

West Chester University

Digital Commons @ West Chester University

West Chester University Master's Theses

Masters Theses and Doctoral Projects

Spring 2023

Plurality and Epistemic Injustice: A Neo-Arendtian Reading of Miranda Fricker's Epistemic Injustice

David Casciola
dc985230@wcupa.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.wcupa.edu/all_theses



Part of the [Epistemology Commons](#), and the [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Casciola, David, "Plurality and Epistemic Injustice: A Neo-Arendtian Reading of Miranda Fricker's Epistemic Injustice" (2023). *West Chester University Master's Theses*. 278.
https://digitalcommons.wcupa.edu/all_theses/278

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Masters Theses and Doctoral Projects at Digital Commons @ West Chester University. It has been accepted for inclusion in West Chester University Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ West Chester University. For more information, please contact wcrestler@wcupa.edu.

Plurality and Epistemic Injustice: A Neo-Arendtian Reading of Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic
Injustice*

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the
Department of Philosophy
West Chester University
West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of
Master of Arts in Philosophy

By

David Casciola

May 2023

Acknowledgments

There are many people who will have my unending thanks and appreciation for their support and aid throughout this project. I do want to thank Nan and Glenn for always being there for me.

Abstract

In this thesis I bring the philosophies of Hannah Arendt and Miranda Fricker into conversation. Specifically, I argue that through Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice (EI) we are able to see more clearly the importance of testimony—*lexis* as an aspect of Action for Arendt—in Arendt's socio-political framework. Arendt divides the world into the Private, Social, and Public as separate realms of human activity (Labor, Work, and Action respectively); it is in the Public where we are able to appear and express our plurality. According to Arendt this is the only space where equality must be ensured. However, in using EI to analyze Arendt's comments regarding the school desegregation and Black Student movements, I demonstrate that Arendt commits EI against these civil rights movements. This critique justifies my neo-Arendtian reformation that acknowledges the interrelation of the Private, Social, and Public; this distinction may not be so distinct after all. What this restructuring of these realms means is that equality ought to be ensured in all areas of human activity, not just the Public. This is the way to assuage the harms of EI that best avoids the pitfalls of a more individualist solution to the harm. Moreover, I discuss the reification of this solution in a novel ontological category: testimonial objects. These are the products, or crystallizations, of Action in the form of objects that convey testimonial knowledge.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND A NEO-ARENDTIAN FRAMEWORK	7
CHAPTER III: UNDERSTANDING PREJUDICE THROUGH THE LENS OF EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE	39
CHAPTER IV: OBJECTIFICATION OR OTHERING? AND THE ACTUALIZATION OF MODES OF ACTIVITY	65
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION	87
BIBLIOGRAPHY	92

Chapter I: Introduction

For the past few years in the United States in particular, there has been much popular attention paid to issues that ought to concern both epistemologists and socio-political theorists. Examples include phenomena such as ‘fake news’ and the recent proposed changes to Twitter’s verification system. As philosophers we ought to engage with the questions arising from these events. The issues I investigate in this thesis have to do with the ways that we appear as members of an epistemic community. That is, part of the value of living in a community of other people is that being a potential knower—or one who contributes knowledge to the larger pool of human understanding—is an integral part of our human condition. So, if our humanity is partly conditioned on our status as a knower and testifier, then we ought to consider normative claims about the relative statuses of different people *as* testifiers. This is exactly the concern that motivates my project.

To address some epistemological concerns for our socio-political lives, I bring two areas of philosophy into conversation: epistemology and political philosophy. Both of these areas of thought have important things to say to each other, and as I demonstrate on the pages below, the conclusions we can glean from this meeting of social epistemology and political thought reveal new ways to answer questions regarding the just distribution of epistemic social goods such as credibility and epistemic authority. There are two philosophers in particular whose ideas inform this discussion: Miranda Fricker and Hannah Arendt. Fricker’s concept of Epistemic Injustice (EI) helps us understand the ways that we commit wrongs against other people in terms of their epistemic agency—that is, their capacity to exist as a knower *qua* knower. Fricker distinguishes between two species of EI: testimonial and hermeneutical injustice. In brief, testimonial injustice is when a speaker is discredited as a function of systematic features pertaining to their social

identity. Hermeneutical injustice is when a lacuna in our language restricts the ways that a marginalized person or group is able to express their testimony. The ways that these harms can be inflicted through socio-political epistemic practices informs my reading of Arendt's conceptualization of how human plurality expresses itself in our intersubjective world. For Arendt, Action—that is, speech, testimony, or *lexis*—is the activity individuals use to interpose their own plurality and express their freedom as such.

The connection between Fricker and Arendt is more appropriate than it might seem at first as they both employ neo-Aristotelian concepts. A virtue epistemology underpins Fricker's analysis of EI—she argues in favor of a 'virtue of epistemic justice' at the very least—and this will mean that hearers ought to habituate a sort of equilibrium in their treatment of speakers. Hearers ought to find a balance between their implicit trust in the testimony of the speaker as well as a critical appraisal of what they might be saying. Moreover, the focus on Action for Arendt as the expression of one's 'human-ness,' their plurality, emerges from how she interprets the historical development of Aristotle's *zōon politikon*. Arendt states that "Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live."¹ For Arendt, plurality is a condition of humanity that people participate in. However, throughout this essay I use the term slightly differently while capturing the basic idea of the concept. In my usage a person's plurality is manifested in the unique 'standpoint' that they embody, characterizing the ways they express their identities and make epistemic contact with the world. That is, instead of participating in plurality, individuals express their plurality (and as we will see part of this expression is through testimonial exchanges). While I do not explicitly draw the connection in the pages below, this

¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 8.

usage of ‘plurality’ also recognizes some of the concerns that are expressed by standpoint epistemology.

Arendt separates our socio-political world into three realms that correspond to three modes of activity: the Private, Social, and Public; and Labor, Work, and Action respectively. The current epistemological discussion focuses on the last of this tripartite distinction and its attendant mode of activity—Action, as an expression of an individual’s political activity. In this sense, political activity is a person’s speech or *lexis*, and I will contend that this can be taken broadly as their testimony. This realization of testimony as a fundamental aspect of Action crystallizes the connection between my two primary interlocutors; testimony for each of them becomes an integral part of the expression and fulfillment of the human condition.

What my project shows is that when working within an Arendtian socio-political framework, testimonial epistemology is explicitly relevant. As Arendt herself puts it, “Of all the activities necessary and present in human communities, only two were deemed to be political and to constitute what Aristotle called the *bios politikos*, namely action (*praxis*) and speech (*lexis*), out of which rises the realm of human affairs...”² It is this capacity for speech—testimonial exchange broadly speaking—that distinguishes human communities and enables the Public realm to arise from the matrix of need-fulfillment that constitutes the Private realm. Once we recognize *lexis* as fundamental to the emergence of the Public realm, concerns for EI immediately arise. In order for an individual to fully express their plurality they must be able to engage in equal testimonial exchanges with other members of the community. The harms of EI that Fricker describe are more than just testimonial discrimination; they also dehumanize those

² Arendt, 24–25.

who suffer from them because they are restricted from fully participating in the Public realm and expressing their plurality as such.

I have separated this project into three sections which I will briefly sketch before I proceed in more detail. In “Theoretical Background and My Neo-Arendtian Framework” I discuss the theoretical foundations of this project: Fricker’s explication of EI and Arendt’s socio-political framework. Through my discussion of Arendtian theory my primary critique of her project emerges: the way she separates the three realms of activity into distinct spheres of influence occludes the reality of living in community with other people. When people live together the Private, Social, and Public realms are not different areas with border walls separating them, but diverse expressions of the way we live communally. I argue that an alternative conception to this framework, my ‘neo-Arendtianism,’ can recognize the various ways that the different realms of human activity can affect one another. The alternative that I propose is a vertical reorganization that acknowledges how power flows upwards from people acting in concert to be crystallized into authority. I draw the analogy of a single-level ranch house (Arendt’s classical framework) compared to a three-story house (my neo-Arendtianism).

Moreover, we will see how Fricker’s description of EI explicates the failings of Arendt’s framework in terms of how epistemic agency concerns Arendtian plurality. Epistemic agency, a concept that entails a knower’s self-conception as a contributor of knowledge and understanding, helps us see in more detail the harms of EI: it is not just a harm that exists in a theoretical realm of virtue and vice, but has intersocial and material effects on the ways people are treated in and experience the world.

In chapter three, “Understanding Prejudice Through the Lens of Epistemic Injustice” I bring my critique of Arendt into more detail. I concur with other critiques—such as the challenge

to Arendt which Kathryn Sophia Belle³ puts forth—when it comes to the problematic way Arendt addressed desegregation and other Black student movements in the United States. What this project brings to the discussion is that if we understand Arendt’s apparently prejudicial claims as instances of EI, then it reveals the nuance of the socio-political hierarchies her framework reinforces.

In chapter four, “Objections: Objectification or Othering? And the Actualization of Modes of Activity” I review a number of concerns that other philosophers have claimed problematize Fricker’s conceptualization of EI. Since I am staying consistent with her analysis of EI, I consider how using my neo-Arendtian framework will help both Fricker and myself respond to those critics while also looking at how Fricker has responded to them. For example, Gaile Pohlhaus, Jr. questions what the primary harm of EI is. Fricker argues that EI is fundamentally a type of objectification, but Pohlhaus suggests understanding it as a type of ‘othering’ more accurately captures the harm that is done when this injustice occurs. Additionally, Elizabeth Anderson distinguishes between individual/transactional and structural types of injustice and their harms. Fricker seems to argue that the promotion and development of individual virtue—that is, addressing the harm at the individual/transactional level—is the surest way to alleviate the harms of EI. However, Anderson finds issue with this, arguing that assuaging the structural harms of EI will lessen the harms at the individual/transactional level while also being a more practical solution.

I will also consider an objection to my neo-Arendtian framework; what I call the Hierarchy Objection. This objection is worried about the verticality of the framework I propose.

³ Per her personal website, citations and bibliographic entries to Dr. Belle’s works published before she changed her name will refer to her as ‘Kathryn T. Gines.’

The way that I articulate this objection is: the vertical nature of my framework—in privileging one of the realms of human activity, namely the Public—can maintain the hierarchical relations I hope it abolishes in an effort to assuage the harms of EI. I dissolve this objection by pointing to two facts. (1) I question whether verticality entails hierarchy and (2) I suggest that some hierarchies, in particular epistemic ones related to sources of technical and expert knowledge, may benefit from the existence of justified hierarchies.⁴

Finally, what emerges from my discussion is a novel ontological category that describes a feature of the human condition: what I term ‘testimonial objects.’ Testimonial objects, as I call them, are the expressions of one of the Arendtian modes of activity: Action. While Labor and Work are expressed in consumption and use objects, Action is expressed through *lexis* and, materially, can take the form of anything from speech to conversation to artistic expression. ‘Testimonial objects’ explain the harms and potential resolutions to EI as reifications of our testimonial exchanges. There will certainly be more that can be said about these objects, but I hope that this project lays groundwork for future projects on the subject. For now, testimonial objects will demonstrate the harms of EI as a structural harm which ‘others’ those who suffer from it. In my conclusion, I briefly review my claims, defend my argument against one likely objection, and speculate about future directions.

⁴ In fact, it may be the case that when a hierarchical relation is justified, it is no longer a hierarchy *per se*. That is, hierarchies may be the types of relations that are necessarily unjustified, but that is certainly beyond the scope of the present discussion.

Chapter II: Theoretical Background and a Neo-Arendtian Framework

Introduction

In this first chapter I have three objectives concerning the background theory within which I will be working: (1) To describe Hannah Arendt's socio-political framework in detail, point to a few of its drawbacks, and suggest a modification to it. (2) Develop a conception of 'epistemic agency' as an extension of Arendt's notion of human plurality. And (3) to explicate Miranda Fricker's concept of epistemic injustice (EI) and highlight a few of the ways this helps us to understand the shortcomings of Arendt's position such that it justifies my modification. I do not expect all of the connections to be fully explicated in this chapter; that work will be done in the following chapter where we examine a few contemporary examples of EI.

Arendt structures her socio-political framework horizontally through the strict separation of the Private, Social, and Public realms. Each of these is where we satisfy the requirements imposed on us by the conditions of our material, social, and political realities through different sorts of activities (Labor, Work, and Action respectively). What I will eventually suggest is that a vertical structure which allows for interactions between these realms is preferable and it is a more accurate description of the ways in which these realms function in the world.⁵ Moreover, Arendt's socio-political framework provides an additional layer of analysis for understanding the harms of EI (and eventually for the solution to it).

Through my analysis of the Public I show how an aspect of the socio-political framework that Arendt does not give attention is the epistemic aspect of *lexis*. We need to recognize how the testimonial exchanges that manifest our expression of plurality in the Public are fundamentally

⁵ While this is the strongest version of my proposal, a weaker version would be consistent with my argument as long as it recognized a weak separation between the realms of human life.

epistemic; this is why EI concerns us here. The epistemic aspect of plurality is one's epistemic agency and what happens when a speaker suffers the harm of EI is that their epistemic agency is restricted. This restriction then impinges upon the expression of plurality and prevents people from fully participating in human plurality as such. This is why EI is more than just discriminating against certain speakers; it becomes an act of dehumanization within an Arendtian socio-political framework.

Arendt's Framework

Hannah Arendt was a political thinker of the 20th century who focused her writings on the 'totalizing' effects of contemporary society on the individual. Through her analysis of European history, she develops the three realms of the human condition as a way to promote individual liberty while still recognizing the necessity that people rely on the others in their communities. The first step for my argument is to put a bit more detail into the three realms and the different types of human activity which are associated with each. Arendt argues that there are three basic divisions of the world which correspond to different sorts of activity: Labor (Private), Work (Social), and Action (Public).⁶ The conditions of human existence—the material and social realities which are necessary for our form of life—impose this organization on the way that we conceptualize our reality. As Arendt says, "...the world into which we are born, would not exist without the human activity which produced it, as in the case of fabricated things; which takes care of it, as in the case of cultivated land; or which established it through organization, as in the case of the body politic."⁷ Our Labor creates the Private realm as a space for the nourishment of

⁶ Hannah Arendt, "Labor, Work, Action," in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. Peter Baehr (New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2000), 167.

⁷ Hannah Arendt, "The Public and the Private Realm," in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. Peter Baehr (New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2000), 182.

our physiological needs. It is where we do the “labor to produce whatever is necessary to keep the human organism alive...”⁸ That is, Labor is the activity which is fundamental to the material existence of the human being as such. It is how we produce the consumption objects and the machines that we use to create them. This activity dictates the nature of the Private realm as an arena of Labor and the space in which we fulfill the material needs of our bodies such as nourishment.

In the same way that Labor crystalizes the structure of the Private realm, Work crystalizes the structure of the Social realm (and as I will discuss below, Action crystalizes the structure of the Political). By ‘crystallization’ I mean that the activities of these realms shape them through the objects and artifacts that they produce. The Social realm continues the crystallization of power⁹ through the activity of Work which

as distinguished from the labor of our bodies, fabricates the sheer unending variety of things whose sum total constitutes the human artifice, the world we live in. They are not consumer goods but use-objects, and their proper use does not cause them to disappear. They give the world the stability and solidity without which it could not be relied upon to house the unstable and mortal creature that is man.¹⁰

This is the area of life where people work their jobs, socialize, and create organizations through which power is realized. As opposed to the ‘consumption objects’ produced by labor, the ‘artifacts’ or ‘use objects’ produced by work are not destroyed when they are used.¹¹

⁸ Arendt, “Labor, Work, Action,” 167.

⁹ In the next section we will see in detail how power is generated as a product of the concerted effort of human activity.

¹⁰ Arendt, “Labor, Work, Action,” 173.

¹¹ Consider the standard consumer object in this scheme: food. When you consume food, it is destroyed (of course the nutrients are absorbed into your body, but the object no longer exists as such). On the other hand, the sorts of things produced by work are objects like tools or pieces of technology; they are not destroyed when they are used but can be re-used again and again (assuming that they are not damaged). A tangential thought along these lines is how we might categorize the production of art. We use the word ‘consume’ when talking about receiving certain types of art like film or television, but it isn’t destroyed when it is used. I’m not sure that it’s something in the same vein as a use object either. Of course, there is a physical substance to art but part of what gives it value is the

Finally, in the Public realm Action is done: “With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance.”¹² Action, for Arendt, is the ‘words and deeds’ which allow us to express ourselves in our full plurality.¹³ This way of ‘inserting’ ourselves into the affairs of people in general, a community, etc. is what power is, and I want to stress this importance of acting *in the world*. Because,

[t]he activity of labor does not need the presence of others, though a being laboring in complete solitude would not be human but an *animal laborans* in the word’s most literal significance. Man working and fabricating and building a world inhabited only by himself would still be a fabricator, though not *homo faber*: he would have lost his specifically human quality and, rather, be a god—not, to be sure, the Creator, but a divine-demiurge as Plato described him in one of his myths. Action alone is the exclusive prerogative of man; neither a beast nor a god is capable of it, and only action is entirely dependent upon the constant presence of others.¹⁴

According to Arendt we are not able to express our significance as human beings if we are not conducting activity that is in the world with other people. To put it simply: Labor can be done in solitude, Work can be done by non-human entities, and Action is what distinguishes the human animal as something other than an animal or an automaton. You can certainly go off and exist as a hermit, laboring and working on your own, but you would not be able to perform Action without other people, and you certainly would not be generating any social or political power. The activities which you could do would be hollow to the degree that you would only be doing them for or with yourself. As Arendt puts it,

experience that we have when we consume it. That being said, it seems like art might be the sort of thing (or one of the sorts of things) that is produced by the activity of the Political realm: action (or more precisely speech and testimony). We might then say that art is a species of ‘testimonial object.’

¹² Arendt, “Labor, Work, Action,” 178.

¹³ Notice that despite the use of the word ‘action’ this also includes speech. In epistemological terminology, this is testimony; or the way in which we communicate knowledge about beliefs and mental states with one another. The highest form of activity for Arendt, then, includes the necessary activity for social epistemology!

¹⁴ Arendt, “The Public and the Private Realm,” 182.

Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter, corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world. While all aspects of the human condition are somehow related to politics, this plurality is specifically *the condition*—not only the *conditio sine qua non*, but the *conditio per quam*—of all political life.¹⁵

You would not be able to manifest plurality if you were not laboring and working in the presence of others; there would be no one to *recognize* your plurality, no one to reify your identity as anything more than an *animal laborans* or *homo faber*. You would never achieve the status of *zōon politikon*.

