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## ROBUST VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY AND EPISTEMIC ANTI-INDIVIDUALISM

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ABSTRACT. According to *robust virtue epistemology*, knowledge is a cognitive achievement, where this means that the agent's cognitive success is because of her cognitive ability. One type of objection to robust virtue epistemology that has been put forward in the contemporary literature is that this view has problems dealing with certain kinds of testimonial knowledge, and thus that it is in tension with standard views in the epistemology of testimony. We build on this critique to argue that insofar as agents epistemically depend on third-party members of their epistemic community as many social epistemologists contend, then there will be cases where two agents differ epistemically despite being virtue-theoretic duplicates. This means that robust virtue epistemology, at least insofar as it is understood along standard lines such that it endorses epistemic individualism, is also in tension with a central commitment of contemporary social epistemology.

### 1. VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE GETTIER PROBLEM

Gettier-style cases have a good-luck-bad-luck structure. An agent forms the belief that  $p$  on a basis that ensures that the belief is justified. By dint of bad epistemic luck, however, the way the belief was formed would normally prevent it from being true. But by dint of good epistemic luck which cancels out the bad, the belief is true nonetheless. The result is that the agent ends up with a justified true belief which, in virtue of the epistemic luck in play, does not count as knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

For instance, consider the famous 'fake-sheep' Gettier-style case.<sup>2</sup> In this example, the subject forms the justified belief that there's a sheep in the field on the basis of a visual perception as of a sheep. By dint of bad luck, the animal the agent is looking at in the field is in fact a cleverly disguised dog, and hence one would normally expect the belief so formed to be false, even though

justified. But by dint of good luck which cancels out the bad, it just so happens that behind the dog is a hidden sheep. So the agent ends up with a justified true belief, and yet given the epistemic luck in play in this case, the agent's belief does not amount to knowledge.

On the face of it, virtue-theoretic accounts of knowledge—i.e., those accounts of knowledge in which the cognitive abilities (/epistemic virtues) of the agent play a central role—should have a tricky time dealing with Gettier-style case.<sup>3</sup> For are not the true beliefs formed in such cases the product of cognitive ability? For instance, wouldn't we want to say that the agent in the fake sheep case used his cognitive ability in forming his true belief in the target proposition? Indeed, isn't the fact that he has appropriately employed his cognitive ability the reason why we are inclined to treat the belief in question as justified? With this point in mind, insofar as one conceives of one's virtue epistemology as being in the business of offering a theory of knowledge, then one will be inclined towards a view on which epistemic virtue is merely a necessary part of the picture.<sup>4</sup>

For example, one might hold that knowledge is to be understood as true belief which is virtuously formed and which, in addition, meets some sort of anti-luck condition, such as—most promisingly—the safety condition (i.e., that one's cognitive success could not have very easily been cognitive failure).<sup>5</sup> In this way, the task of offering a theory of knowledge would not rest on the virtue-theoretic aspect of the account alone. In particular, one can call on further epistemic conditions—in this case the safety condition—to eliminate the knowledge-undermining epistemic luck in play in the Gettier-style cases. Call this type of virtue epistemology—i.e., one which offers an account of knowledge which includes other epistemic conditions over and above virtue-theoretic epistemic conditions—*modest virtue epistemology*.<sup>6</sup>

But there is a bolder version of virtue epistemology in play in the contemporary epistemological literature. According to this proposal, the way to deal with Gettier-style case is to say that while a subject forms her belief as a result of exercising her perceptual abilities, that belief is not true *because of* the exercise of her perceptual abilities because this belief instead owes its truth to environmental happenstance. Consider the fake sheep case again. Sure, we have epistemic virtue and we have cognitive success (i.e., true belief). But is the agent's cognitive success because of the exercise of his cognitive ability? Intuitively, it is not.<sup>7</sup>

