has good evidence – out of the many suspects, it will strongly support one of them. Late one night, after hours of cracking codes and scrutinizing photographs and letters, he finally comes to the conclusion that the thief was Lucy. Sam is quite confident that his evidence points to Lucy’s guilt, and he is quite confident that Lucy committed the crime. In fact, he has accommodated his evidence correctly, and his beliefs are justified. He calls his partner, Alex. “I’ve gone through all the evidence,” Sam says, “and it all points to one person! I’ve found the thief!” But Alex is unimpressed. She replies: “I can tell you’ve been up all night working on this. Nine times out of the last ten, your late-night reasoning has been quite sloppy. You’re always very confident that you’ve found the culprit, but you’re almost always wrong about what the evidence supports. So your evidence probably doesn’t support Lucy in this case.” Though Sam hadn’t attended to his track record before, he rationally trusts Alex and believes that she is right – that he is usually wrong about what the evidence supports on occasions similar to this one.

Level-Splitters: Sam should maintain his high confidence in both Lucy is the thief, and my evidence doesn’t support that.

Problems for Level-Splitting

(1) Moore-paradoxical quality to believing or asserting, “Lucy is the thief, but my evidence doesn’t support that.”

Worry: Principled reason to resist this line. Knowledge norm of assertion or of belief, and/or the BK-principle should suffice.

(2) Outsmarting the evidence: What should he think about his belief? That it is true, but not because his evidence supports it – he got it right, despite the odds!

Make it diachronic: you expect you’ll misevaluate; then you get the evidence and (correctly) conclude $P$; say to yourself, “I thought I was going to judge incorrectly, but I must have lucked out!”

$K(p \land [Pr(p) < \frac{1}{2}])$ ⇒

$Kp \land K[Pr(p) < \frac{1}{2}]$ ⇒

$[Pr(p) = 1] \land [Pr(p) < \frac{1}{2}]$.

Assuming, now, that high confidence can warrant using as a premise in reasoning and action.
(3) “P is true. But all my evidence relevant to P does not support it. It supports low confidence in a true proposition, P, and therefore high confidence in a false proposition, ¬P. So my evidence is misleading.”

(4) **Irrational practical reasoning:** since high confidence in P, will accept 9:1 odds on it. But when asked why he is so sure the evidence tells in favor of Lucy, he’ll say “Oh, I’m not! I’m sure it doesn’t tell in favor of her.” “So Why are you offering me 9:1 odds?” “Well, I shouldn’t be offering such strong odds, since the evidence isn’t in my favor. But, on the other hand, she is the thief. That’s what we’re betting on, right?”

Further: rational to send her to jail, but when asked he has to admit that he shouldn’t do so.

(5) **Bootstrapping:** After a long series of such cases, Sam will think he has a lot of true beliefs all of which are unsupported by the evidence; this begins to look miraculous. Perhaps, instead, he should use all his true beliefs to bootstrap and believe that he is reliable, despite Alex’s testimony.

But this is level-bridging. The Level-Splitter has to explain why akrasia is fine in single cases, but not in the long-run.

**Rejecting the Bridge Principles?**

She tries to defend them. I am quite worried about doing this. **But,** can we get the same issues up-and-going under the scope of “It’s very likely that...” or “Bizarre possibilities aside...”?

Another line (from Sophie): even if Sam can’t *use* the reasoning [or have the credences?], his evidence still supports doing so.

**Exceptions?**

**Dartboard** case.

Difference 1: Uncertainty about what E supports, vs. uncertainty about what E is.

Difference 2: In Sleepy Detective the evidence is truth-guiding, and one knows this; in Dartboard the evidence is falsity-guiding, and one knows this.

This is an unusual feature of Dartboard. And it is only because of this unusual feature that epistemic akrasia seems rational in Dartboard. You should think that you should have low confidence in Ring precisely because you should think Ring is probably true –
and because your evidence is falsity-guiding with respect to Ring.
Epistemic akrasia is rational precisely because we should take into
account background expectations about whether the evidence is
likely to be truth-guiding or falsity-guiding, (738)

In Dartboard you think your evidence is misleading, but it’s like a
lottery case.
We can avoid bootstrapping because, since he knows his evidence
is falsity-guiding, positing that his evidence does support each $P_i$ is
not a good explanation for why he’s believing truths.

Puzzlement...

She still accepts the link between evidential probability and cre-
dence, in which case I can’t see how the case is acceptable. We still
run into most of the problems:

(1) Moorean sentence: “Ring is true, but my evidence doesn’t
support it.”

(2) “I was sure I would misjudge whether ring was true, but I got
it right – despite the evidence!”

(3) Reasoning to show her evidence is misleading.

(4) Accept 4:1 odds on Ring; but when asked why, one has to
admit that the evidence doesn’t support it.

Moreover, here’s an argument that it’s not possible for one’s evi-
dence to strongly support that Ring and my evidence strongly sup-
ports $\neg$Ring:

One knows: $\neg$Ring $\leftrightarrow$ the probability of Ring is high. Say one
has high credence. One knows that this is either rational or
irrational, and can reason as follows: “If my high credence is
irrational, that’s just to say that I should lower it; since the only
other possible rational credence is low, I should have low con-
fidence in Ring. If my credence is rational, that means that my
evidence supports Ring, which implies that Ring is false; so
again I should have low confidence in Ring.” So by disjunctive
syllogism from known premises, you conclude that rational-
ity requires you to have low credence in Ring, contrary to our
supposition.

More generally, in this sort of case one is able to “outsmart”
one’s evidence. Here’s Sophie: “You should think that you
should have low confidence in Ring precisely because you
should think Ring is probably true – and because you [know
that your] evidence is falsity-guiding with respect to Ring.”

Not exactly. In lottery case you don’t
know which proposition it’s misleading
about, whereas in Dartboard you do.

Maybe that’s fine, given the assump-
tion that she knows her evidence is
misleading! But we’ll come back to this.

Weak credence luminosity: If $Cr(p) \approx 1,$
then $K(Cr(p) > \frac{1}{2}).$

So if rational credence goes with
evidential probability, then one can’t
have these evidential probabilities.
Problem: your evidence also “knows” (entails) that it is falsity-guiding with respect to Ring. So just as you can conclude that you ought to have low credence, why wouldn’t this evidence in fact warrant low credence, i.e. have a low evidential probability? Which is just to deny that the evidence could have this structure to begin with.