So, Arendt describes the way that we have structured the world: according to her there are three distinct realms in which Labor, Work, and Action are done. These exist horizontally and do not interact with one another; a certain behavior is one of these types of activities and only one. However, this seems contrary to our lived experience of the world. The things that a person does and the places they go can and do involve an intermingling of these different realms of activity. Take for example a public school. It involves both the Social *and* the Public;¹⁶ it is a space where people emerge from their Private spaces to engage with one another (the Social), but it is also a space where equality ought to be maintained because it is a zone of expressing one's plurality (the Public). In order to account for situations like this—of the mingling of different types of activity—I suggest an alternative interpretation of the structuring of the realms of human activity: a vertical orientation which acknowledges how these different realms are reliant on one another.

To get a general sense of these two types of structures consider the following metaphor: the way that Arendt lays out her framework is like a ranch-style house—a single floor structure

¹⁵ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 7.

¹⁶ This conjunction will be important for the critique of Arendt in the following chapter.

where each room is separated. You can move between the rooms, but when you do, you must close the door as soon as you enter another room; there are always barriers between them. The problem with this framework is that it fails to capture our actual experience of human society or Arendt's own understanding of power and authority, which require an intermingling of different sorts of human behaviors. The different activities of human life are not, in fact, strictly segmented off from one another; each bleeds over into the others. I argue that a vertical version of this framework (my Neo-Arendtianism) is a more accurate representation of how the different moving parts of human society interact.¹⁷ The three realms mentioned above function as three levels of the house which are built on top of one another. It is not a ranch-style anymore but a multilevel home where the first level represents the Private realm. It is where the water pipes enter the house, there is a kitchen and bedrooms, as well as all the other things that the physical nature of our human condition demands. The second level is the Social realm where you have your entertainment systems, TVs, a computer for socializing and working remotely. It is filled with 'use-objects,' things which are not consumed upon their use, and is the most 'human made' of the three levels. Finally, the third floor is the Public realm. Here, you have a balcony and a writing desk. You can step out and take a broad view of your neighborhood, converse with your neighbors on their balconies about neighborhood policy and debate the various proposals. The thing about this house, like all others, is that you can move between the floors, bringing a snack from the first floor with you, or a book from the second. There is a porous movement between these realms where they meet, and this is integral for the continued existence of the house itself. You need to satisfy your needs on the first floor before you can work or entertain yourself on the

¹⁷ Before going any further I want to caution away from conflating the verticality of my position with notions of hierarchy. Certainly, hierarchies are vertical power relations, but once we understand power as Arendt does, I think that it will become clear that verticality *does not* entail hierarchy.

second. And there, you need to fulfill your needs of socialization and such, so that you can have the knowledge of what the interpersonal world is actually like before you can go up to the third floor and suggest changes to problems which you've identified. This arrangement better accounts for how Arendt herself understands power and authority. Below, I describe how the relationship between power and authority flows through the realms of the human condition. But first, I will consider an objection to my neo-Arendtian framework.

Power and Authority

Arendt takes great care to distinguish between different concepts of rulership, and particularly salient for this discussion are 'power' and 'authority.' Power and authority are of interest because they characterize the development of Arendt's triadic conception of the human condition. Power is a decentralized form of rulership that emanates from people acting in concert while authority is a centralized form of rulership that derives from the 'buy-in' to institutions and the positions within them. I will argue that this foundation gives rise to my reconfiguration of her framework so that it might answer the criticisms laid against it. Arendt presents her framework as horizontal—each section of the tripartite world is held up next to the others as completely distinct and equal—but this horizontal, individuated framework fails to account for the interrelational reality of the human world. The alternative which I introduced above is a vertical organization which allows for diffusions between the different realms of activity and it acknowledges the flows of power (up) and authority (down).

Arendt differentiates between 'power,' 'authority,' and other potentially conflated concepts, in terms of how they describe various ways that rulership is expressed.¹⁸ The sense of

¹⁸ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1970), 43.

rulership that is used here refers to the ways that an individual or organization might exert their will over other people. “*Power* corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and only remains in existence so long as the group keeps together.”¹⁹ Political power is the expression of the ‘common will’ of a group of people, the way that together they express their desire for things to be a certain way. An example of this is a popular movement which achieves a social or political change desired by the people who make up the group.

Power can achieve this because it is the source of political authority. “*Authority*...can be vested in persons—there is such a thing as personal authority, as, for instance, in the relation between a parent and a child, between teacher and pupil—or it can be invested in offices... Its hallmark is unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey; neither coercion or persuasion is needed.”²⁰ Authority, then, is a recognition of power and further expression of it. Power distills upward through the organization of a society: it begins at the lower level with the people in general and rises to the political leaders where it is crystallized in the authority of offices. As Arendt puts it by way of Cicero, “*potestas in populo, auctoritas in senatu.*”²¹ Through this distilling process, power comes to be invested in offices, social structures, and institutions. It goes from being a property of people to being a property of a social role and as such it becomes a reflection and recognition of the power which enabled it in the first place. Thus, the initial source of power is generated by a sort of decentralized rulership as it arises from people doing things in concert; in a genealogical sense it begins when people labor together

¹⁹ Arendt, 44.

²⁰ Arendt, 45.

²¹ Arendt, 43. n.65; ‘power in the people, authority in the senate.’

(material power), when people work together (social power), and when people act together (political power).

Power is the crystallization of the various particularities of a group into a singular expression—the political will—for a brief moment or longer, such that it becomes a program of activity that the whole community follows. When power expresses itself in this way (and is considered legitimate, as we will see in the following chapter exactly why violence can delegitimize power) it becomes political authority. Authority begets a genuine obedience, then, because it is a recognition of the particularities of power. It is genuine because it does not rely on force or violence to justify it; these methods are destructive and only engender further uses of their methodologies. “Where commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use; and the question of this obedience is not decided by command-obedience relation but by opinion, and, of course, by the number of those who share it. Everything depends on the power behind the violence.”²² When obedience, and by extension authority, breaks down—that is, when the power which undergirds it is no longer recognized or that power disintegrates—violence and force cannot be used to maintain the social order. The use of violence delegitimizes power because as a force that justifies control through community activity, power is legitimate when it is not coercive through violence or the threat of violence. When violence enters the scene power becomes a crude method of control. What this means is that legitimate obedience to an authority entails that the authority was generated by power that was not infected with violence. This understanding of power and authority will prove important because it reveals how the realms of

²² Arendt, 49.

the human condition are not the strictly separated venues—as Arendt seems to contend—but that they are interconnected realms that influence one another.

Epistemic Agency

It is important to conceptualize plurality not just as a political aspect of the human condition, but also as epistemic. That is, we need to think of both the political and epistemic relations between different people when making axiological assessments. Raoul J. Adam is a pedagogical scholar who offers a way of understanding plurality in just such a way. He argues that academic institutions have “*epistemic identities*, that is, dispositional beliefs about knowledge and the nature of knowledge that are socially and psychologically constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed.”²³ I will repurpose this concept by reconfiguring it in terms of Arendtian plurality and social epistemology. My neo-Arendtian framework articulated above can help us understand what is happening with EI, but first we need a concept of the epistemic self. Transposing Adam’s concept of institutional epistemic identity to individuals allows us to acknowledge and navigate the social realities of being the sort of agent which is capable of successfully giving and receiving testimony. This illuminates something interesting about EI in terms of the social nature of epistemic phenomena. In Arendt’s framework we exist as intersocial beings and to exist, we must exist with other people. It means that our epistemic considerations must also necessitate (at least) some sort of intersocial quality. As she writes,

The special relationship between action and being together seems fully to justify the early translation of Aristotle’s *zōon politikon* by *animal socialis*, already found in Seneca, which then became the standard translation through Thomas Aquinas: *homo es naturaliter politicus, id est, socialis* (“man is by nature political, that is, social”). More than any elaborate theory, this unconscious substitution of the social for the political betrays the extent to which the original

²³ Raoul J Adam, “Conceptualising the Epistemic Dimension of Academic Identity in an Age of Neo-Liberalism,” *Education Research and Perspectives: An International Journal* 39 (2012): 71.

Greek understanding of politics had been lost. For this, it is significant but not decisive that the word “social” is Roman in origin and has no equivalent in Greek language or thought. Yet the Latin usage of the word *societas* also originally had a clear, though limited, political meaning; it indicated an alliance between people for a specific purpose, as when men organize in order to rule others or to commit a crime. It is only with the latter concept of a *societas generis humani*, a “society of man-kind,” that the term “social” begins to acquire the general meaning of a fundamental human condition.²⁴

Arendt suggests that this view of what it means to be human, which comes from Aristotle through Aquinas’ translation, conflates the political and social character of the human subject as one and the same; ‘man is by nature political, that is, social.’ If all we had was Aquinas’ understanding, then we would think that the social and political were one and the same. But, per Arendt, this conflation is a result of the linguistic histories of these concepts. While the Greeks lacked a word for the ‘social,’ the Roman conception, *societas*, suggested a political society—potentially the origin of Aquinas’ conflation—however, as a ‘society of man-kind,’ *societas* indicates an intersocial organization which is distinct from a purposeful political organization as such.

Importantly, it is not the sociability of humankind which distinguishes it from other animals. Plato and Aristotle both recognized that “man cannot live outside the company of men, but they did not count this condition among the specifically human characteristics.”²⁵ The necessarily human characteristics for the ancient Greeks came from how humans organized our political practices. Arendt comes to this conclusion because “the human capacity for political organization is not only different from but stands in direct opposition to that natural association whose center is the home (*oikia*) and the family.”²⁶ The familial or household ties of the Private realm, as well as Social relations of friendships or occupations are not uniquely human sorts of

²⁴ Arendt, “The Public and the Private Realm,” 182–83.

²⁵ Arendt, 183.

²⁶ Arendt, 183.

organization; they still rest on the need for resources, goods, and practices which many biological subjects must meet in order to satisfy their physiological and psychological needs. It is in our political construction of the Public realm that we see the expression of what is uniquely and essentially human. Moreover, as Arendt continues this demarcation, “of all the activities necessary and present in human communities, only two were deemed to be political and to constitute what Aristotle called the *bios politikos*, namely action (*praxis*) and speech (*lexis*), out of which rises the realm of human affairs...”²⁷ If *praxis* and *lexis* are the uniquely human activities which arise from the political realm, then by syllogism we can see that *lexis* and *praxis* are the expressions of human uniqueness, and when these activities are undertaken by individuals, they are expressions of a particular human’s identity; that is, the uniquely human things that make you, *you*.

Focusing more specifically on *lexis* reveals the fundamentally epistemic (that is, socially epistemic) nature of this conception of what it means to be human. Epistemically, *lexis* corresponds to testimony as the way in which we transmit ideas, beliefs, pieces of knowledge, etc., from one subject to others. If this is part of the activity that makes a person uniquely human, then we can see (and will see once a clearer picture of EI has been sketched) that denying a person’s capacity of *lexis* is tantamount to denying their unique human subjectivity, which Arendt calls human ‘plurality.’ We are working to a conception of epistemic agency that will capture the political and social aspects of plurality as articulated by Arendt. This recognizes how individuals in this socio-political framework also operate within an epistemic framework. Because *lexis* is about the transfer of testimony—an epistemic act—then we cannot talk about

²⁷ Arendt, 183.

the political without considering the epistemic and *vice versa*. And, this also gestures towards the harms that can arise from a social epistemic environment: epistemic injustice.

What is particularly important about this concept how it involves the ways that individuals identify themselves as epistemic agents—the sort of agent capable of producing and contributing knowledge within their community—through the use of an ‘epistemic filter.’ This is a concept developed by social epistemologists Filippo Ferrari and Sebastiano Moruzzi, in their exploration of the interaction between ‘fake news’ and science denialism. As they define it, an epistemic filter is “*the (set of) background assumption(s) that the enquirer implicitly or explicitly takes on board in conducting her enquiry.*”²⁸ This filter acts as a mechanism which allows for epistemic success by determining not just the type of evidence which the inquirer accepts, but also the agents who qualify as trustworthy testifiers for them to begin with. This gets at the basic idea of EI: the intersection of social identity and the power of epistemic credibility. What EI articulates is that when people are discredited as potential knowers, this deflation of their capacity as an epistemic agent does them an injustice because of how it conflicts with their epistemic agency as an expression of their plurality. This helps us understand the harm of EI as deeper than merely deflating an agent’s epistemic position, when we commit EI we are also restricting the victim’s capacity to participate in their full human plurality.

A person’s epistemic filter also constitutes their ‘epistemic self-conception.’ This is “a commitment that reflects the kind of enquirer we take ourselves to be.... the conception that a subject has of herself qua inquirer.”²⁹ An agent’s epistemic self-conception is the foundation for

²⁸ Filippo Ferrari and Sebastiano Moruzzi, “Enquiry and Normative Deviance: The Role of Fake News in Science Denialism,” in *The Epistemology of Fake News*, ed. Sven Bernecker, Amy K. Flowerree, and Thomas Grundmann (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2021), 113.

²⁹ Ferrari and Moruzzi, 113–14.

their epistemic identity—the type of epistemic agent that they want to be or see themselves as. Epistemic injustice precludes people from participating in the knowledge generation and exchange endeavor which is fundamental to the Public realm. This activity is fundamental to what distinguishes the Public as a space for the exchange of testimonial objects and it is what makes the human community uniquely human. What happens when this injustice occurs is that the testimony of the maligned epistemic agent is disregarded as uncredible or the agent themselves are deemed untrustworthy. “[I]t is reasonable to understand epistemic injustices as impeding (unjustly) on the exercise of one’s *epistemic agency*.”³⁰ When people are disregarded as epistemic agents their plurality is also deflated and this restricts their capacity to participate in the broader organization of human life. Particularly in our organization of human society which places so much emphasis on scientific and technical knowledge, if someone is denied access to a certain type of knowledge, their ability to participate in society itself is effectively hampered. Moreover, by deflating an agent’s credibility unjustly, they are prevented from contributing to the further development of society as a whole and providing their own standpoint which may provide a solution or a novel remedy to a problem. Analogously, we can think of when a citizen of a democracy is denied the right to vote. This is a harm against them which restricts their capability of ‘speaking’ in the political environment, but they also lack the direct route (voting in pro-suffrage candidates) to affect changes that would earn their enfranchisement.

In Arendtian terms, the deflation caused by EI is vicious because it affects the way that a person can express their plurality. This expression is the basis for the actualization of power and authority, and by extension participation in the socio-political space. So, what EI is doing in

³⁰ Heidi Grasswick, “Understanding Epistemic Trust Injustices and Their Harms,” *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 84 (November 2018): 72.

terms of epistemic identity and human plurality is unjustly diminishing agents as a function of the agent's *social* identity. When an agent is limited in their capacity as an epistemic agent, it inhibits their capacity to participate in the political realm where they can rightly express their individual plurality and freedom; it restricts their autonomy of expression by telling them the things for which they are or are not trustworthy. Moreover, when *other* agents are shown preferential epistemic regard—that is, they are given more epistemic trust than is warranted—it reinforces a deflated sense of epistemic self-conception in other knowers. This deflation is a function of the amount of epistemic trust or distrust which is allotted to the agent.

Epistemic trust is a subspecies of trust in general which has been defined in terms of reliance and confidence: “All forms of trust must have a reliance and confidence aspect *qua* trust. Thus, part of our account of [epistemic trust] will involve...these two clusters to fit a distinctively epistemic concept.”³¹ That is, the truster must depend on the trustee for some piece of testimony, and the truster must be confident that their trust in the latter will bring them epistemic success. This is a normal sociological process which we go through: determining who is deserving of our epistemic trust, and usually this discernment is done through identifying social roles to which we ascribe epistemic credibility regarding some domain (such as scientist, doctor, etc.).³² However, EI complicates the matter, as we will see in the next chapter more explicitly, by adding (unjust) attitudes about social identity into the considerations for trustworthiness. This injustice occurs when global or systematic prejudices, stereotypes, etc., affect the credibility of an agent. When an agent is subjected to this unjustified credibility deficit they are also restricted from expressing the plurality of their humanity.

³¹ Benjamin W. McCraw, “The Nature of Epistemic Trust,” *Social Epistemology* 29, no. 4 (October 2, 2015): 419.

³² There is some potential overlap here with the concept of expertise to which has received much philosophical attention in the past. See Goldman (2011).

Virtue Epistemology and Epistemic Injustice

Through this project I am gesturing at an epistemology which is grounded in the socio-political space, and as such ethical considerations will map onto this framework in at least some limited capacity. Linda Zagzebski is a philosopher who argues for just such an intimate connection between ethics and epistemology. She writes, “[t]he deepest disputes in epistemology focus on concepts that are quite obviously ethical and often are borrowed directly from theoretical moral discourse.”³³ At a certain level this connection is experientially self-evident, because “the association of praise and blame is explicitly extended to states of knowledge and ignorance when we use such expressions as ‘She should have known better.’”³⁴ In using this sort of language to talk about the features of a person’s beliefs, we imply that they also have normative epistemic responsibilities. In the same way that we normatively assess moral behaviors and actions, we also normatively assess epistemic behaviors and actions. That is, there are certain obligations we have toward other potential knowers insofar as promoting their epistemic agency. Furthermore, these practices are ‘good’ because they generate more epistemic success within the community of knowers.

To have a virtue epistemology—an approach to the questions of epistemology in a neo-Aristotelian tradition which focuses the discussion on agents and the intellectual virtues or vices they possess—we must also say something regarding what sorts of virtues it will be describing. These will be intellectual virtues as distinct from intellectual faculties. “It is quite obvious that sight, hearing, and memory are faculties, and...the Greeks identified virtues, not with faculties themselves, but with the excellences of faculties.”³⁵ But, intellectual virtues are not excellencies

³³ Linda Zagzebski, *Virtues of the Mind* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), *xiii*.

³⁴ Zagzebski, 6.