More generally, according to this proposal an agent has knowledge when her cognitive success (i.e., her true belief) is because of her cognitive ability. Call this type of virtue epistemology—i.e., one which offers an account of knowledge in terms of only virtue-theoretic epistemic conditions—*robust virtue epistemology*.<sup>8</sup> This proposal has a number of high-profile supporters, including Ernest Sosa, Linda Zagzebski and John Greco.<sup>9</sup>

Consider, for the purposes of illustration, Sosa's presentation of robust virtue epistemology (which is arguably the most influential). Sosa argues that performances in general have a *triple-A structure*: they are *apt* when *accurate* because *adroit*. Take archery. Unskilled archers occasionally hit the target. They are lucky. But even the success of master archers can be down to luck: a sudden gust diverts the arrow upon being skilfully dispatched but then a compensating gust brings the arrow back on course again. The conjunction of accuracy and adroitness falls short of aptness. Despatching the arrow is an apt performance just in case the arrow hits the target because of the adroitness of archer's archery.

What applies to performances in general also applies, argues Sosa, to the specific cognitive performance involved in the acquisition of knowledge. That is, apt belief (i.e., knowledge) is accurate belief (i.e., true belief) where the accuracy is because of the agent's cognitive adroitness (i.e., the agent's epistemic virtue). In the fake-sheep case, for example, the subject's belief is both accurate and adroit, but it is not apt, and hence it does not amount to knowledge. For just as the archer's lucky hitting of the target does not amount to an apt performance because of the luck involved, so the agent's cognitive success in the fake sheep case does not amount to apt belief either. In both cases the luck involved means that the agent's success is not accurate *because* adroit.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. TESTIMONY AND RELIABLE RECEPTION

Let *strong epistemic individualism* be the view that what converts a true belief into knowledge supervenes on internal features of the agent. If undefeated doxastic justification is that which is responsible for the conversion, then strong epistemic individualism is the view that undefeated doxastic justification supervenes on internal agential features. In contrast, some epistemologists hold that although doxastic justification supervenes on such features, what might defeat such justification does not. Let therefore *weak epistemic individualism* be the view that defeasible doxastic justification supervenes on internal features of the agent.

For a clear example of weak epistemic individualism, consider the process reliabilist view defended by Alvin Goldman. According to this view, a belief is justified just in case the (type of) cognitive process through which it was formed and sustained is reliable. Importantly, Goldman is explicit that the implicated processes are purely internal—they are operations of the cognitive faculties residing inside the agent's skin and skull.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, Goldman's conception of epistemic defeat is non-individualistic.<sup>12</sup> For instance, the epistemic status of the agent's belief is undermined if she has misleading evidence that the belief-producing process is unreliable, but the

possession of such evidence need not supervene on her internal features.

We shall henceforth set epistemic defeat aside and talk about epistemic individualism *simpliciter*. Goldman's process reliabilism illustrates that some epistemic externalists are epistemic individualists, but note also that epistemic anti-individualism is compatible with epistemic internalism. Imagine a mentalist who holds that the epistemic standing of an agent's beliefs supervenes on the mental states of the agent, but who further endorses the extended mind hypothesis with respect to justification-conferring mental states such that those states extend beyond the boundaries of the agent's skin and skull.<sup>13</sup>

Reflect also that epistemic individualism is best defined in terms of *weak supervenience* rather than *strong supervenience*.<sup>14</sup> The true belief held by an internal duplicate of a knowing agent counts as knowledge only if that duplicate occupies the same possible world as the knowing agent. Shift the duplicate to a different possible world and her true belief need not count as knowledge. That is to say, epistemic individualists maintain that doxastic justification is *intra-world* narrow rather than *inter-world* narrow, to use the terminology employed by Frank Jackson and Philip Pettit.<sup>15</sup> There is thus a specific sense in which even epistemic individualists can allow that justification depends on features of the external world.

