

Plebani have undoubtedly provided us with an indispensable resource with this excellent guidebook.

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*A Critical Introduction to Testimony.* BY AXEL GELFERT. (London: Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. 257. Price £22.99.)

Gelfert's book, the first systematic overview of the epistemology of testimony, does an excellent job of introducing beginners to this rapidly growing field. While the book is primarily introductory in character, Gelfert also judiciously incorporates original insights, and the book will both stimulate researchers and provide them with a useful bird's eye survey of the field.

The first three chapters set the stage for the rest of the book. Chapter 1 makes a case for the centrality of testimony as a source of knowledge and for our resulting epistemic dependence, contrasts the philosophical concept of testimony to the ordinary (formal) notion, and reviews a range of ways of distinguishing among kinds of testimony. It then discusses broad and narrow views of testimony, suggesting that an intermediate view is likely to be preferable. Chapter 2 concerns the 'testimonial conundrum' resulting from our epistemic dependence: while we have no choice but to trust others, our trust inevitably leaves us vulnerable to error. The chapter contrasts the strategies of trusting acceptance and rational rejection, arguing that the challenge posed by the conundrum is that of knowing when to use each strategy. Chapter 3, in turn, examines relationships between testimony and other sources of knowledge: perception, memory, and inference. The discussion of testimony and perception introduces Reid's understanding of testimony as a 'social operation of the mind'. The discussion of testimony and inference introduces contrasting views on whether testimonial beliefs rest on inferences concerning the speakers' trustworthiness. And the discussion of testimony and memory acknowledges the constructive character of the latter but argues that it may nevertheless have a preservative function, in which case there may be—as suggested by Burge's treatment of content preservation—an analogy between testimony and memory. While this arguably glosses too quickly over the possibility that memory has a generative rather than a preservative function—a possibility that might usefully have been discussed in connection with arguments for testimony as a generative epistemic source in ch. 7—the decision not to explore the possibility is understandable given the introductory character of the book.

The following five chapters constitute the core of the book and together provide a survey of the key problems that have come to define the field. Chapter 4 looks at whether testimony can be assimilated to other forms of evidence. After reviewing competing conceptions of evidence, the chapter motivates the idea that testimony cannot be reduced to one form of evidence among others, reviewing critiques of the idea that it is possible to ground acceptance of testimony on evidence (the paucity objection), as well as arguments that attempts to do so fail to respect the special character of the relationship between speaker and hearer (the perversity argument). Chapter 5 reviews the reductionist/antireductionist debate which occupied centre stage in the early years of the epistemology of testimony, distinguishing carefully between global and local forms of reductionism. In addition to advancing a number of criticisms of the latter, the chapter makes a convincing case for a more nuanced reading of Hume on testimony than is standard in the literature. Chapter 6 then examines responses to the reductionism/antireductionism debate in terms of hybrid internalist/externalist theories of testimonial justification. Building on existing theories, the chapter defends a hybrid account of testimonial inference to the best explanation (TIBE), according to which TIBE has a dual role, grounding both our stance of default acceptance and our rejection of specific instances of testimony. Chapter 7 is devoted to the controversy over whether testimony can generate or only transmit knowledge, examining arguments for the view that we can acquire knowledge from a speaker who lacks belief or justification or from unsafe testimony. These arguments assume that the generation of knowledge by testimony is an exceptional occurrence, but the chapter also reviews more radical communitarian arguments, according to which the performative character of testimony implies that the generation of knowledge by testimony is the rule, not the exception. Concluding the core of the book, ch. 8 turns to interpersonal theories which highlight the role of trust and the expectation of trust in testimony. These include assurance views, which emphasize the speaker's responsiveness to the hearer, as well as his assumption of responsibility for the beliefs that the latter bases on his testimony.

The final three chapters of the book cover a series of more specialized questions; while these are somewhat more advanced, they nonetheless remain accessible to beginners. Chapter 9 is devoted to problems about expert testimony, including the question of who counts as an expert and how to adjudicate between conflicting expert opinions. In view of our growing reliance on expert testimony in a time of increasing specialization, this chapter will be of particular interest to many readers. Chapter 10 surveys a number of 'pathologies of testimony', including rumours, urban legends, and gossip, proposing a unified Kantian account on which a pathology of testimony is 'any type of overtly informative speech act that disrespects another person in their capacity as a rational being' (p. 213). The chapter also reviews recent discussions of

epistemic injustice in the reception of testimony. Chapter 11, the final chapter of the book, relates testimony to the problem of the value of knowledge via the idea, advanced by proponents of the genealogical approach to knowledge, that the concept of knowledge is best understood with reference to our need for good informants. The chapter concludes with some brief reflections, against the background of the genealogical approach, on the implications of current technological changes—which tend to replace purely ‘social’ operations of the mind with ‘technologically mediated’ operations of the mind—for epistemology, suggesting that these changes may eventually lead to a change in the concept of knowledge itself.

Aside from the minor quibble about the memory/testimony analogy noted above, there is little to complain about with respect to the content of the book, which manages to present an impressive amount of technical material in a style that will be accessible to students, without falling into the trap of oversimplification. One might make a minor criticism with respect to the format of the book. In addition to the main text, the author has included a glossary at the end of the book and a set of study questions and suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter. While this apparatus will no doubt be helpful to students, it would have been equally helpful to begin or end each chapter with a summary of the key points covered. But this criticism is indeed minor. The book is a model of clarity, deftly combining an even-handed mapping of the known territory with forays into new regions, and will be invaluable to epistemologists in both their teaching and their research.

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*Wittgenstein: Opening Investigations*. BY MICHAEL LUNTLEY. (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015. Pp. xxxi + 179. Price £66.95).

What is going on in the opening sections of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations (PI)*? In this stimulating (but at times very demanding) monograph, Michael Luntley develops a reading of the opening sections of *PI* that departs from the ‘received wisdom’ on the matter and which, in turn, points towards a novel reading of *PI* on which Wittgenstein is viewed as ‘party to ongoing attempts at philosophical explanation not only with regard to language acquisition, but also with regard to the stance of the mature competent language user [and] rule-follower’ (p. 120).