³⁵ Zagzebski, 10.

of the senses. Zagzebski points out different lists of what count as intellectual from Aristotle to Spinoza. “None of [those] qualities are faculties like sight or hearing,”³⁶ she notes. We might then think that intellectual virtues are the sorts of intellectual capacities that are truth conducive—the sorts of practices which help us arrive at accurate beliefs about the world—and this indicates that the capacities (and their subsequent virtues) are more than just intellectual, but epistemic as well. Zagzebski argues “truth conduciveness is an essential component of intellectual virtues” and that these virtues are grounded “in the motivation for knowledge.”³⁷ In terms of particular epistemic virtues, we will see below that Fricker is concerned with a ‘critical openness to the world’ as her virtue of epistemic justice which allows us to accept testimony while recognizing the biases which may be affecting our credibility assessments of speakers.

Zagzebski’s virtue epistemological approach centers the epistemic agent as the locus of philosophical investigation; this is why considerations about epistemic agency are so important. As Zagzebski says, “The mark of a virtue theory of morality is that the primary object of evaluation is persons or inner traits of persons rather than acts.”³⁸ Virtue epistemology brings our focus back to the individual and will help us to understand a deeper aspect of Arendtian plurality. Understanding epistemology as a practice that is grounded in the cognitive features and practices of the agent allows us to recognize these features and practices as expressions of what makes these agents unique in terms of their testimony and the sorts of language they use in their interpretations of their beliefs. Virtue epistemology reveals how testimony—that is, *lexis*—is an explicit expression of our plurality in political as well as epistemic terms. The harm of EI is clear: it restricts the capacity of an individual as a potential knower.

³⁶ Zagzebski, 11.

³⁷ Zagzebski, 13.

³⁸ Zagzebski, 15.

In her book on the subject, *Epistemic Injustice*, Miranda Fricker argues that there are “two forms of epistemic injustice:”³⁹ testimonial and hermeneutical injustice. “Testimonial injustice occurs when prejudice causes a hearer to give a deflated level of credibility to a speaker’s word; hermeneutical injustice occurs at a prior stage, when a gap in collective interpretive resources puts someone at an unfair disadvantage when it comes to making sense of their social experiences.”⁴⁰ Testimonial injustice focuses on the credibility of testifiers, while hermeneutical focuses on structures that undermine their capacity to be fully epistemic agents.

Thinking about epistemology using Arendtian terms, we can consider how epistemology maps onto the different realms of human activity. A ‘Private epistemology’ involves individualistic practices of affirming one’s epistemic agency. We might think of these as intellectual virtues of logical consistency or other sorts of reasoning practices. A ‘Social epistemology’ involves practices which would allow individuals to discriminate the sorts of things they accept as testimony. And a ‘Political epistemology’ involves top-down practices across a community to ensure the equality of agents as knowers and to protect their capacities for giving testimony. Notice that the latter two represent the areas in which we must engage in epistemic discussion with other people. And these areas are where the problems come in! When we apply this socio-political framework to the epistemic argument of Fricker, testimonial EI primarily occurs in the realm of ‘Social epistemology’ and that hermeneutical EI primarily occurs in the realm of ‘Political epistemology.’ Moreover, we will also see that this view lends itself to my own argument against the strict separation of the Private-Social-Public. The fact that these forms of EI are indicative cases of each variety of epistemology does not mean that they

³⁹ Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 2007), 1.

⁴⁰ Fricker, 1.

might only occur in those contexts, and so this will justify the understanding of the Private-Social-Public as fundamentally interconnected.

Fricker says,

The overarching aim [of her project] is to bring to light certain ethical aspects of two of our most basic everyday epistemic practices: conveying knowledge to others by telling them, and making sense of our own social experiences. Since the ethical features in question result from the operation of social power in epistemic interactions, to reveal them is also to expose a politics of epistemic practice.⁴¹

That is, Fricker brings into focus how epistemology has an ethical dimension: it is more than just access to knowledge, it is also how we negotiate power relations and determine who is qualified as a knower. We need to account for and assess the normative and political implications of what it means to be an epistemic agent in a socio-political context where relations of power and authority come to bear on one's status *as* an epistemic agent. Once we look more closely at her concepts of EI, my employment of Arendt's framework as an additional layer of analysis will become clearer.

Fricker argues for a methodological gap-closing between epistemology and ethics which situates the epistemic practice within the context of social norms.

[The methodology] should take the form of asking first-order ethical questions in the context of socially situated accounts of our epistemic practices.... This socially situated conception makes questions of power and its sometimes rational, sometimes counter-rational rhythms arise naturally as we try to account for the epistemic practice itself.... Starting from the socially situated conception, by contrast, allows us to trace some of the interdependencies of power, reason, and epistemic authority in order to reveal the ethical features of our epistemic practices that are integral to those practices. Ultimately, the point is to see how our epistemic conduct might become at once more rational and more just.⁴²

⁴¹ Fricker, 1–2.

⁴² Fricker, 3–4.

So, we need to navigate between the epistemic and social aspects of interpersonal interaction, but understand how those interpose on each other as well. What we need, says Fricker, is a way to bridge between epistemology and ethics such that it enables the uptake of knowledge⁴³ as well as the affirmation and maintenance of the epistemic agent. Part of what is at play here is Fricker's concept of "*identity power*—a form of social power which is directly dependent upon shared social-imaginative conceptions of the social identities of those implicated in the particular operation of power."⁴⁴ This is the idea that power can be imbued socially, in the form of social identities. In the United States particularly salient examples of identifiers that carry with them a certain amount of identity power are ones like 'white' or 'man.'

Testimonial Injustice

Fricker proffers that testimonial injustice arises through expressions of social power relations, specifically what she calls 'identity power.'⁴⁵ That is, the sort of social power that is bound up in the privilege of one's social identities. She distinguishes between 'agential' and 'structural' power; the former "is exercised by an agent,"⁴⁶ and the latter "is so thoroughly dispersed through the social system that we should think of it as lacking a subject."⁴⁷ This distinction does not just delineate between individual and structural sorts of expressions of social power, it also creates an epistemic parallel to the distinction between different sorts of rulership described by Arendt. Agential power is better thought of as *authority* rather than as a different realization of power *per se*. As I discussed above, power involves people acting in concert, as

⁴³ An analysis of knowledge is not the topic of this paper, but you may substitute 'justified belief' if you find the concept of knowledge as such suspect enough.

⁴⁴ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 4.

⁴⁵ Fricker, 9.

⁴⁶ Fricker, 10.

⁴⁷ Fricker, 10–11.

opposed to authority which is power that is imbued into offices or social roles. Authority relies on group ‘buy-in’ in order for it to be maintained. Fricker uses the example of a traffic warden and how their power is realized through parking tickets and the authority that is implied by that social role. The warden only has power because the community has agreed to some minimal extent that the fines they give out must be paid. The individual relation between the warden and the recipient of the parking ticket is not a power relation; the power relation would be between the state as an institution constituted by group buy-in and the recipient of the ticket.⁴⁸ Fricker points out that “even in agential operations of power, however, power is already a structural phenomenon, for power is always dependent on practical co-ordination with other social agents.”⁴⁹ What constitutes the relation between the warden and the recipient is authority. Authority, then, is the source of Fricker’s agential identity power when it is realized at the individual level.⁵⁰ Moreover, it is not a great leap to believe that testimonial credibility plays into the authority of a subject. Someone can have more authority because they have greater credibility, and they can be more credible because they have more authority.⁵¹ Injustice arises when either of these qualities are granted in excess or withheld without a well justified reason.

In terms of social power, the point, says Fricker, “is to *effect social control*, whether it is a matter of particular agents controlling what other agents do or of people’s action being

⁴⁸ There should be something said here as well about how the state also expresses the threat of violence (either explicitly or implicitly) in order to enforce the parking ticket scheme. Non-compliance will lead to greater fines and the eventual impounding (theft) of the vehicle.

⁴⁹ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 11.

⁵⁰ In a sense, this is the ultimate destination for power when it is institutionalized and invested in agents of the state. Power distills up through the congregational effort of the people, it is crystallized into authority in the state apparatus, and is exercised back at the individual level through interpersonal interactions between citizens and state representatives like the police. However, it is also possible that this final stage of the expression of power, in the context of the relations between individuals and the state, is where power and authority become conflated with violence. If this is the case, then it might be the case that epistemic injustice itself is a form of violence or at least violence-adjacent.

⁵¹ Whether this relationship between authority and credibility is justified is another matter entirely.

controlled purely structurally.”⁵² This gets back to Arendt’s basic notion for distinguishing between power and authority, but in her case these are different concepts to describe the different relations of rulership between people. The essence of social power is in how it actualizes these relations of rulership.⁵³ Moreover, she suggests that “placing the notion of control at its centre lends the appropriate critical inflection: wherever power is at work, we should be ready to ask who or what is controlling whom, and why.”⁵⁴ The particular form of social power that is important for testimonial injustice is ‘identity power.’ “Wherever there is an operation of power that depends in some significant degree upon such shared imaginative conceptions of social identity, then *identity power* is at work.”⁵⁵ Identity power, as Fricker presents it, is a sort of social power that derives its authority from social identities (sex, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) that are at play in a given social context. Moreover, it requires a buy-in from the members of a community where that power is realized and performed:

Whether an operation of identity power is active or passive, it depends very directly on imaginative social co-ordination: both parties must share in the relevant collective conceptions of what it is to be a man and what it is to be a woman, where such conceptions amount to stereotypes (which may or may not be distorting ones) about men’s and women’s respective authority on this or that sort of subject matter. Note that the operation of identity power does not require that either party consciously accept the stereotype as truthful.... The conceptions of different social identities that are activated in operations of identity power need not be held at the level of belief in either er subject or object, for the primary *modus operandi* of identity power is at the level of the collective social imagination. Consequently, it can control our actions even despite our beliefs.⁵⁶

⁵² Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 13.

⁵³ By ‘rulership’ I do not mean a necessarily formal sort of arrangement, rather, I mean to get at exactly what Fricker noted, that this is about how an individual or group might control another individual or group through the realizations of their social relations.

⁵⁴ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 14.

⁵⁵ Fricker, 14.

⁵⁶ Fricker, 15.

Identity power is pervasive throughout our social world. There is some degree to which we need to rely on the stereotypes implied by identity power in order to make epistemic judgments and efficiently move through the epistemic environment. For example, we assume that the social identity ‘scientist’ means that an individual is trustworthy when it comes to their assessment of scientific data, or the identity ‘chef’ means that one is knowledgeable about various cooking techniques.

The important aspect about identity power in Fricker’s discussion is that it “often takes purely structural form.”⁵⁷ Identity power is a part of the social structure within which it is realized, and it requires group buy-in: the acquiescence from the group that certain identities carry different levels of credibility regarding different subject matters. “[I]dentity power is an integral part of the mechanism of testimonial exchange, because of the need for hearers to use social stereotypes as heuristics in their spontaneous assessments of their interlocutor’s credibility.”⁵⁸ Furthermore, the division of cognitive labor means that “the use of stereotypes may be entirely proper, or it may be misleading, depending on the stereotype.”⁵⁹ However, this opens up the door for testimonial injustice, specifically in the case of prejudicial stereotypes. The use of prejudices means that stereotypes which unduly increase a subject’s credibility or unduly reduces a subject’s credibility may form, and these are problematic epistemically (they limit our access to knowledge or provide us with false or unjustified knowledge) as well as ethically (“the speaker is wrongfully undermined in her capacity as a knower”⁶⁰).

⁵⁷ Fricker, 16.

⁵⁸ Fricker, 16–17.

⁵⁹ Fricker, 17.

⁶⁰ Fricker, 17.

Credibility, then, is the subject of the uniquely epistemic-ethical virtue that Fricker is motioning towards here. That is, in order to fully recognize another person in their full plurality they must also be recognized as a full knower (or someone who can potentially contribute to the common well of knowledge in some way or another). Moreover, she notes that “unlike those goods that are fruitfully dealt with along distributive lines (such as wealth or health care), there is no puzzle about the fair distribution of credibility, for credibility is a concept that wears its proper distribution on its sleeve.... Credibility is not generally finite...and so there is no...competitive demand to invite the distributive treatment.”⁶¹ Credibility is not limited like material resources are and so a notion of distributive justice in which each subject would be given an equal or equitable amount of credibility does not apply; every subject is entitled to as much credibility as their situation merits. The point of the concept of epistemic injustice is to draw our attention to instances where biases and prejudices deflate a potential knower’s credibility and ability to be a full-fledged contributor to the common pool of knowledge.

The exemplar case of testimonial injustice, says Fricker, is one that is systematic and prejudicial to one’s social identity. “Systematic testimonial injustices, then, are produced not by prejudice *simpliciter*, but specifically by those prejudices that ‘track’ the subject through different dimensions of social activity—economic, educational, professional, sexual, legal, political, and so on.”⁶² The systematic quality of this concept spells out how it is not concerned merely with prejudice in some singular or small group of instances. Rather, it concerns the case when some sort of prejudice that is related to some aspect of a person’s social identity is tracked throughout multiple sorts of social activity. What this constitutes is a structural instantiation of

⁶¹ Fricker, 19–20.

⁶² Fricker, 27.

testimonial injustice such that individuals suffer a credibility deflation as a function of some aspect of their personal identity. The structural understanding of this injustice bears out in social hierarchy relations such that it reinforces those very relations. Regardless of which is primitive (the hierarchy or the injustice) testimonial injustice serves as the foundation of maintaining the system of an unjust power hierarchy. In the following chapter I will discuss how Arendt's own framework fails to acknowledge our socio-political realities as an exemplification of this feature of EI.

Hermeneutical Injustice

Fricker approaches the second species of EI, hermeneutical injustice, with a feminist lens which "has long been concerned with the way in which relations of power can constrain women's ability to understand their own experience."⁶³ This idea of how power can constrain understanding paints a clear picture of exactly what is going on with hermeneutical injustice: it is when conditions imposed on us by the structure of the Private, Social, and Public realms constrain our understanding in a way that deflates our capacities for expression. It becomes unjust when it does so in a way that restricts the conceptual language we use to describe our experiences of personal injustices. The important thing to understand about this idea is "the suggestion that the powerful have an unfair advantage in structuring collective social understandings."⁶⁴ People who have greater social power are able to develop the concepts in the language which we use such that it reifies and reinforces their position in the socio-political hierarchy. In this way Fricker draws a distinction between the epistemic experiences of the powerful and the oppressed: "the powerful tend to have appropriate understandings of their

⁶³ Fricker, 147.

⁶⁴ Fricker, 147.

experiences ready to draw on as they make sense of their social experiences, whereas the powerless are more likely to find themselves having some social experiences through a glass darkly, with at best ill-fitting meanings to draw on in the effort to render them intelligible.”⁶⁵ Hermeneutical injustice constrains the ways in which oppressed peoples (or more broadly, people with lesser social power) are able to articulate their experiences by restricting their linguistic tools; the harm of this injustice is how it restricts the expression of a person’s plurality.

The primary example that Fricker draws on here to explicate this sort of injustice comes from the US women’s liberation movement in the late 1960s. What is particularly illuminating for the present discussion is

the method of consciousness raising through ‘speak-outs’ and the sharing of scantily understood, barely articulate experiences [as] a direct response to the fact that so much of women’s experience was obscure, even unspeakable, for the isolated individual, whereas the process of sharing these half-formed understandings awakened hitherto dormant resources for social meaning that brought clarity, cognitive confidence, and increased communicative facility.⁶⁶

Through the method of putting words to experiences of oppression, people are able to construct the conceptual framework to even begin to speak about them in the first place. This sort of liberatory methodology is an explicit example of Action as more than simply speaking or testifying: what these speak-outs did was create the epistemic space—which had been restricted through hermeneutical injustice—so that the women involved in this movement at this time could express their full plurality. The danger of hermeneutical injustice is not that it denies testimony or access to knowledge in some way, but that it denies the very conceptual capacity to

⁶⁵ Fricker, 148.

⁶⁶ Fricker, 148.

broach these discussions before we even engage the sorts of credibility deflations of testimonial injustice.

As a more explicit example of this, Fricker conveys the story of Carmita Wood from Susan Brownmiller's *In Our Time*. Wood was a victim of workplace sexual harassment, but this was at a time when the term 'sexual harassment' was not a part of our linguistic vocabulary. Wood and her legal team constructed this terminology when they were making an appeal to unemployment insurance.⁶⁷ As Fricker says,

Here is a story about how extant collective hermeneutical resources can have a lacuna where the name of a distinctive social experience should be. So described, we can see that women such as Carmita Wood suffered (among other things) an acute cognitive disadvantage from a gap in the collective hermeneutical resource. But this description does not quite capture it, for if the epistemic wrong done to Carmita Wood were construed simply as a matter of plain cognitive disadvantage, then it is unclear why the epistemic wrong is suffered only by her and not also by her harasser...For something to be an injustice, it must be harmful but also wrongful, whether because discriminatory or because otherwise unfair. In the present example, harasser and harassee alike are cognitively handicapped by the hermeneutical lacuna—neither has a proper understanding of how he is treating her—but the harasser's cognitive disablement is not a significant disadvantage to him. Indeed, there is an obvious sense in which it suits his purpose.⁶⁸

This example makes it clear that the harm done in hermeneutical injustice is not only in how it restricts testimonial credibility, but in how it restricts a testifier's capacity as a knower as such in terms of the conceptual tools at their disposal. And this is not just for purposes of liberation or resistance, but for the initial task of responding to any sort of violent or traumatic experience by being able to speak about it to begin with. In this sense, hermeneutical injustice is much more insidious than testimonial injustice because it operates at the level of our framework for language and how we form the ideas and beliefs prior to even articulating them as testimony.

⁶⁷ Fricker, 150.

⁶⁸ Fricker, 150–51.

Epistemic Perception

Before proceeding I want to address a fundamental question regarding Fricker's epistemology of testimony (or any social epistemology for that matter): that is, between inferentialist and non-inferentialist accounts of how knowledge is transmitted from testifier to hearer. "[Inferentialism] presents the hearer as gaining knowledge only if he rehearses an appropriate inference. [Non-inferentialism] seems to present the hearer as gaining knowledge by way of one or another default of uncritical receptivity such that he is entitled to accept what he is told without exercising any critical capacity."⁶⁹ Both of these options become problematic when they become the only method of transferring knowledge. For the inferentialist, whenever a hearer receives testimony, she must recreate the argument for that piece of information. But "it simply does not match our everyday phenomenology of informal testimonial exchange, which presents learning something by being told as distinctly *un-laborious* and spontaneous."⁷⁰ The experience of receiving mundane testimony (such as the time that the bus will arrive) from another knower is, in general, an uncritical enterprise which the inferentialist account makes little sense of. For the non-inferentialist "we find a picture according to which the hearer enjoys some sort of default of uncritical receptivity to what she is told."⁷¹ But Fricker suggests that when we do encounter testimony that introduces some sort of cause for doubt, we "experience a sort of intellectual shift of gear, out of that unreflective mode and into a reflective, more effortful mode of active critical assessment."⁷² When we detect a reason for doubt then it is like a gestalt shift in the valence of our assessment of the testimony: we shift from mere acceptance based on the fact

⁶⁹ Fricker, 62.