Robust virtue epistemology is normally characterised in such a way that it is clearly committed to epistemic individualism. On this view, when an agent knows she gets things right through her own cognitive abilities, where these abilities are thought of along individualistic lines as being located where she is and as having a physical basis resident in her. Sosa, for example, understands cognitive abilities in terms of what he calls 'competences', which he characterises as follows:

“[A] competence is a disposition, one with its basis resident in the competent agent, one that would in appropriately normal conditions ensure (or make highly likely) the success of any relevant performance issued by it.”<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, robust virtue epistemology is often expressed in terms of how when an agent knows her cognitive success is primarily creditable to her cognitive ability (i.e., such that the most salient factor in her cognitive success is her cognitive ability).<sup>17</sup> That's just what is held to be missing in Gettier-style cases, since these are such that the agent gets things right in virtue of incidental features of her environment (e.g., the sheep hidden from view behind the sheep-shaped object) rather than because of her own cognitive ability. Accordingly, while the Gettierised agent's cognitive success might well be to some degree creditable to her cognitive ability, it is not primarily creditable to her cognitive ability but rather primarily due to these incidental features of the environment.

Conversely, when an agent has *bona fide* knowledge her cognitive success, while primarily

creditable to the agent's cognitive ability, will also be typically creditable to some small yet non-negligible degree to nomological facts and environmental features. As a comparison, consider solubility. The internal physical structure of a solute is primarily responsible for its dissolution when immersed in a solvent, but physical properties of the solvent as well as prevalent laws of nature also play an indispensable albeit minor role. For instance, the same substance might not form a solution if immersed in the same liquid in a possible world with deviant laws of nature. Or take the analogy with archery which many robust virtue epistemologists are fond of. When an expert archer propels the arrow through the innermost ring as a result of exercising her skill of archery, the success is primarily creditable to the archer. Still, nomological regularities and environmental features also play a minor role in accounting for her hitting the target. For instance, if an entirely unpredictable change in the prevalent wind direction had suddenly occurred, even an expert archer would have missed the target. But that is perfectly compatible with the weakly supervening of that archery ability on the internal physical make-up of the archer. In short, dispositional properties—be they cognitive or physical—weakly supervene on their physical base properties. This means that while robust virtue epistemology exemplifies epistemic individualism, this view need not deny that getting things right through exercising the pertinent cognitive abilities is independent of *anything* external to the agent.<sup>18</sup>

Even so, it is precisely this commitment to epistemic individualism which creates problems for robust virtue epistemology when it comes to certain kinds of testimonial knowledge. The reason for this is that on standard views of testimonial knowledge it is possible to acquire such knowledge in suitable circumstances by, to a large extent, trusting the word of another. But because of the trust involved in these cases, however, it does not seem right to say that the agent who gains testimonial knowledge in this way is primarily creditable for the relevant cognitive success (indeed, if any one person is primarily creditable for this cognitive success it is surely the informant).

Jennifer Lackey offers the following testimonial case to illustrate this problem:

“Having just arrived at the train station in Chicago, Morris wishes to obtain directions to the Sears Tower. He looks around, randomly approaches the first passerby that he sees, and asks how to get to his desired destination. The passerby, who happens to be a Chicago resident who knows the city extraordinarily well, provides Morris with impeccable directions to the Sears Tower.”<sup>19</sup>

Lackey then writes:

“What explains why Morris got things right has nearly nothing of epistemic interest to do with him and nearly everything of epistemic interest to do with the passerby. In particular, it is the passerby's experience with and knowledge of the city of Chicago that explains why Morris ended up with a true belief rather than a false belief [...]. Thus, though it is plausible to say that Morris acquired knowledge from the passerby, there seems to be no substantive sense in which Morris deserves

credit for holding the true belief that he does.”<sup>20</sup>

Lackey’s aim with this example is to offer an argument for a very strong claim indeed—*viz.*, that Morris is to no significant degree creditable for his cognitive success, and thus that an agent can gain knowledge even while such knowledge is in no significant way creditable to his cognitive ability. We think that the example does not show this much, but that it is important for assessing the merits of robust virtue epistemology nonetheless.