⁷⁰ Fricker, 64.

⁷¹ Fricker, 64. There is a sense of gullibility here that can make epistemic success dubious. See Elizabeth Fricker (1994).

⁷² Fricker, 65.

that we are being told this by another knower to critically accounting for why this information might be suspect and whether or not it is in fact truthful. What Fricker wants us to do so that we might get around these problems is suggest the following:

That a credibility judgement can be a perception. More specifically, such judgements are ‘theory’-laden perceptions, the ‘theory’ in question being a body of generalizations about human cognitive abilities and motivational states relating to the two aspects of trustworthiness, competence and sincerity. This idea of a credibility judgement as a perception of the speaker will help characterize the responsible hearer’s stance as one of *critical openness* to the world of others, where this stance allows her to take in knowledge as effortlessly as the phenomenology suggests.⁷³

So, to fully capture the phenomenology of the experience of testimonial exchanges, credibility judgements are in fact perceptions about the various qualities of a testifier which contribute to whether the hearer takes an open or critical stance towards what they are saying. If it seems epistemically healthy to accept it at face value then the hearer remains in a default, uncritical state. On the other hand, if there are circumstances which indicate the information is incorrect or suspect in some way, then the hearer assumes a critical state in which she begins to work through the arguments and reasoning for that piece of testimony, looking to either verify it or determine what is wrong with it on an epistemic level.⁷⁴

This sort of epistemic perception means that knowers have a certain sense for determining the epistemic success of testimony.

In order for the hearer to, so to speak, see his interlocutors in epistemic colour, the perceptual capacity would have to be informed by a background ‘theory’ (body of generalizations) not simply of human competences and motivations *per se*, but, more specifically, a socially situated ‘theory’ of the competences and motivations of this or that social type in this or that context.... That the hearer must trade in social types in this way was why...we found stereotypes to be a proper part—indeed, an essential part—of credibility judgements. It is only when the

⁷³ Fricker, 67.

⁷⁴ For more on Fricker’s discussion of the inferentialism debate see Sandy Goldberg’s “Comments on Miranda Fricker’s *Epistemic Injustice*” (2010).

stereotypes are prejudiced that something alien—a counter-rational current of identity power—has entered in.⁷⁵

When we make epistemic judgements based on credibility perceptions, we utilize stereotypes based on social identities to assess whether or not to enter the critical mode of assessment. It is when these stereotypes are influenced by relations of social power—either dictated by those relations or actively reinforcing them—that such stereotyping becomes prejudicial and enters into the realm of epistemic injustice. We can think of this sort of epistemic perception, then, as one of the intellectual capacities discussed in terms of Zagzebski’s virtue epistemology. It is a way for an epistemic agent to observe the world insofar as how they consider the credibility of other epistemic agents. When it is done well—that is, it is truth conducive and does not commit a harm against other epistemic agents—it is a virtue of epistemic justice. Conversely, when it is done poorly it will be the vice of epistemic injustice.

As Fricker argues, “the responsible hearer perceives his interlocutor in a way that is epistemically loaded—he perceives her as more, or less, credible in what she is telling him...”⁷⁶ What this means is that we must conceptualize a type of perception which is simultaneously epistemic and ethical. As an analogy Fricker examines the concept of moral perception: “in this neo-Aristotelian tradition, the sensibility of the virtuous subject is conceived as ‘trained’ or socially educated, so that the subject comes to see the world in moral colour.”⁷⁷ If people can be ‘trained’ to perceive ethical virtues or ethically virtuous action, then they can also be trained, so the analogy goes, to perceive epistemic successes or epistemically virtuous testimony. “The main idea is that where a hearer gives a suitably critical reception to an interlocutor’s word without making any inference, she does so in virtue of the perceptual deliverances of a well-trained

⁷⁵ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 72.

⁷⁶ Fricker, 72.

⁷⁷ Fricker, 72.

testimonial sensibility.⁷⁸ Testimonial sensibility serves as the capacity which we develop as knowers in a social context as a non-inferential understanding of how testimonial knowledge is transferred. It can function well or poorly and when it functions poorly this can result in epistemic injustices. The important thing to take away from this concept is that “the virtuous hearer does not arrive at her credibility judgement by applying pre-set principles of any kind, for there are none precise or comprehensive enough to do the job. She ‘just sees’ her interlocutor in a certain light, and responds to his word accordingly.”⁷⁹ There is no algorithmic method which indicates whether a testifier is credible or not. The hearer must determine if they perceive whoever is speaking to be trustworthy, and that trustworthiness is the basis for the hearer’s belief. Epistemic success, then, depends on the testifier’s perceived trustworthiness as well as the epistemic goodness of their testimony. The virtuous hearer is one who is successful in discerning between trustworthy and untrustworthy testifiers who are actually telling her things that contribute to her knowledge.

Conclusion

I want to end this section by briefly summarizing the points that I have made thus far and indicating how my modification of Arendt’s political framework reveals additional socio-political implications of EI. I began by setting the stage with Arendt’s socio-political framework: a tripartite distinction of the Private, Social, and Public realms that house different modes of human activity (labor, work, and action). I then argued Arendt’s strict distinctions fail to properly encapsulate our experience of the human world, and suggested that instead we ought to conceptualize her scheme as a vertical, rather than horizontal, organization. This model is able to

⁷⁸ Fricker, 72.

⁷⁹ Fricker, 76–77.

more accurately navigate the flows of rulership in terms of power and authority as Arendt herself understands them. Power and authority describe how rulership is generated by people acting in concert with one another (power) and how that is crystallized in Public offices or Social roles (authority). Then, I described how Fricker's EI is comprised of two species of injustice: testimonial and hermeneutical. Both of these are instances of the deflation of an agent as a potential knower or testifier of knowledge. Testimonial injustice involves the explicit discrediting of an agent as a function of their social identity, while hermeneutical injustice involves a restriction on their capacity for expressing their particularity as a function of the sorts of concepts which are enabled by the structure of power relations. Both of these intersect with the Arendtian framework in terms of how they inhibit an agent's capacity for expressing their testimony. More explicitly, they inhibit an agent's capacity for participating in action in the Public realm which is where human particularity is truly expressed. That is, they inhibit an agent *in their capacity as a human subject*. Thus, per Arendt, EI is dehumanizing.

Chapter III: Understanding Prejudice Through the Lens of Epistemic Injustice

Introduction

Now, to further explicate the connection between EI and my neo-Arendtian framework, I want to focus my attention on examples of testimonial injustice and how we might understand them in Arendtian terminology. These examples include a critique of the way that Arendt treated desegregation movements in the United States, concepts of prejudice, and an explicit example of a defendant's legal testimony being discounted. Seeing how EI can function in the world will help us understand the revelatory role which it plays in developing my neo-Arendtian framework. In terms of this framework, I will focus on the Public realm, because this realm of human activity is how human freedom as such is expressed in the form of *lexis*. If testimonial injustice restricts an individual's capacity for *lexis* (political actions such as acts and speech) then it is a phenomenon that ought to be addressed by the Public realm. Moreover, my neo-Arendtian framework recognizes that there is a connection between the different realms of human activity insofar as activities and conditions in one realm can affect and influence how human plurality and freedom are expressed in others. This demonstrates how Arendt's criticism of desegregation activists fails to recognize them as performing political speech (*lexis*). This critique of Arendt echoes Kathryn Sophia Belle's larger work on this subject: *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*.

To briefly sketch my position, I will begin by describing Arendt's argument against the imposition of legislation to mandate the desegregation of the United States' public schools in her "Reflections on Little Rock" essay. For Arendt, public schools are Social spaces; that is, spaces where discrimination is justified. As I will discuss in more detail below, Arendt's dismissal of the school desegregation movement discounts their efforts as political action. Then, I will discuss

the critiques of Arendt's position from Belle: primarily that Arendt's contention that schools are Social spaces and that the desire for integration was an attempt at social climbing. This is inaccurate to the realities of the situation as the movement was not about increasing social clout of the Black community, but for full political recognition. Next, I will focus on the concept of recognition as it is discussed by Franz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* in order to make better sense of reinterpreting Arendt in light of Belle's criticisms as well as my own reformulation of her framework. In sum, if we think of Arendt's argument while using EI as a critical lens it, will help to highlight the shortcomings of her framework. It also indicates that any reformulation of Arendt's framework ought to be able to account for an EI based critique.

Arendt on Little Rock

In her "Reflections on Little Rock," Arendt argues that discrimination was justified in Private and Social spaces (but not Public) because the Public was the only space where individual equality ought to be legally defended. That is, individuals have a right to discriminate against other groups based on their own proclivities in the Private and Social realms:

Segregation is discrimination enforced by law, and desegregation can do no more than abolish the laws enforcing discrimination; it cannot abolish discrimination and force equality upon society but it can, and indeed must, enforce equality within the body politic. For equality not only has its origin in the body politic; its validity is clearly restricted to the political realm.⁸⁰

Arendt articulates a nuanced position regarding the imposition of segregationist, discriminatory policies in the United States: that while desegregation legislation can deconstruct the aforementioned legal enforcement of segregation.⁸¹ Progressive legislation, like school

⁸⁰ Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock," in *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, ed. Peter Baehr (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2000), 237.

⁸¹ Though it should be noted that not all segregation in the United States was enforced by explicit legislation. For an example in terms of discriminatory 'redlining' housing policies see Richard Rothstein's *The Color of Law* (2017).

desegregation, cannot change the beliefs of the people who implemented those laws in the first place. So, Arendt seems to think that it is proper for legislation to enforce equality, but only in the Public realm, and not the Social or Private. In Public, equality must be defended to ensure that each individual can express their testimony in the form of *lexis*. Considering this, then, it is paramount that whatever is determined to be under the purview of the Public is of utmost importance if the performance of testimony is fundamental to the expression of human freedom! Furthermore, if we follow Arendt's strict, lateral distinctions between the different realms of human activity, then—assuming that equality ought to only be justified in the Public realm—it does indeed follow that the federally mandated desegregation of schools is a lesser priority than other legal restrictions such as anti-miscegenation laws, if school is indeed a Social space and not Public in the Arendtian sense.

When we consider these assumptions of Arendt's position on the phenomenon of testimonial injustice, the cases presented here will help to demonstrate the mistake that Arendt is making: the denial of equality in *any* space will constitute a deflation of an individual's capacity for political action in the form of testimony in the Social and Public spheres. This is to say that if we maintain Arendt's strict siloing of the different realms of human activity, then EI helps reveal how such a framework fails in its ultimate goal of promoting human liberty and justice. In fact, when we recognize the interconnection between these different realms it becomes clear that the capabilities an individual has in one area will affect their capabilities in others. That is, if someone's capacity for testimony is deflated in one area (such as the Social), then it stands to reason that it will also be deflated in another (such as the Public). So, if we want to maintain human liberty through *lexis* in the Public realm, then this capacity ought to be defended and reaffirmed for all people across all realms of human activity. EI, then, becomes inimical to the

preservation of liberty as such. Of particular note is how institutionalized discrimination can limit the capacities of individuals to express themselves in the Public realm, even if those discriminations are only affecting their Social or Private spaces. So, even if we are going to be consistent with Arendt's framework, then we must at least acknowledge how segregated public schools might affect how Black students could perform their testimony.

What I will now turn to with this chapter is a brief discussion on the nature of prejudice. I will refer to Elisabeth Young-Bruehl—a student of Arendt's—and her work on the subject: *The Anatomy of Prejudices*. When we look at the effects of EI (testimonial injustice in particular for this examination) I hope to show how the harm being committed can be understood in terms of prejudice. I will be arguing that part of why prejudice is such a vice is because it restricts human plurality by discrediting epistemic agency. As we will see, some of the most explicit examples of prejudice include ways that this harm either discredits or silences its victims; at its core prejudice is concerned with reinforcing a hierarchy of knowers in terms of restricting access to membership in the epistemic community. Moreover, and more explicitly in terms of Arendtian terminology, I will describe how prejudice emerges in the Social and extends into the Public when Work is reproduced to become a dominating factor of society.

Prejudices and Holocaust Denialism as EI

Elisabeth Young-Bruehl conducted an extensive genealogy of the various psychological and sociological studies of prejudices which were observed throughout the 20th century. She contextualizes these studies as a reaction to the cultural and ethnic exterminations conducted by

Nazi Germany.⁸² The primary target of these early studies was antisemitism, and this begat a monolithic understanding of the concept of prejudice:

[Gordon] Allport's broad idea...helped buttress two related ideas. One was that any differences of form a prejudice may assume over time or in different milieus are unimportant in comparison to prejudice's essence or nature. Antisemitism is one manifestation of prejudice in general, and not only is it essentially no different from white racism, but antisemitism in the time of Pontius Pilate is essentially no different from antisemitism in the time of Adolf Hitler.⁸³

The general methodological assumption at the time when studies of prejudice were beginning was that prejudices of all sorts were instances of the same phenomenon: some sort of discriminatory bias committed by one group against another. However, as Young-Bruehl argues, conceiving of prejudices as a singular monolith obscures how different sorts of prejudice (antisemitism, anti-Blackness, sexism, queerphobia, etc.) have different phenomenological characteristics. I will suggest that one thing which connects different forms of prejudice is that they can be characterized as forms of EI and are differentiated by the sorts of testimony that they deflate. While prejudice is not a singular phenomenon (for example anti-Black prejudice is a different sort of bias than antisemitism) that expresses itself differently based on the target of the act, we can interpret them as different species of EI. The two species I will deal with here are antisemitic and anti-Black prejudices. In the former, testimony is suppressed in the form of the denial of history-generating practices (Holocaust denialism). While in the latter it is not testimony that is suppressed, but the development of self-consciousness as self-knowledge that is denied by systems of prejudicial oppression. These two forms of prejudice are particularly relevant to my discussion considering Arendt's ethnic ties and the context of Little Rock, so they will be my focus.

⁸² Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *The Anatomy of Prejudices* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 7.

⁸³ Young-Bruehl, 17.

The point of Holocaust denial, says Young-Bruehl, is to replace the historical truth with an antisemitic version which casts the Nazi concentration camps as a massive international hoax; their ‘truth’ is superior to the facticity of history and silences the victims by denying their very victimhood. They

are impervious to argument and scornful of the legitimate historians who try to expose their fabrications and show up their lies. But ‘lies’ is not really the right word, for it presumes a conscious intention to mislead, and the deniers view their statement as leading toward what they hold to be the truth, the ends justifying the means, the obsession producing a rigid mental state of conviction that is split off from any feeling for the victims or their history.⁸⁴

The point of this sort of prejudice is to silence the victims; to deny their very capacity to speak and construct the narrative of their collective identity. As Young-Bruehl says, “this silencing is part of the sadism of antisemitism, which aims right at the victim’s need for speaking.”⁸⁵ This silencing phenomenon exhibits the connection between prejudice and testimonial injustice: testimonial injustice is nefarious because of how it dehumanizes a potential knower as a function of their capacity for contributing knowledge to the human community. Through this silencing process by antisemitic prejudice groups, those who have already been victimized by instances of mass and systematic violence are further dehumanized by having their capacity for *lexis* diminished.

To emphasize this point, Young-Bruehl conveys the story of Levi Primo through his memoir, *Survival in Auschwitz*:

The need to tell a story—an unbelievable story—and be believed, by a therapist, by family, by a larger public, by History, is the need to master (if not ever to overcome) the trauma, to make the world inhabitable again... When an antisemite

⁸⁴ Young-Bruehl, 462.

⁸⁵ Young-Bruehl, 466.

attacks the products of this need, the stories, the traumatizing is repeated, instituting another ‘final solution.’⁸⁶

By denying the victims the capacity for telling their story *and being believed*, Holocaust denialism commits a fundamentally epistemic injustice against them: it denies their right to be a legitimate source of testimony regarding their experiences and in doing so denies their access to the community of epistemic agents. As I discussed in the previous chapter, having the capacity for *lexis* is tantamount to being a member of the political community, and *that* is integral for one to assert their human plurality. Participation in the Public realm and asserting one’s plurality is necessary for the expression of human freedom as such, so if we want to engage in a political project that is as emancipatory as possible, we need to recognize the necessity of engendering the capacity for *lexis*. What antisemitic Holocaust denialism demonstrates is how testimonial injustice denies people the capacity to express their full plurality as such. It does this by undermining their legitimacy and testimonial expression by questioning their believability and silencing them.

Anti-Black Racism as EI

Kathryn Sophia Belle is a philosopher of race who has written at length on racial issues in Arendt’s writing. As Belle highlights in her book on the subject:

The purpose of this book is to acknowledge Arendt’s keen philosophical and political insights without ignoring or bracketing her problematic assertions, assumptions, and oversights regarding the Negro question. I make the following main arguments: (1) A fundamental flaw in Arendt’s orientation toward and claims concerning the Negro question is that she sees the Negro question as a Negro problem rather than a white problem; (2) Arendt’s analysis of the Jewish question has implications for her analysis of the Negro question, but Arendt does not readily connect the two; (3) Arendt’s commitment to rigidly distinguish what is properly political from the private and the social influences her analysis of the

⁸⁶ Young-Bruehl, 466.

Negro question in a way that undermines her understanding of and judgments about it.⁸⁷

I will briefly sketch this argument and couch it in the terms which I have been developing. The way that Arendt separates the Private, Social, and Public realms *also* leads her to committing EI herself. As I will discuss below, the way that Arendt defines violence and employs this definition in her discussion of student movements and protests for Black liberation commits EI by discrediting the Action of Black protesters. This is a fault with Arendt's thinking that I have already noted above in my reformation of the relation between the realms of human activity. What Belle's critique points out is how this strict separation prevents Arendt from having full knowledge about the broader human community which she inhabited. What this is showing us is how testimonial injustice can be detrimental to the perpetrator of the injustice as well—it serves as the foundation for hermeneutical injustice by laying the groundwork for the conceptual deficiencies which reify the very power imbalances which instantiated them.

In contrasting the antisemitic climate in which Arendt was raised with the treatment of Black Americans around desegregation of schools, Belle states, contra Arendt, that “integration is a thoroughly political, not simply social issue.”⁸⁸ While Arendt indicates that the schooling environment is a purely social space—that is, it is an area in which discrimination is allowed—Belle contends that it is in fact political. For Arendt, per Belle, she “suspects that Black families want to assimilate and socialize with white people so much that they are willing to rely on government intervention (in this case, legally enforced integration of public schools) to be able to mingle with them.”⁸⁹ That is, educational access becomes a method for social climbing. Surely part of what is happening is that education enables social mobility as a function of the economics

⁸⁷ Kathryn T. Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 1.

⁸⁸ Gines, 21.

⁸⁹ Gines, 22.

of the job market, but what Arendt seems to miss is how that is not the sole reason for the desire for educational attainment.

As Belle puts it, “looking at racial integration in public schools through the lens of Jewish assimilation, Arendt misreads the motivations of Black parents as deriving from a desire for acceptance and upward social mobility (like the parvenu) rather than as conscious efforts to get legally gained rights enforced by political institutions (like the pariah).”⁹⁰ That is, Arendt sees the motivation for integration to be a Social motivation—a motivation for upward social mobility—to be a parvenu. From Arendt’s point of view, the demand that was being made by Black families for integration⁹¹ was to enable them to climb the social ladder. Moreover, this social climbing, per Arendt, was not a function of having greater access to social goods as the parvenu found greater upward mobility, but merely for increased social recognition in the form of social practices such as invitations to parties, for example. This is what distinguishes the parvenu: their reasoning is for bourgeois social recognition, not the political recognition which the pariah demands. Arendt misses the reality that the integration movement was not made up of social parvenus, but political pariahs. The motivation was not only for economic benefit as a function of receiving better education. While this is certainly a material benefit, this line of thinking also reproduces stereotypical attitudes about the cognitive capabilities of Black people; it assumes if schools were segregated the white school would always produce better educational outcomes even if they received the same resources. The integration movement ought to be characterized as that of a political pariah because the motivation was for recognition as equals in all modalities of human activity: the Private, Social, and Public. The public schools were just one

⁹⁰ Gines, 23.

⁹¹ Ignoring the motivations of any white activists who were making the same demands.

venue for this struggle to be fought in a broader movement for the recognition of the Black American as fully human participator in the plurality of experience.

To further develop this point on the differences between the Black and Jewish experiences, I will look at how Frantz Fanon describes these differences. The importance for Fanon in relation to these ideas comes in his discussion of recognition and how traditional philosophical conceptions of recognition fail to acknowledge how it differs in terms of the Black experience. In *Black Skin, White Masks* Fanon is writing about the experience of existing as a Black person in France in the 20th century. He writes:

And then the occasion arose when I had to meet the white man's eyes. An unfamiliar weight burdened me. The real world challenged my claims. In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness.⁹²

Part of the Black experience for Fanon is in the development of this 'third-person' consciousness which expresses the idea that part of the Black experience is how it is imposed upon the Black subject by white society. The expectations of what it means to be Black in a white world mean that Fanon has to have a consciousness outside of himself—a third-person perspective—in order to exist and succeed. He recounts the experience of being perceived by another white passenger on a train:

I know that if I want to smoke, I shall have to reach out my right arm and take the pack of cigarettes lying at the other end of the table. The matches, however, are in the drawer on the left, and I shall have to lean back slightly. And all these movements are made not out of habit but out of implicit knowledge. A slow composition of my *self* as a body in the middle of a spatial and temporal world—such seems to be the schema.⁹³

⁹² Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (London, UK: Pluto Press, 1986), 110.

⁹³ Fanon, 111.

The white passenger perceiving Fanon as a Black body determines the way that his self-consciousness develops because he must be constantly conscious of his own actions and how those actions are being perceived.

Fanon's awareness is not just based in the immediate cultural context, but also accounting for the historicity—and in a certain sense the immutability—of the Black subject such that it becomes a 'triple person' consciousness: "Then, assailed at various points, the corporeal schema crumbled, its place taken by a racial epidermal schema. In the train it was no longer a question of being aware of my body in the third person but in a triple person...I existed triply."⁹⁴ I think what is particularly illuminating here is Fanon's notion of the 'racial epidermal schema.' What this is getting at, I surmise, is the inescapability of Blackness for Fanon; that is, the fact that regardless of how he presents himself or acts, the white world will always see him in his fullness as a Black man with all of the social, cultural, and historical implications which that entails. This is to say that for Fanon part of the oppression of the white, racialized world is how it constrains the self-construction of his own self-consciousness.

Fanon contrasts this inescapable, triple person consciousness he must have with the experience of Jewish assimilation into white society: "the Jew can be unknown in his Jewishness. He is not wholly what he is. One hopes, one waits, His actions, his behavior are the final determinant. *He is a white man* [emphasis added] ...he can sometimes go unnoticed."⁹⁵ Being Black is not inescapable in the same way that being Jewish is, and I think that this is part of what Belle is highlighting as a problem with Arendt's understanding in the issue of the motivation for desegregation of public schools. That is, because Jewish people are able to 'pass'

⁹⁴ Fanon, 112.

⁹⁵ Fanon, 115.

they are not always subject to EI in the same way that Fanon might be. The inescapability of Fanon's Blackness is a function of his 'racial epidermal schema,' and because of this it means that EI will be largely inescapable as well. Part of what Fanon's explanation provides is how being Black offers one a unique perspective on how the world works in terms of the ways that forces of power and oppression operate on Black subjects differently than white ones. Moreover, Arendt suggests that she is capable of accessing this perspective when she writes: "if I were a Negro I would feel that the very attempt to start desegregation in education and in schools had not only, and very unfairly, shifted the burden of responsibility from the shoulders of adults to those of children."⁹⁶ Here, we see how Arendt takes on the perspective of a Black mother to come to a conclusion about desegregation. The fact that she thinks this to be an appropriate action speaks to her epistemic privilege. That is, Arendt makes claims based on a perspective that she could not possibly know, and because of the privileges which she enjoyed as a white intellectual first and ethnically Jewish second.

In the Social realm, being Jewish is not inescapable in the same way that being Black is, so it does not lead to Fanon's triple person consciousness in the same way. A Jewish person's identity is not conditioned and determined by its historicity in the same way as a Black person's because the Jewish person is able to find some escape from these determinations by passing as non-Jewish. One of the unique characteristics of the Black experience articulated by Fanon is the 'epidermal schema:' a racialized concept that is imposed on Black bodies. Steve Pile puts it as something that "is woven out of thousands of stories, anecdotes, images and so on that surround the body, giving it a kind of truth..."⁹⁷ This conditions how the Black subject is perceived by the

⁹⁶ Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock," 244.

⁹⁷ Steve Pile, "Skin, Race and Space: The Clash of Bodily Schemas in Frantz Fanon's Black Skins, White Masks and Nella Larsen's Passing," *Cultural Geographies* 18, no. 1 (2010): 29, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474010379953>.

rest of society, and this is a characteristic which the Jewish experience can lack. This difference—the ways that the Jewish experience differs from the Black experience—exemplifies how different social identities experience testimonial injustice differently based on the extent to which they are able to participate in more dominant social identities (in this case, whiteness).

As we saw above, testimonial injustice can help to explain antisemitism's Holocaust denialism as a way of silencing the story-telling capacity of the Jewish community. That is, it restricts its capacity for speech—and thus *lexis*—by negating the ability to tell a story and be heard and believed. That's not the end of the story though, because testimonial injustice also explains Hannah Arendt's commentary on the public-school desegregation efforts of the mid-20th century United States. While she may not have been expressing an explicit anti-Blackness in the way she disregarded this political movement, she did disregard the testimonial performances of the people who were contributing to this movement. Arendt states,

I think no one will find it easy to forget the photograph reproduced in newspapers and magazines throughout the country, showing a Negro girl, accompanied by a white friend of her father, walking away from school, persecuted and followed into bodily proximity by a jeering and grimacing mob of youngsters. The girl, obviously, was asked to be a hero—that is, something neither her absent father nor the equally absent representatives of the NAACP felt called upon to be.⁹⁸

The claims that Arendt makes here are provocative, seemingly suggesting that the desegregation movement has thrust the onus of political action onto a child. “But Arendt is mistaken about the image, the friend, the father, and the NAACP representatives. Her point of departure for seeking to understand the situation is already steeped in multiple misunderstandings.”⁹⁹ As Belle importantly points out, in her “Reflections on Little Rock,” “Arendt mistakenly describes the photo of [Dorothy] Counts in Charlotte rather than the one of [Elizabeth] Eckford in Little

⁹⁸ Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock,” 236.

⁹⁹ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, 16.

Rock.”¹⁰⁰ And this is only the first misunderstanding of Arendt’s analysis. That is, Arendt is making claims about the way *she* had perceived what was happening without appealing to a source closer to the events in question to corroborate her claims. We might think of this as a sort of epistemic privilege in which Arendt is giving her perspective a greater amount of credence while simultaneously discrediting the perspectives of Black social justice activists. What I suggest is that Arendt is able to unknowingly participate in testimonial injustice because she is able to claim the privileged social identity of whiteness.¹⁰¹

The connection between prejudice and EI is a natural consequence of the application of a social epistemology to my neo-Arendtian framework. This reveals the relationship between EI and power; that is, they flow through this framework in the same manner. Just as power begins at the level of people acting together and diffuses upwards through the societal structure until it crystallizes as authority imbued in offices and institutions, EI—as an imbalance of power—diffuses upwards until it crystallizes as different forms of prejudicial beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes. This connection between power, EI, and prejudice, then, dovetails with my preference for Young-Bruehl’s conception of prejudice as prejudices; as different sorts of expressions of unjust discrimination processes. Prejudices become systematic as a function of beliefs and attitudes about social identities and EI as a dehumanization shows how these prejudices are expressions of socio-political hierarchies.

Louisiana v. Warren Demesme: An Explicit Example of EI

¹⁰⁰ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, 16.

¹⁰¹ ‘Claim’ in the sense that one claims a piece of property. For more on this see, Harris (2020), “Whiteness as Property.”

Different sorts of prejudices are motivated by testimonial injustice in different ways. In terms of our neo-Arendtian framework, prejudices function as a way that those with greater social power silence those who are beneath them in the social hierarchy, whereas in other instances the target is discredited as a legitimate participant in the epistemic exchange. For example, Holocaust denialism as an instance of antisemitism functions to degrade the cultural power of Holocaust survivors' capacity for storytelling. This furthers the antisemitic genocidal project by deflating that expression of the victims' experiences. In contrast, part of what makes anti-Black prejudice unique is how it, in particular, dismisses the legal testimony of Black Americans, a quite explicit testimonial injustice. This is an expression of systematic legal oppression that degrades the Black subject as a full participant in the United States justice system. This makes the process even more insidious because, as Young-Bruehl writes, "all the types of prejudices have in their operating modes ways for suppressing their victim's insights into the nature of their victimization..."¹⁰² One of the ways which these systems express their power is by arresting the ways in which their victims can epistemically interact with the world, marginalizing their capacity to interact with the oppressive systems on an intellectual level. This can be exemplified in how Holocaust denialism silences Jewish history,¹⁰³ or how the question of desegregation of the education system indicates an assimilation of Black culture into white society.¹⁰⁴

We can also see a contemporary example of how prejudice functions in the form of EI in the Louisiana Supreme Court case *Louisiana vs. Demesme*. Warren Demesme's request for a

¹⁰² Young-Bruehl, *The Anatomy of Prejudices*, 459.

¹⁰³ Young-Bruehl, 463.

¹⁰⁴ Kathryn T. Gines, "Hannah Arendt, Liberalism, and Racism: Controversies Concerning Violence, Segregation, and Education," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 47, no. S1 (March 2009): 60, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2041-6962.2009.tb00139.x>.

lawyer was dismissed because of his use of the phrase, “why don’t you just give me a *lawyer dog* [emphasis added].”¹⁰⁵ The central issue of this case centered on the defendant’s (Demesme) request for a lawyer in his original police interrogation. The court ruled that the language he used, his request for a ‘lawyer dog,’ was him asking for a canine lawyer instead of a legitimate request for legal counsel. It becomes clear from this case that anti-Black prejudice has crystallized as a form of testimonial injustice which has restricted Demesme’s participation in the judicial system by infringing on his right to legal counsel. Because of the ambiguity of the word ‘dog’—between its literal meaning and its slang meaning—Demesme’s liberty in terms of this right to counsel was curtailed. ‘Dog,’ here, is not referring to a literal canine; Demesme was using the commonplace (regardless of race) Louisiana slang sense of the word meaning something like ‘dude,’ ‘bro,’ or ‘man.’ That is, his capacity to be a fully recognized person in the eyes of the law was restricted because the legal system refused to recognize the full meaning of the use of his language.

This use of language involves what legal scholar Norman Tabler describes as the ‘unspeakable comma:’ the phenomenon where a comma that would be used in a written expression is not detected in a speech pattern. Regarding Demesme’s case Tabler states, “Demesme did not say, ‘Get me a lawyer dog,’ which makes no sense. Rather, he said, ‘Get me a lawyer, Dawg,’ which makes perfect sense—at least to Demesme.”¹⁰⁶ This quotation makes clear how the pronunciation of the word ‘dog’ as ‘dawg’ differs: one refers to an animal and the other is a colloquialism which refers to another person. This is not a mere semantic oddity, the misinterpretation of Demesme’s testimony—importantly his testimony as a Black man, which

¹⁰⁵ J. Crichton, *State of Louisiana versus Warren Demesme*, No. 2017-KK-0954 (Supreme Court of Louisiana October 27, 2017).

¹⁰⁶ Norman Tabler, “The Unspeakable Comma,” *The Federal Lawyer* 65 (2018): 18.

recalling the discussion of Fanon above is inescapable—has a material consequence: he had presumably foregone his right to an attorney before making a statement which was used to convict him of sexual assault. When the appeal was brought before the Louisiana Supreme Court they voted 6-to-1 against Demesme. “Justice Scott Crichton wrote a concurring opinion explaining his vote. As he saw it, Demesme’s reference to a *lawyer dog* was ‘ambiguous or equivocal,’ and decisions of both the Louisiana and U.S. Supreme Courts hold that an ambiguous or equivocal reference to an attorney does not constitute invocation of the constitutional right to counsel.”¹⁰⁷ The unspeakable comma is a manifestation of both testimonial injustice in the legal system. It is testimonial injustice because of the absurdity of the claim that Mr. Demesme was requesting a canine as a lawyer. The refusal to accept his request as a legitimate request for legal counsel was a result of the prejudicial discrediting of his words. This injustice discredited Warren Demesme’s full expression of his own particularity such that he suffered dire legal consequences.

What Does This Mean for Arendt?

What I have discussed so far details how Arendt’s framework can break down; that is, how inconsistencies in it are revealed by an EI analysis. I will summarize this briefly. Human freedom needs to be affirmed in the Political sphere through the activity of *lexis*. *Lexis* is characterized as testimony which can take the form of literal speech (such as courtroom testimony) or other sorts of actions (such as protesting segregated schools). For Arendt, it is only in this realm (the Political) that equality can be justified as a function of defending a person’s liberty. Moreover, this liberty (through *lexis*) is an expression of plurality. This seems all well

¹⁰⁷ Tabler, 18.

and good; Arendt argues that there are spaces for the expressions of equality in the Political and discrimination becomes restricted to the Private and Social realms. But, while Arendt thinks that these realms have a hard distinction between them, history has shown us that they do not. While Arendt argues that a public school represents a purely Social space—that is, a space where discrimination may be justified—this overlooks how educational access influences how a person can interact with the political process. The looming question is how Arendt could have disregarded the *lexis* of the desegregation movement. What I will proffer is that EI is an explanatory factor in this. Furthermore, I will also argue that the restructuring of Arendt's framework I suggested in the previous chapter can help us to avoid this issue in particular. To remind the reader, this suggestion was a vertical orientation of Arendt's Private-Social-Public divide which recognizes how these realms of human activity are interdependent upon one another and how fluctuations in one can affect the others.

EI becomes a fundamental issue for Arendt's treatment of Black movements, and this is more than (as Belle argues) her misunderstanding of Black movements as functioning in the Social (as opposed to the Political). This is to say that EI infects Arendt's position at a basic level: the way that she defines 'violence' deprives violent actions or practices of legitimately contributing speech. As we will see below, this becomes problematic insofar as Arendt labels these movements and protests as violent. To see Arendt's view more clearly, and assess her discussion of the (as she calls them) violent Black student movements, let us look at *On Revolution*. In this work, Arendt addresses the legitimacy of revolutions and how her conception of freedom is relevant to the establishment of civil governments. She states, "For political freedom, generally speaking, means the right 'to be a participator in government,' or it means

nothing.”¹⁰⁸ To break this down a bit, political freedom, for Arendt, means that one must be able to participate in the activity of their government. But to do this they have to be able to legitimately take Political action. If, as Arendt says, violence is an anti-political sort of activity—violence precludes one from performing legitimate Action—then, testimony that is labelled as violent would be discredited as a matter of fact. Below, we will see how this shakes out for Arendt’s position and reveals the fundamental EI in her conception of violence.

Arendt begins by characterizing war and revolution (and politics more broadly) as being “for the cause of freedom versus tyranny.”¹⁰⁹ This tension defines the organization of the state as such in a dialectical back and forth against the forces of destructive technologies produced: “In other words, freedom has appeared in this debate like a *deus ex machina* to justify what on rational grounds has become unjustifiable.”¹¹⁰ Warfare has gotten to the point where it may result in the total destruction of either side—of human society in general—so the only way for either side to justify their actions is to characterize their arguments as fighting for freedom as such. We see this today with the Russian invasion of Ukraine: Russian propaganda argues that their soldiers are attempting to ‘denazify’ Russians living in Ukraine, while the Ukrainians are fighting for their own rights to liberty and self-determination.¹¹¹

So, human freedom has become the fundamental justification for state violence. And it is important that we look at it as a justification here because:

The point here is that violence itself is incapable of speech, and not merely that speech is helpless when confronted with violence. Because of this speechlessness political theory has little to say about the phenomenon of violence and must leave

¹⁰⁸ Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2006), 210.

¹⁰⁹ Arendt, 1.

¹¹⁰ Arendt, 4.

¹¹¹ Miriam Berger, “Putin Says He Will ‘denazify’ Ukraine. Here’s the History Behind That Claim.,” *The Washington Post*, February 25, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/24/putin-denazify-ukraine/>.

its discussion to the technicians. For political thought can only follow the articulations of the political phenomena themselves, it remains bound to what appears in the domain of human affairs; and these appearances, in contradistinction to physical matters, need speech and articulation, that is, something which transcends mere physical visibility as well as sheer audibility, in order to be manifest at all. A theory of war or a theory of revolution, therefore, can only deal with the justification of violence because this justification constitutes its political limitation; if, instead, it arrives at a glorification or justification of violence as such, it is no longer political but antipolitical.¹¹²

Per Arendt, violence cannot perform *lexis*; it is incapable of speech because it undermines the foundational validity of speech as such. To perform speech, one must be doing something that can be manifested in the world of appearances—it must be capable of being articulated as a phenomenon between human subjects, and, if it cannot be then it is destructive towards the political process itself. That is, it is antipolitical.

Thinking back to the central claim of this chapter, if Arendt's socio-political framework is committing the harm of EI, then her denial of violence as legitimate political speech may be one way in which it manifests. In *On Violence* she states,

In America, the student movement has been seriously radicalized wherever police and police brutality intervened in essentially nonviolent demonstrations: occupations of administration buildings, sit-ins, et cetera. Serious violence entered the scene only with the appearance of the Black Power movement on the campuses. Negro students, the majority of them admitted without academic qualification, regarded and organized themselves as an interest group, the representatives of the black community. Their interest was to lower academic standards. They were more cautious than the white rebels, but it was clear from the beginning...that violence with them was not a matter of theory and rhetoric. Moreover, while the student rebellion in Western countries can nowhere count on popular support outside the universities and as a rule encounters open hostility the moment it uses violent means, there stands a large minority of the Negro community behind the verbal or actual violence of the black students.¹¹³

¹¹² Arendt, *On Revolution*, 9.

¹¹³ Arendt, *On Violence*, 18–19.

Here, Arendt seems to suggest that the student protests in the United States during the 1960s were employing nonviolent means when they were comprised of primarily white students. Her contention is that it was not until Black students, particularly those who identified with the Black Power movement, joined the protests and added their demands, as well as their methods of resistance, that the protests became violent. Moreover, she seems to be echoing the contention that these Black students, much like the Black families who wanted to desegregate the public school system, were not interested in the goal of education, but of social climbing. She alleges that they lacked academic qualifications and wanted to lower the standards of the institutions; the implication is that these students were unqualified for the sort of academic work done at the university level and that they were merely attending to be able to participate in the Social realm of the bourgeois academy.

By labelling them as violent, not only does it devalue their speech, but it negates their speech altogether. If violence means that something cannot be considered political speech, if it makes it antipolitical, then by labelling this movement (and really any movement) as a violent one, it works to discredit them and expunge them from participation in the political process itself. Moreover, since political participation is the foundation of human freedom (and promoting human freedom is the entire point of our political project), excluding people from this process by denying their capacity for *lexis* as such amounts to denying their capacity for the expression of their freedom and plurality. This sort of negation is exactly why EI (and testimonial injustice in particular) is so sinister. What EI means in the context of Arendt's socio-political framework is the denial of a person's fundamental capacity to express their essentially human characteristics; it is a rejection of their humanity.

Belle levels a similar critique against Arendt by noting that

In *The Human Condition* there is a troublesome relationship between violence and the private and public spheres, or the use of violence to leave the private realm and to make entry into the political realm possible. Likewise in *On Revolution* Arendt attempts to situate violence outside of the political realm even while acknowledging the constitutive role of violence in the creation of a political realm.¹¹⁴

So, while Arendt characterizes violence with an antipolitical character, she still must account for the fact that it is foundational to the creation of the liberal democratic state, particularly in the case of the United States. To further the discussion of violence from the previous chapter, again Belle points out that “Power is inherent in political communities and requires legitimacy, but not justification. Arendt asserts that ‘legitimacy’ is derived from the initial organization of acting in concert, but ‘justification’ is derived from a future end. Not only does Arendt stress that violence does not equal power, she adds that politically speaking the two terms are opposites.”¹¹⁵ So, political communities express and exert power, and the reason that they are able to do so is because they are legitimate. The community ‘buys in’ to the political community as such by participating in it. Already it is becoming clearer why the denial of participation in the political community can become so problematic; it erodes the commitment, or ‘buy-in,’ that legitimizes the Political realm as such.

The justification of violence, on the other hand, relies on the assurance of (at least some) human freedom.

The danger is that the ushering in of labor and necessity will not result in freedom, but rather will force all mankind “for the first time under the yoke of necessity.” What [Arendt] seems to be suggesting is that the use of man-made violence to force necessity on some for the freedom of others is preferable to the elimination of violence in the private sphere, which has the danger of subjecting everyone to necessity and labor.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, 93.

¹¹⁵ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, 94.

¹¹⁶ Gines, 96.

The concern here, for Arendt, is how violence is justified to maintain a certain sort of socio-political order for the purpose of enabling the liberties of some people at the expense of others.

That is,

It is also important to call attention to her complicity with the violence required to contain necessity in the private realm in order to preserve a separation of the public and private spheres...She identifies violence as a prepolitical phenomenon that forces the family, laborers, and slaves to remain in the private realm in order to enable free men to enter the public and political realms...Arendt appears to justify the use of violence. Her observation is not only an ‘uncomfortable truth,’ but also a deeply disturbing one.¹¹⁷

This ‘uncomfortable truth’ which Belle highlights is an Aristotelian elitism which must be dealt with in terms of the way Aristotle placed the *vita contemplativa* above the *vita activa*. Arendt notes that labor is a necessity for the full experiencing of human plurality, but despite that we wish to ‘rebel’ against that necessity. “The wish to be liberated from labor's ‘toil and trouble,’ is not modern but as old as recorded history. Freedom from labor itself is not new; it once belonged among the most firmly established privileges of the few.”¹¹⁸ This privilege is what underlies Belle’s uncomfortable truth: it was what enabled someone like Aristotle to contemplate metaphysics while he had a household of domestic laborers to satisfy the necessities of his nourishment. In this sense a certain sort of hierarchy which prioritizes the freedoms of certain people over others may develop. *Animal laborans* becomes restricted by biophysical necessities in order to free *zōon politikon* from them as a full (that is, fully human) political actor.

The point that I wish to make, and that Arendt does as well, is that this sort of hierarchy ought to be avoided. To this end she states, “the price for the elimination of life's burden from the shoulders of all citizens was enormous and by no means consisted only in the violent

¹¹⁷ Gines, 97.

¹¹⁸ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 4.

injustice of forcing one part of humanity into the darkness of pain and necessity.”¹¹⁹ This is in fact more than just a moral imperative. Certainly human bondage is a blight to be avoided, but even more so within an Arendtian framework because depriving an individual of one mode of human activity will, in effect, deprive them of a part of their own plurality. For,

[T]he perfect elimination of the pain and effort of labor would not only rob biological life of its most natural pleasures but deprive the specifically human life of its very liveliness and vitality. The human condition is such that pain and effort are not just symptoms which can be removed without changing life itself; they are rather the modes in which life itself, together with the necessity to which it is bound, makes itself felt. For mortals, the "easy life of the gods" would be a lifeless life.¹²⁰

This is to say that laboring—and we can extend that to any activity of the human condition—is an integral part of what makes each person distinctly their own. Without those experiences, one would fail to fully embody their own subjectivity.

There is a tension at the heart of the human condition in terms of the laboring processes. Simplistically, we do not enjoy doing labor. But to put it in Arendt’s words, “the fact is that the human capacity for life in the world always implies an ability to transcend and to be alienated from the processes of life itself, while vitality and liveliness can be conserved only to the extent that men are willing to take the burden, the toil and trouble of life, upon themselves.”¹²¹ This tension, then, is the desire to avoid labor, while at the same time, laboring is necessary to find fulfillment and actualize human plurality. The issue which arises when one of these paths (all labor or no labor) is chosen is that the individual becomes a totalized subject of that mode of activity; these modes of activity become ideologies in themselves. And Arendt in particular wants us to avoid the sort of thoughtlessness that is associated with this totalization:

¹¹⁹ Arendt, 119.

¹²⁰ Arendt, 120.

¹²¹ Arendt, 120–21.

Perhaps the very fact that these two elements, the concern with stability and the spirit of the new, have become opposites in political thought and terminology—the one being identified as conservatism and the other being claimed as the monopoly of progressive liberalism—must be recognized to be among the symptoms of our loss. Nothing, after all, compromises the understanding of political issues and their meaningful debate today more seriously than the automatic thought-reactions conditioned by the beaten paths of ideologies which all were born in the wake and aftermath of revolution.¹²²

Her concern, here, regards the way that political ideologies have the capacity to ‘totalize’ an individual. That is, if a person does not engage with a topic beyond the ‘automatic thought-reactions’ that are dictated by whichever political party or movement that they belong to, then they are not really participating in politics. They are not performing *lexis* if it is just that: a performance of a social identity.

Conclusion

Arendt wants us to promote human plurality as it is expressed through liberty and freedom in the Political realm. But there is the problem of the sorts of necessities imposed on us in by the Private realm; needing to provide food, shelter, etc., for oneself restrict their capacity to participate in the Political. So, a socio-political hierarchy is established which enables certain groups of people to engage in political participation. That is, they are freed from the necessities of the Private while a greater burden is placed on others.¹²³ I echo this concern below when I consider the Hierarchy Objection. EI demonstrates the intimate link between violence and silencing, and, moreover, the dehumanization which is committed when an individual is restricted from participating in the Public realm. Arendt finds that certain institutions, public schools for example, are locations within the Social as opposed to the Public, and this is borne

¹²² Arendt, *On Revolution*, 215.

¹²³ As an express example of this, consider the sorts of unpaid, domestic labor that is, broadly speaking, done by women in patriarchal, capitalist societies that allows for the (usually) male head of household to enter the Social and Public realms. For more, see Turner (2008).

out by the strict separation which she envisions between the different spheres of human activity. But, as the critique brought forth by Belle helps demonstrate, this seems to be at odds with the way that she envisions human plurality and freedom to operate. If we want to encourage the greatest amount of freedom and full human plurality, we need to recognize our prejudices, in particular our prejudices which affect the ways that other people can express themselves through *lexis*. In the following chapter, I will address how we can respond to EI and the ways that remedies for it will play out in my neo-Arendtian framework.

Chapter IV: Objectification or Othering? And the Actualization of Modes of Activity

Introduction

In the previous chapters I have discussed how Fricker's EI can be used to gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies of Arendt's socio-political framework. Moreover, Fricker's testimonial injustice in particular seems to demonstrate ways that the Arendtian understanding of the human social world as comprising three distinct realms of activity is unable to achieve its assumed goal of promoting human freedom and flourishing. Broadly speaking, my point here is going to be further demonstrating why it is important to consider epistemologies when speaking of politics and vice versa. That is, what we know and how we know it influences the ways in which we interact with other people in the political community. What EI brings into focus is that the concerns of the politically minded epistemologist include how an individual's epistemic agency is recognized through their social identities and roles. When we ascribe greater or lesser credibility to an individual as a function of their social identity *alone*, we are doing an injustice towards them. But this injustice is deeper than merely a disbelief in their claim. What this does is impinge on their very membership in the human community as a political space.

However, as we work out these ideas some concerns arise. Below, I will present critiques of Fricker's position from scholars whose purpose is extending her concept of EI so that it offers a better understanding of the phenomenon in question. Since I have agreed with Fricker up to now, I will consider these critiques as they pertain to the conclusions which I have drawn and how they affect the proposals of this project. The first issue I contend with questions the ways that we think about EI as either a transactional or structural injustice. That is, is EI the sort of injustice which we ought to think about at the level of atomistic interactions between epistemic agents, or ought the essential character of this type of injustice be thought of as inherently

structural? Second, I will investigate the primary epistemic harm of testimonial injustice: epistemic objectification. Fricker describes this harm as “when a hearer undermines a speaker in her capacity as a giver of knowledge, the speaker is epistemically objectified.”¹²⁴ In effect, Fricker’s conception of this relationship characterizes it as a subject/object relationship where the hearer reduces the speaker to a mere object. Fricker says that epistemic othering is the primary harm of EI. But, says this objection, objectification is a mischaracterization of the harm that is committed here. The primary harm of testimonial injustice is epistemic othering. When we think of the harm in this way, then it more accurately captures just how insidious the harm of EI is.

Finally, as I conclude, I will describe the ways that the different human activities which I have been discussing throughout this project are actualized in the world in different ways (such as consumption-objects or use-objects). In doing so I hope to extend Arendt by demonstrating that the harm being done by EI is one that is fundamentally political insofar as it bars a subject from fully enjoying their human plurality as a member of the political community. It does this by restricting the ways that they are able to express their *lexis* (their testimonial-objects). What a restriction like this means is that those who suffer from EI are denied their human plurality as members of the epistemic community.

Pohlhaus and Anderson: Positive Critiques of Fricker’s Epistemic Injustice

Gaile Pohlhaus Jr. is a social epistemologist and feminist philosopher who offers a positive critique of Fricker’s epistemic objectification which Fricker “uses to characterize the intrinsic harm of the kind of epistemic injustice she calls ‘testimonial injustice.’”¹²⁵ Epistemic

¹²⁴ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 133.

¹²⁵ Gaile Pohlhaus, Jr. “Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice,” *Social Epistemology* 28, no. 2 (April 3, 2014): 99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2013.782581>.

objectification is the sort of harm which I have discussed in the previous chapters: it is what is done to a person when they are harmed as a knower as such. Pohlhaus argues that Fricker's conception of this relationship is essentially that of a subject/object, and that reducing it in this way fails to understand how it is harming speakers in terms of hierarchies of social power. Pohlhaus' positive proposal is to think of this as a subject/other relationship, which acknowledges the ways a hearer can take advantage of a speaker in an epistemically nefarious way while not completely reducing them to an object. That is, while the speaker still maintains epistemic agency to some degree, they are nevertheless still treated without their full humanity as members of the epistemic community.

Pohlhaus notes that "one of the advantages of Fricker's notion of epistemic injustice is that it helps us to think about the sociality of knowing without losing sight of the individual knower and her relations with other knowers."¹²⁶ Part of what EI demonstrates is the social dimension of social epistemology insofar as it pertains to the knower as a member of an interconnected web of testimonial relationships. And while there is a focus on the transactional character of these relationships—that is, that they are, in a sense, atomistic exchanges between a testifier and a hearer, more on this below—Pohlhaus states that EI "nevertheless happens within the context of socially situated capacities."¹²⁷ This makes it clear that EI is essentially a socio-political harm because the subject/other relationship is itself a more political type of relationship. Contrast this with the subject/object relationship that makes its targets mere things to be used. Othering, however, does not fully reduce its target to a non-human entity, but pushes them down

¹²⁶ Pohlhaus, 100.

¹²⁷ Pohlhaus, 100.

a constructed socio-political hierarchy. This method still forces the ‘other’ to play the game so to speak and participate in the hierarchy as opposed to being completely excluded from it.

Under this general account, knowers are not solitary individuals but rather agents within a larger community whose interdependency with one another as knowers requires something of them *in relation* to one another. Fricker’s path for remedying epistemic injustice also implies a view of knowing that sees our epistemic lives as interdependent.¹²⁸

If we are going to have a social epistemology that is indeed social, then it must recognize that knowers are not just epistemic agents acting individually in their environments. Rather, they are members of communities of knowers which have the purpose of pooling their knowledge for the benefit of its members. The issue which EI elucidates for us is how when nefarious forces—such as prejudice—manipulate epistemic practices not only do they maintain the hierarchies which enabled these forces in the first place, but they also undermine our social epistemic practices by diverting their benefits to only certain members of society.

By a subject/other relationship, Pohlhaus “not only alleviates the problems [she] examine[s] in the concept of epistemic objectification, but also expands our understanding of the social dimensions of knowing.”¹²⁹ The issue with thinking of EI as epistemic objectification, says Pohlhaus, is that this interpretation of the harm of EI fails to fully capture the harm being done. If this harm is understood as objectification, then the treatment of the victims would resemble other sorts of objects which are sources of knowledge such as our perceptions, for example. However, skepticism towards perceptions is different in kind than the sort of deflationary discrediting which takes place when one is a victim of EI. The victim is marginalized as only a partially legitimate and credible epistemic interlocutor while still acting

¹²⁸ Pohlhaus, 100.

¹²⁹ Pohlhaus, 100.

as a source of testimony for those above them on the socio-political hierarchy. Adopting a skeptical attitude towards one's own perceptions does not restrict another person's plurality; othering another epistemic agent through the harm of EI does. As a brief example, consider the 'benefit' gained by the European metropolises which expropriated historical and cultural artifacts from their colonial holdings. These were treated as legitimate sources of knowledge, the scholars and laypersons who studied these were able to gain an understanding of the cultures from which they came—the accuracy of this knowledge notwithstanding¹³⁰—but the people which these artifacts represented were not a part of the conversation. They were used for their testimonial labor and considered epistemic agents only insofar as they were able to provide such labor for the dominant socio-political group, but they themselves were unable to benefit from this system.

Fricker's characterization of this harm "contends that the wrong of epistemic objectification lies in treating another *solely* as an object in a manner that does not recognize her as a subject capable of being an informant."¹³¹ That is, for this characterization of the harm of EI, it treats one's epistemic identity as a binary between subject and object; it fails to appreciate how a speaker could be held as a 'semi-subject' insofar as their testimony could be accepted for its content without acknowledging the full humanity of the person who was testifying. Moreover,

In this comparison, it is the attribution of passivity to epistemic objects that allows Fricker to characterize testimonial injustice as epistemic objectification, for in the case of testimonial injustice, the determining factors as to whether information is transferred seem to reside solely with the hearer. Rather than giving testimony as an informant, which is then received by the listener if properly delivered, the speaker must instead wait to see whether the hearer believes her this time or not. In a certain sense then the speaker is not an active participant in the epistemic transaction who might herself have an effect on the listener.¹³²

¹³⁰ And this may indicate how EI can be harmful to those perpetrating it as well. Because the othered victim is not a fully legitimate interlocutor, they lack the credibility (in the eyes of the individual committing EI) to correct misinterpretations of their testimony.

¹³¹ Pohlhaus, "Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice," 102.

¹³² Pohlhaus, 102.

So, the harm here, says Fricker, is how the speaker is reduced to a passive, testimonial object, but this does not seem to fully capture how EI reduces the speaker. It is not that the speaker's testimony is being rejected because it is inconsistent with some sort of broadly accepted epistemic practice they might be unaware of, but that the hearer is rejecting their testimony (partially or in full) as a function of the speaker's social identity. Testimonial injustice is an irrational reproduction of social hierarchies such that it reinforces those hierarchical relations by maintaining the semi-personhood of certain speakers through a process of othering.¹³³

What Pohlhaus suggests is that in cases of EI "one hears and understands another's words, perhaps even after one has asked a question in search of an answer...and yet one fails to believe what the speaker has said without any grounds for doubt (except simply that the speaker is not trustworthy with no rational basis for maintaining such distrust)."¹³⁴ The issue, then, is that in the course of any sort of (ideally) truth-conducive practice, EI rears its head. What is happening is that EI becomes an unreasonable 'ground for doubt;' it is an attempt at justifying a hierarchical discrediting of certain speakers. Contrast EI with the harm that pseudoscientific thinking commits. A pseudoscientist who practices astrology, for example, presents his argument as if it were scientific and provides some sort of prediction for the future that is in fact unjustified. What makes EI insidious is that the person who commits it presents her discrediting as justified when it is not. As Pohlhaus puts it,

testimonial injustice occurs when, engaging in ordinary epistemic practices for ascertaining truth from another epistemic agent based on testimony, the hearer fails in one aspect of that practice: [the hearer fails to perceive] the speaker as trustworthy when he ought to. In this manner, the relation between perpetrator and

¹³³ Even if the speaker in question is merely being treated as an object, objects can still provide information. I will return to this thought below in my discussion of testimonial objects.

¹³⁴ Pohlhaus, "Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice," 103.

victim is quite unlike that between an epistemic subject and an epistemic object.¹³⁵

The harm being done in the case of EI, then, is not that the hearer is making a decision to treat the speaker as an object—merely using them for the content of their testimony without any thought to the *person* who is testifying—says Pohlhaus, but that the hearer makes the decision to treat the speaker as an epistemic other. And this demonstrates another difference between the subject/object and subject/other relationships: the way that the received testimony is treated. The testimony which we receive from an object is unquestioned—or at least it is unquestioned as a source, the information itself may be questioned—but the testimony we receive from an other (or any speaker) may be questioned as accurate given the presumed credibility of the speaker. We do not question the credibility of a ball when observing its color, but we may question the credibility of a speaker when determining if we should trust what they are saying.

I want to distinguish between the ways that we epistemically trust objects and other subjects. This demonstrates how the relationship between an epistemic agent and an object as a source of information differs from the relationship between a speaker and a hearer. That is, they involve epistemic trust in different ways. Central to this distinction is Benjamin W. McCraw's discussion of trusting as 'trust-in' and 'trust-that.' McCraw says that "the weaker sense of trusting-that simply reduces to belief-that and, thus, does not illuminate (epistemic) trust-in."¹³⁶ We can think of trust-that as the way our relationship with objects that provide some sort of epistemic contact functions. We trust that a thermometer displays a correct representation of the temperature of the air around it as seventy-two degrees Fahrenheit, and this leads to the belief that the air is that temperature. When we are dealing with another epistemic agent, we have trust

¹³⁵ Pohlhaus, 103–4.

¹³⁶ McCraw, "The Nature of Epistemic Trust," 414.

in them insofar as their testimony leads to the formation of an accurate belief about the world. When a speaker says that the temperature is seventy-two degrees Fahrenheit, it leads to a belief about the temperature which arises from our dependence on the speaker and certain facts about them. The main difference between trust-that and trust-in relationships is whether or not there is an interpersonal dependence on the source of the belief formation process. Furthermore,

We need to make a distinction between S [the speaker] as the cause of a belief and S as the object of my epistemic dependence or reliance. When I place my [epistemic trust] in another, that person is not a mere cause of belief—my trusting expresses my reliance in another for the belief in question. This dependence component expresses the stronger sense of trusting in someone insofar as one extends reliance or depends upon another in ways that merely believing someone cannot capture.¹³⁷

The nuance of this relationship means that when we trust-in another epistemic agent we are expressing a vulnerability to them as a function of the fact that we must rely on their testimony for our own belief formations. For a mundane example, consider going to a restaurant and asking your server which wine might pair well with the entrée you selected. In this situation you are expressing a vulnerability to them; a trust-in your server that they have the knowledge of what wine will pair well with your entrée and that they will truthfully communicate that to you. What happens in the case of epistemic othering is that this vulnerability is flipped; when the hearer's social identity has greater social power, they do not have to relinquish their vulnerability. In fact, it is the speaker who becomes vulnerable because their plurality is now reliant on the credibility the hearer ascribes to them. It is a way for the hearer who possesses a dominant social identity to benefit from the testimony of a speaker (and the beliefs and information which may come from that testimony) without relying on them (and thus becoming vulnerable to them) as their perceived social inferior. By making the speaker an other—that is, an epistemic semi-subject—

¹³⁷ McCraw, 421–22.

the hearer assuages their vulnerability by making the speaker reliant on the hearer for the recognition of their own full epistemic subjectivity.

This epistemic othering—or ‘derivatization’ as Pohlhaus calls it¹³⁸—further demonstrates the nuance of the harm of EI: it is not a binary between treating a testifier as a full epistemic agent or not, but a way of seeing speakers “as semi-subjects that allows perpetrators of testimonial injustice to use them to their own epistemic ends.”¹³⁹ The subject/object understanding of this relationship fails to grasp how “there is an element of subjectivity (even while less than full) required on the part of the victim.”¹⁴⁰ Even when a hearer is committing testimonial injustice against a speaker, they do not fully objectify them. If they were to fully objectify them, it may even *lessen* the impact of the harm. Instead, in treating the speaker as an epistemic other the speaker can contribute testimony. But they are only allowed to contribute testimony insofar as it is consistent with the perceived dominance of the social identity possessed by the hearer. The hearer still treats the speaker as a subject in some degree, but only as far as he can benefit from the speaker’s subjectivity. What is happening is that the unjust hierarchies of social relations are being reproduced through the political epistemologies of EI. As Pohlhaus puts it, “this aspect of their treatment is obscured by the subject/object lens employed by Fricker, but wholly consonant with her treatment of social power as governing our epistemic relations in ways that can be vicious or virtuous.”¹⁴¹ That is, hierarchies of social power are not in the business of objectifying speakers who possess marginalized social identities, but of

¹³⁸ Pohlhaus, “Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice,” 105.

¹³⁹ Pohlhaus, 104.

¹⁴⁰ Pohlhaus, 104.

¹⁴¹ Pohlhaus, 104.

marginalizing such speakers' subjectivity in order to benefit from their epistemic labor while still reinforcing the social hierarchy.

Pohlhaus derives her understanding of othering from the work of Simone de Beauvoir, extending how Beauvoir uses othering in the context of sex and gender relations to the hierarches of social epistemology discussed here. The key to Pohlhaus' conceptualization of this phenomenon is recognition:

It is not possible for objects to fill this role [of recognition]. However, the “hard demand of reciprocal recognition,” or a truly *intersubjective* relation with other subjects, requires one to negotiate one's understanding of the world with others who may experience it differently (due, for example, to different interests or different habits of attention)...Applying this idea to the epistemic context, we might say that the sole purpose of the epistemic other is to provide epistemic support for navigating the experienced world of those deemed subjects. In this relation, those persons treated as “other” serve to recognize and maintain epistemic practices that make sense of the world as experienced from dominant subjectivities, but do not receive the same epistemic support with regard to their distinct lived experiences in the world.¹⁴²

Part of what is going on here comes from the fundamental purpose of a social epistemology: that aggregating epistemological practices among a community is more truth-conductive than atomistic investigations into truth; we are more successful in arriving at true belief when we work together. However, when social hierarchies are applied to epistemological practices, the aim of these practices deviates from the somewhat idealistic objective of generating true belief (or at least something close to true belief) for the community members. What the phenomenon of EI shows us is how socio-political hierarchies reproduce themselves in the epistemic economy of testimonial exchanges: people who possess dominant social identities can benefit from a harm such as testimonial injustice insofar as it reinforces the inequities which have benefitted their position in the hierarchy.

¹⁴² Pohlhaus, 105.

When we understand the primary harm of EI as a form of othering it demonstrates how hearers who benefit from dominant social identities can also benefit from speakers who possess marginalized social identities. It is analogous to labor exploitation: the dominant hearer learns about the experiences of marginalized speakers without changing the conditions that marginalized the speaker in the first place. Marginalized speakers must testify within the epistemological framework which has already been predetermined, but they are not granted the opportunities¹⁴³ to contribute their own sorts of testimonial practices which more accurately represent the ways they experience the world. Let us suppose that there is a group of tenured philosophy faculty at different well known and respected institutions. They have positions reviewing the works that are published as well as having a say in which young scholars are admitted to doctoral programs. These faculty members may determine which epistemological practices are considered ‘legitimate’ forms of generating true beliefs and young scholars are required to conform to these practices. So, in order for the upcoming scholars to be successful they will have to perform within these epistemic practices, despite whether or not such practices represent how they see and interpret the world. While age and experience can enable a graduate student to become a professor, this is not the case with many identities that are not as ‘fixed.’¹⁴⁴ To draw another analogy to economics, it is a way that epistemic labor can be exploited: the hearer reaps all the benefits of the speaker’s epistemic practices, but the speaker is not able to modify the system so that it might benefit them and better represent their own epistemic agency. If such structural systems are to change, they have to change from the inside.

¹⁴³ There are certainly examples of epistemic practices which question accepted canons, though I do not think it is necessary to list them all here.

¹⁴⁴ Recall the way Fanon characterizes the inescapability of his Blackness. ‘Student’ or ‘professor’ is a less fixed identity than a racial identity.

Pohlhaus argues that her critique of testimonial injustice's primary harm allows us to see exactly the harm that it does: epistemic othering. Fricker argues that the fundamental harm of testimonial injustice is epistemic objectification; that through EI people who possess dominant social identities are able to reduce people with marginalized social identities to mere objects. "This type of relation is not one in which objects are capable of participating; it is also a kind of relation that Beauvoir judges to be fundamentally unethical, since it denies a person's full status as a free subject capable of experiencing and giving significance to the world uniquely."¹⁴⁵

Pohlhaus argues that the primary harm of testimonial injustice is in fact epistemic derivatization: the othering of people with marginalized social identities by those in positions of socio-political power. While the subject/object relationship still acknowledges how the speaker's subjectivity is in some way degraded, the subject/other relationship is able to acknowledge the semi-subjectivity of the speaker and how their epistemic labor is exploited in order to maintain the hierarchies of socio-political power.

Now that I have shown 'othering' as the primary harm of EI, let me say a bit about the solution which Fricker proposes and what Elizabeth Anderson provides as an alternative. The essence of Anderson's critique is that Fricker relies too heavily on practicing virtues which create epistemic justice at the individual (or transactional) level, and that in order to alleviate this issue we must look at structural solutions. Fricker contends that,

In testimonial exchanges, for hearers and speakers alike, no party is neutral; everybody has a race, everybody has a gender. What is needed on the part of the hearer in order to avert a testimonial injustice—and in order to serve his own epistemic interest in the truth—is a corrective anti-prejudicial virtue that is distinctively reflexive in structure.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Pohlhaus, "Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice," 105.

¹⁴⁶ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 91.

EI is a hinderance to the generation of true belief within a community because of prejudices associated with hierarchical socio-political relations.¹⁴⁷ So, per Fricker, epistemic agents ought to employ a ‘reflexive critical awareness’ so that they might respond to and adjust their own prejudices. As she says, “When the hearer suspects prejudice in her credibility judgement...she should shift intellectual gear out of spontaneous, unreflective mode and into active critical reflection in order to identify how far the suspected prejudice has influenced her judgement.”¹⁴⁸ The solution, then, is that hearers need to develop their own capacities for recognizing their own prejudices and then critically assess how they can modulate their behavior so that they might correct for these prejudices.

Anderson responds to this by noting how the remedy which Fricker articulates focuses on the individual interactions of testimonial exchanges. That is, it reduces EI to a phenomenon which primarily occurs between individuals as testimonial injustice, and from this individual level interaction develops into the broader harm of hermeneutical injustice.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, Anderson says that,

[Fricker’s] account recognizes both transactional and structural forms of epistemic injustice. However, her remedies in both cases stress individual virtue. I shall argue that, just as Rawls claimed that distributive justice is a virtue of social institutions, so must we scale up the virtue of epistemic justice to systemic size, and consider what it would be for our social practices of inquiry to operate justly. The result of our inquiry will chart an expanded terrain of epistemic injustice and remedies for it.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ The primary harm of EI certainly concerns the discrediting of the speaker, but there is also a secondary harm that results from an overall lower generation of knowledge for the entire community. If fewer people are considered full epistemic agents, then there are fewer agents to generate knowledge. Call this the ‘knowledge production harm.’

¹⁴⁸ Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 91.

¹⁴⁹ To briefly remind the reader, testimonial injustice is when a speaker is discredited as a function of their social identity, and hermeneutical injustice occurs when a speaker lacks the linguistic or communicative tools to express an injustice they have been victim to.

¹⁵⁰ Elizabeth Anderson, “Epistemic Justice as a Virtue of Social Institutions,” *Social Epistemology* 26, no. 2 (April 2012): 165, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2011.652211>.

Through this contention—that Fricker’s solution focuses on the practice of individual virtue and may ignore the broader structural obstacles which EI generates—Anderson highlights the difference between ‘transactional’ or ‘structural’ forms of justice and injustice. Whereas

a transactional theory of justice identifies criteria of justice for particular exchanges or interactions between one person and another...A structural theory supplies criteria for assessing global properties of a system of rules that govern transactions, and imposes constraints on permissible rules with an eye toward controlling the cumulative effects of individual transactions that may be innocent from a local point of view.¹⁵¹

While transactional theories focus on the individual level interactions of injustice in order to address these harms, structural theories seek to address them from the perspective of broad social systems. Furthermore, focusing on transactional injustices may obscure some of the harm of testimonial injustice through the perceived ‘innocence’ of certain interactions. However, when we take a more general view of EI with a structural injustice perspective, it can demonstrate how the harms generated by something like EI can become endemic to a socio-political environment. Anderson illustrates this further with the example of John Rawls’ Difference Principle which “directs states to design systems of economic rules that are expected to maximize the income prospects of the least advantaged representative worker.”¹⁵² Relying on individuals practicing epistemic virtues is admirable, but insufficient for assuaging the structural harms of EI. Instead individual practices ought to be supplemented structural and institutional systems that promote the full epistemic agency of all community members. Anderson rightly critiques such a strategy as not being “up to the task of coping with the problems generated by a system of rules that regulate only the local properties of transactions and not their global effects.”¹⁵³ Anderson’s

¹⁵¹ Anderson, 163–64.

¹⁵² Anderson, 164.

¹⁵³ Anderson, 164.

ultimate suggestion is that in order to address the harm of EI we ought to focus on structural answers to it.

Per Anderson's reading of Fricker, the social harm of EI is a transactional injustice of credibility deflation; it is what I will call an 'epistemic prejudice.' As Anderson states: "unjust credibility discounting can become systematic if members of a social group suffer from it across social domains, in conjunction with prejudicial discrimination in access to other goods. Nevertheless, the systematicity here appears to be reducible to the likelihood of facing some kind of transactional injustice in many domains."¹⁵⁴ In effect what is going on here is that EI begins as a transactional injustice at the individual level, but it reproduces itself through social interactions which systematizes it into a structural injustice. Once systematized, it becomes endemic to a socio-political environment and then can reproduce itself again over a broader range of transactional situations.

Anderson uses the example of a Congressional aide using an outdated witness list for a hearing. If the original author of the list was prejudiced in their attitudes towards certain speakers and did not employ Fricker's virtue of epistemic justice in order to adjust these prejudices, then the generation of this original list constitutes a transactional injustice. Over time, the list of witnesses becomes the standard over the long career of the Congressperson and is used for many Congressional hearings over the course of decades. In this way "testimonial exclusion becomes structural when institutions are set up to exclude people without anyone having to decide to do so."¹⁵⁵ Now that the older witness list has become the 'standard,' it is shared with new Congresspersons who are overseeing hearings on the same topics. Their aides then generate their

¹⁵⁴ Anderson, 165.

¹⁵⁵ Anderson, 166.

own witness lists based on this initial prejudiced one. What was originally a transactional injustice became structural, and then this structural injustice begat another transactional one. Because the secondary transactional injustice was generated by an inherited structure—which benefits the *status quo* of those in positions of socio-political power—it emphasizes how a response, such as the encouragement of practicing individual virtue, seems to be an ineffective solution.

Anderson offers two general challenges to Fricker’s focus on EI as a primarily transactional type of injustice: “First, [transactional remedies] may not effectively counteract even transactional epistemic injustices. Second, they may not address certain structural epistemic injustices that may have locally innocent (non-prejudicial) causes, but require structural remedies.”¹⁵⁶ If EI is primarily a transactional type of harm, then its solutions ought to be transactional as well, or so the argument goes. But, addressing something like EI at the individual or transactional level seems like too great an expectation; we do not expect people to be perfectly moral agents at all times and so we ought not expect them to be perfectly moral epistemic agents, either. Moreover, focusing on the transactional aspects of this harm can omit and potentially obscure the ways that structural harms function to maintain the systematic aspects of this injustice. If the focus is only on EI as a transactional harm, then it may obscure structural harms in a way that makes them more resilient to remedy.

It is unclear whether transactional remedies to EI can be a useful response. Moreover, these remedies may not necessarily address the structural instances of EI. The transactional remedy which Fricker proposes is, in Anderson’s words, the ‘virtue of testimonial justice.’ “An individual who possesses the virtue of testimonial justice will be disposed to critically reflect on

¹⁵⁶ Anderson, 167.

the possible operations of prejudice on her credibility judgments, and discount her own credibility judgments to counteract her prejudices.”¹⁵⁷ At first glance this is all well and good: this is a virtue which can, theoretically, be practiced and developed over time, and encourages one to change their prejudicial views and perspectives as a hearer in order to recognize the full plurality of other speakers. As one more fully develops their capacity to recognize their prejudices, they would be more predisposed to adjust these prejudices and avoid committing instances of EI (and eventually, hopefully, working to dismantle structural EI as well). But what Anderson points out is that “the virtue of testimonial justice is largely forced to operate in the dark: we do not know how much we are prejudiced against a speaker, and so do not know how much to correct for this bias. Reflection, which lies at the core of testimonial justice, is cognitively taxing and impossible to keep up in environments that demand rapid responses.”¹⁵⁸ The problem for this virtue seems to be twofold: that we are unaware of exactly how prejudiced we are and in what ways, and that the amount of cognitive energy which it takes to make these modulations is too taxing to expect it to be continuously maintained.

Anderson’s critiques echo other concerns with Fricker’s argument, to which Fricker has replied. The first concern “is whether conscious critical reflection on our parts as hearers is really up to the job of detecting the operation of prejudice in our testimonial sensibilities. This worry is at its most vivid in cases where prejudice threatens to enter in not by way of our beliefs, but more surreptitiously by way of the social imagination.”¹⁵⁹ Moreover, I think that this concern becomes even more vivid when we consider the insidiousness of structural injustice insofar as the way it, in a sense, alleviates the culpability of EI on the part of the hearer. As Anderson states, “Fricker

¹⁵⁷ Anderson, 167.

¹⁵⁸ Anderson, 168.

¹⁵⁹ Miranda Fricker, “Replies to Alcott, Goldberg, and Hookway on *Epistemic Injustice*,” *Episteme* 7, no. 2 (June 2010): 165, <https://doi.org/10.3366/epi.2010.0006>.

argues that we need to distinguish nonculpable or innocent epistemic error from moral vice. An innocent epistemic error, or even mere epistemic negligence, does not do an injustice to the speaker. It is simply a mistake. Prejudice is wrongful, and so transmits its injustice to harmful errors that it causes.”¹⁶⁰ But as transactional EI is reproduced and crystalizes into a structural injustice, the culpability of a hearer becomes vaguer insofar as they are not necessarily making a conscious decision to employ prejudices if they are already ‘baked in’ to a system of structural oppression and marginalization. Since the hearer is not making the choice to avoid their virtue of testimonial justice, then, while they still may be participating in EI broadly speaking, they are doing so passively and not actively committing such an act. A more effective way of addressing EI, then, would be a structural approach to the harms being committed. Part of this approach, as I will discuss below, includes a reconsideration of the harm of EI as well as the perspective from which we approach addressing it.

Fricker’s remedy to the harms of testimonial injustice is aptly named as the virtue of testimonial justice¹⁶¹ and means that, “the virtuous hearer *neutralizes the impact of prejudice in her credibility judgements*.”¹⁶² This remedy seems more appropriate when we think of EI as the primarily transactional injustice of a subject/object relationship. But if we think about EI in a way that Anderson and Pohlhaus suggest—as a type of structural injustice of a subject/other relationship—then this means that we need to rethink Fricker’s remedy for EI.

Offering a full remedy to such an issue is beyond the scope of the present project and there have been suggestions elsewhere. For example, Anderson proposes a virtue of epistemic

¹⁶⁰ Anderson, “Epistemic Justice as a Virtue of Social Institutions,” 166.

¹⁶¹ See *Epistemic Injustice*, 169 for a description of the virtue of hermeneutical justice, though for the present purposes I will remain focused on testimonial injustice and its remedies.

¹⁶² Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 92.

justice *for institutions*, or “epistemic democracy: universal participation on terms of equality of all inquirers.”¹⁶³ It is unclear what sort of structural approach ‘epistemic democracy’ might specifically entail. Such a remedy would involve and it is unclear if this would be a goal for all institutions; self-interested institutions may still perpetuate EI if they are motivated by something other than justice or generating true beliefs. Below, what I will suggest is that the neo-Arendtian framework which I have been developing throughout this project can offer a practical solution to the problems presented here: that acknowledging the different modes of human activity and finding the balance between labor, work, and action will engender human freedom and plurality. A result of which could be the assuaging of EI and the production of epistemic democracy.

Conclusion

Hannah Arendt’s political philosophy—particularly the way that I have modified her framework in this thesis—provides further insight into the concerns around EI, and I believe it will aid in developing a more robust solution to these issues as well. Because EI impinges on one’s capacity to participate in and contribute to the political community, it means that victims of this injustice are also deprived of what makes them uniquely human as such. Per Arendt (as discussed in the previous chapter), the aim of the well lived life is a balance between the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* such that all members of a community participate in the various modes of activity while also enabling them to participate in political and intellectual pursuits.

Since EI prevents a degree of participation in the political community—in the way that it precludes one from being a full member by discrediting their testimony—it does more than *just*

¹⁶³ Anderson, “Epistemic Justice as a Virtue of Social Institutions,” 172.

exemplify a way that people are discredited as epistemic agents: it shows how people are dehumanized as a function of their epistemically limited participation in the political community. Moreover, this sort of dehumanization is consistent with Pohlhaus' concept of epistemic derivatization. That is, through the phenomenon of EI victims of this harm are not merely reduced to an objectified state by the hearer but are made into a semi-subjectivized other. Since this sort of epistemic subjectivity is an integral part of one's humanity—to be denied one's existence as an epistemic subject *also* denies one's full human plurality as such—EI can be seen as the broader harm that it is. Addressing EI is not merely about rectifying certain epistemic principles as they pertain to community level knowledge generation, but is also about guaranteeing the full human subjectivity of all members of the community.

My neo-Arendtian framework is meant to show that the different modes of human activity are connected; they are not separate spheres of existence, but interrelations which allow for a fuller experience of humanity. I am in agreement with Arendt, as discussed in the previous chapter, that participating in each area of human activity is what enables a full experience of human plurality. Along with this we must recognize the triple-modality of our humanity as such. That is, (1) that we are physiological beings, (2) that we are social beings, and (3) that we are political beings. As physiological beings we require consumption-objects in order to maintain our bodies. As social beings we require use-objects. And as political beings we require testimonial-objects.

The first two of these seem to be the simplest (and potentially least interesting) to understand. Consumption-objects are things like food or water; they are required for the nourishment of our bodies and are destroyed when they are consumed. When consumption-objects are destroyed, though, they are processed into our bodies. As nourishment they become a

part of us and we use them to continue on living. In this way the utilization of consumption-objects is a positive destruction; the object is destroyed for the propagation of the human body. Use-objects (or artifacts as Arendt refers to them) are not destroyed when they are used; they are tools or contraptions which can be used for their purposes repeatedly. These enhance the capabilities of the body or augment them in some way.

Finally, testimonial-objects have the qualities of both of the types of objects discussed above. They are 'consumed' by the individual and integrated into their internal environment of beliefs about the world, but they are not destroyed once they are consumed in this way. Once someone has used a testimonial-object, depending on what it is exactly, it may be reused in the same or an augmented way. But, more importantly, these are the sorts of things which may be exchanged by epistemic agents in order to convey knowledge about the world from one person to the other. Being sources of testimony between individuals, these fall under the purview of transactional and axiological exchanges. However, when we take a broader look at the situation and consider the structural implications of EI, something interesting develops: while testimonial objects may at first seem transactional, they are also at the whims of whatever structural norms allow them to be legitimate testimonial objects at all. That is, we must also consider if a speaker is being othered by those who are 'consuming' her testimony.

If consumption-objects and use-objects are the actualizations of labor and work, then testimonial-objects are the realizations of action. What this means is that they are the representations of one of the required modalities for a person to fully embody their plurality. When EI restricts the ways that someone can express themselves, what it is doing is more than just silencing or reducing them to an object, a semi-subject, or an other. The harm of EI is that it precludes a subject from actualizing one of the aspects of their plurality, and, since the modes of

human activity are interconnected, this no doubt has knock-on effects on how they can actualize their other modes of activity as well. EI bars them from full access to and participation in the human community.

Chapter V: Conclusion

I have spent the previous pages detailing the intricacies of two differently situated sorts of philosophical theories: Miranda Fricker's Epistemic Injustice and Hannah Arendt's tripartite socio-political framework. The ideas of these philosophers inform how we ought to think about the epistemological concerns that emerge from the ways epistemic credibility and authority are integral to the functioning of human communities. Successfully generating and transmitting knowledge is a social good and being considered a credible testifier is fundamental to expressing human plurality. Moreover, authority grants a speaker a certain degree of social power that allows her to better express her plurality. Thus, the essence of human existence, so to speak, involves being a fully legitimate epistemic agent whose credibility and authority is not unjustly questioned. When one is deprived of their epistemic agency, then they are also deprived of their humanity as such; the form that this deprivation takes is epistemic injustice.

The Hierarchy Objection

Above I have argued for a reconfiguration of Arendt's realms of human activity. When Arendt presents them, they are horizontally oriented and distinct spaces of experience. However, as I demonstrated in chapter three, both Kathryn Sophia Belle and I have leveled criticisms of Arendt that are products of this very framework. Arendt seems to think that phenomena—such as segregation in public schools, for example—is restricted to only one realm of human activity. And since schools are, according to Arendt, within the purview of the Social realm, then the discrimination of such a policy is justified. This is the origin of the testimonial injustice she commits against the Black community. If, as I have argue above, the Private, Social, and Public realms are not distinct and separate spaces, but interconnected, then the ostensible goal of Arendt's project of promoting human freedom through the enjoyment of plurality is at risk.

When we recognize this interrelation, it becomes clear that prejudicial discrimination is unjustified. We must ensure freedom in the Public realm by also promoting freedom in the other realms of human activity so that discriminations in these other realms do not infect the Public as it is the arena of *lexis* and the expression of plurality. So, the way that I adjust Arendt's framework recognizes how the different realms of human action are not distinct but do in fact influence one another. They are not distinct realms of human experience, but different aspects of the human condition that are interrelated. My alternative is a vertical organization that allows for the Private, Social, and Public to influence and affect one another. The immediate result of such a reformation to Arendt's framework is that individual equality needs to be promoted in all realms of society, not just the Public.

My position is not unassailable, however. One objection that I foresee is what I call the Hierarchy Objection. Since I have reoriented the realms of human activity vertically, the objector might say, my position is susceptible to a decidedly unequal, hierarchical institution; this is certainly opposed to my project (and Arendt's¹⁶⁴). If the neo-Arendtian framework can be used for such a hierarchical purpose, then discrimination can be reintroduced throughout the framework. This would contradict the expressed solution to the harms of EI by allowing inequality in all realms of the proposed framework. In particular the entrance of inequality, through hierarchy, in the Public realm endangers the entire system by preventing the people from fully expressing their plurality.

I have two responses to this objection. First, the Hierarchy Objection presupposes that verticality entails hierarchy. It does not seem clear to me why the move from a vertical socio-

¹⁶⁴ It is beyond the scope of the current project, but there is a strain of anti-hierarchical thought throughout *On Revolution* where Arendt argues in favor of the small, local, municipal governments that arose (in New England in particular) during the American Revolution.

political framework to a hierarchical one is necessary. That is, it certainly seems like it is the case that just because a socio-political structure is vertical, does not entail that it is hierarchical. Second, this objection seems to ignore that there are ‘good’ or ‘justified’ hierarchies that we use in order to discriminate sources of information. They might be simple binaries like recognizing that a meteorologist is going to give you a better prediction for the weather forecast than your cousin who lives in Montana. Such an epistemic hierarchy can be more complex as well like recognizing that you can find a YouTube video that conveys the basics of a concept, but to learn all the details you will have to find an expert on the subject (not to presuppose that YouTube videos cannot be produced by experts).

The Hierarchy Objection is a legitimate concern for my project, but it is not a nail in the coffin of my neo-Arendtian framework. It highlights why equality—broadly speaking—across the different realms of human activity is so important. If we do not ensure equality in the Private and Social realms, then when it infects the Public the expression of plurality is at risk. Moreover, it is precisely this concern that motivates my characterization of Arendt’s position regarding public school desegregation. A movement that was certainly within the realm of the Public and exemplified people performing Action was disregarded by her as something that purely operated within the Social realm.

Testimonial Objects

The critique of Arendt’s treatment of desegregation and Black student movements makes clear the dehumanization which results from epistemic injustice: her disregard for these movements emerged from a prejudicial discrediting of African Americans as legitimate testifiers of their own experiences. Moreover, since Arendt creates a strict distinction between the different realms of human activity, it does not allow for the recognition of some behavior or

practice to occur in or involve two different realms or types of activity. This conceptual lack of her framework justifies my move to provide an alternative. This alternative acknowledges the ways that our behaviors and activities within socio-political spaces is not always due to *only* one realm of human activity. As I discussed, Arendt contended that the movement to desegregate public schools in the United States operated within the Social realm. However, if this were true then the activities they were doing as a part of this movement would be Work, per Arendt's conceptualization of her framework. But, the sorts of protests they were doing are better characterized as Action: they were instances of people expressing their *lexis* as a form of testimony. That is, they were creating testimonial objects.

Testimonial objects are a category which represents the sorts of things generated by Action; they are the social and material products of testimony (taken in a broad sense). Like their parallels, consumption and use objects, testimonial objects result from a mode of human activity: Action. Testimonial objects integrate different qualities of the other two, creating a synthesis of them into a new category. Testimonial objects are 'consumed' in the metaphorical sense¹⁶⁵ when a listener hears a piece of testimony and it is integrated into the sets of beliefs they already hold (assuming that they do not reject the testimony as false for one reason or another). But, testimonial objects are not destroyed by their consumption; once used, they may be reused in the same way that use objects are. And, while a use object does not affect the epistemic agency of the user, testimonial objects do. They have the potential to change the way a listener understands the world insofar as they can modify their beliefs.

¹⁶⁵ There may also be a sense where this sort of consumption is psychological or cognitive. While eating an apple adds those nutrients and calories to your physiology through the mediation of your digestive system, hearing a piece of testimony adds that knowledge to your cognitive schema through the mediation of your auditory system and your epistemic filter.

Testimonial objects offer us a way to understand the harm of epistemic injustice and offer a solution. If testimonial objects have the potential to change a hearer's beliefs, then these objects can alter the prejudicial beliefs that infect (consciously or not) a hearer's discrediting of different speakers as a function of their social identities. However, as discussed above, we cannot rely on individuals to actively promote a virtue of epistemic justice in themselves; such a rectification requires both individual support and structural changes to the ways that communities assign epistemic trust. I do not suggest that we discredit experts—their testimony is valuable—but we ought to recognize how we can affirm the epistemic agency of all members of a community in order to promote their full human plurality.

Bibliography

- Adam, Raoul J. "Conceptualising the Epistemic Dimension of Academic Identity in an Age of Neo-Liberalism." *Education Research and Perspectives: An International Journal* 39 (2012): 70–89.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. "Epistemic Justice as a Virtue of Social Institutions." *Social Epistemology* 26, no. 2 (April 2012): 163–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2011.652211>.
- Arendt, Hannah. "Labor, Work, Action." In *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, edited by Peter Baehr, 167–81. New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2000.
- . *On Revolution*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2006.
- . *On Violence*. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1970.
- . "Reflections on Little Rock." In *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, edited by Peter Baehr, 231–46. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2000.
- . *The Human Condition*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- . "The Public and the Private Realm." In *The Portable Hannah Arendt*, edited by Peter Baehr, 182–230. New York, NY: The Penguin Group, 2000.
- Berger, Miriam. "Putin Says He Will 'denazify' Ukraine. Here's the History Behind That Claim." *The Washington Post*, February 25, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/24/putin-denazify-ukraine/>.
- Crichton, J. State of Louisiana versus Warren Demesme, No. 2017-KK-0954 (Supreme Court of Louisiana October 27, 2017).
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. London, UK: Pluto Press, 1986.
- Ferrari, Filippo, and Sebastiano Moruzzi. "Enquiry and Normative Deviance: The Role of Fake News in Science Denialism." In *The Epistemology of Fake News*, edited by Sven Bernecker, Amy K. Flowerree, and Thomas Grundmann, 109–33. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198863977.003.0006>.
- Fricker, Elizabeth. "Against Gullibility." In *Knowing from Words*, edited by Bimal Krishna Matilal and Arindam Chakrabarti, 125–61. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1994. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-2018-2_8.
- Fricker, Miranda. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 2007.
- . "Replies to Alcoff, Goldberg, and Hookway on *Epistemic Injustice*." *Episteme* 7, no. 2 (June 2010): 164–78. <https://doi.org/10.3366/epi.2010.0006>.
- Gines, Kathryn T. *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014.
- . "Hannah Arendt, Liberalism, and Racism: Controversies Concerning Violence, Segregation, and Education." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 47, no. S1 (March 2009): 53–76. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2041-6962.2009.tb00139.x>.
- Goldberg, Sanford. "Comments on Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice*." *Episteme* 7, no. 2 (June 2010): 138–50. <https://doi.org/10.3366/epi.2010.0004>.
- Goldman, Alvin I. "Experts: Which Ones Should You Trust?" In *Social Epistemology: Essential Readings*, edited by Alvin I. Goldman and Dennis Whitcomb, 109–33. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.

- Grasswick, Heidi. "Understanding Epistemic Trust Injustices and Their Harms." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 84 (November 2018): 69–91. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1358246118000553>.
- Harris, Cheryl I. "Whiteness as Property." In *Black Political Thought: From David Walker to the Present*, edited by Sherrow O. Pinder, 272–80. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- McCraw, Benjamin W. "The Nature of Epistemic Trust." *Social Epistemology* 29, no. 4 (2015): 413–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2014.971907>.
- Pile, Steve. "Skin, Race and Space: The Clash of Bodily Schemas in Frantz Fanon's Black Skins, White Masks and Nella Larsen's Passing." *Cultural Geographies* 18, no. 1 (2010): 25–41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474010379953>.
- Pohlhaus, Gaile. "Discerning the Primary Epistemic Harm in Cases of Testimonial Injustice." *Social Epistemology* 28, no. 2 (April 3, 2014): 99–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2013.782581>.
- Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law*. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing, 2017.
- Tabler, Norman. "The Unspeakable Comma." *The Federal Lawyer* 65 (2018): 18.
- Turner, Jack. "American Individualism and Structural Injustice: Tocqueville, Gender, and Race." *Polity* 40, no. 2 (April 2008): 197–215. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.polity.2300088>.
- Young-Bruehl, Elisabeth. *The Anatomy of Prejudices*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Zagzebski, Linda. *Virtues of the Mind*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996.