We hold that two further features of the Morris case need to be added if it is to be a clear case of testimonial knowledge. The first is that we need to stipulate that Morris is in fact in an epistemically favourable environment, one in which testifiers tend to be honest and reliable about the subject matter in question. While trusting the word of another may be a good route to knowledge in such epistemically favourable environments, it is not generally a good route to testimonial knowledge, and hence we need to make this feature of the case explicit if we are to retain the clear intuition that Morris gains testimonial knowledge in this case.

The second feature we need to add to this case if it is to be a clear case of testimonial knowledge is that Morris had better not be *merely* trusting the word of another. That is, we need to be reading the case such that Morris is displaying a reasonable degree of relevant cognitive skill. For example, if Morris had been willing to ask just anyone (or anything) in order to get the information he seeks, including potential informants who clearly would not be good sources of information (e.g., a small child), then we don’t think it would be intuitive to suppose that he gains testimonial knowledge in this case (even though he happens to ask a reliable informant). Moreover, if Morris would have been willing to believe just about anything his informant told him, no matter how bizarre this might be, then this too would also (we claim) be a barrier to the intuition that he gains testimonial knowledge in this case (even though the informant he chanced upon in fact gives him reliable information).

With these two features added to the example, consider now our refined Morris case, which we will call the *Morris\** case. Given what we have just said about how *Morris\**’s cognitive ability must be playing some significant role in his acquisition of testimonial knowledge, it follows that his cognitive success is to some significant degree creditable to his cognitive ability. Unlike Lackey, then, we are not claiming that an agent can gain knowledge where the cognitive success in question is to no significant degree creditable to the agent’s cognitive ability. The point remains, however, that given that *Morris\**’s trust in his informant’s word is playing such a central role in his acquisition of knowledge his cognitive success is still not primarily creditable to his cognitive ability. The *Morris\** example is thus in direct conflict with robust virtue epistemology, since on

this view an agent's cognitive success must be *primarily* creditable to her ability if she is to have knowledge, and not merely partly creditable.

Moreover, we take it that how we are now describing the case—such that the claim is merely that an agent can, in epistemically favourable circumstances, gain testimonial knowledge by to a large extent (though not completely) trusting the word of another—accords with standard thinking amongst epistemologists of testimony. Robust virtue epistemology is thus, it seems, in conflict with mainstream views with regard to the epistemology of testimony.<sup>21</sup>

One response to this problem, of course, is just to pitch one's endorsement of robust virtue epistemology against mainstream epistemology of testimony. That is, one might bite the bullet and argue that Morris\* *doesn't* have knowledge in this case precisely because of the degree of trust in play. While this line of response will obviously be controversial, it is not entirely without merit. There are, after all, accounts of the epistemology of testimony in the literature which would be inclined towards such an austere line.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, though, no robust virtue epistemologist so far as we know has indicated a willingness to take this line of response to this problem.

Note also that merely retreating to a view on which the agent's cognitive success need be only partially creditable to her cognitive ability will, on the face of it anyway, not help the robust virtue epistemologist on this score. Of course, it would resolve the Morris\* case, since it would now follow that Morris\* has knowledge after all, as intuition indicates. But this resolution of the Morris\* case comes at the expense of preventing robust virtue epistemology from offering their distinctive response to the Gettier problem. Consider the fake sheep case again. Wouldn't we say that the agent's cognitive success in this case is at least as creditable to his cognitive agency as Morris\*'s cognitive success in the testimonial case? But if so, then insofar as Morris has knowledge then so do agents in Gettier-style cases, and this is clearly not the result the robust virtue epistemologist is after.

Robust virtue epistemologists thus seem to be in the grip of a dilemma. Either they stick to their guns and argue that Morris\* lacks knowledge, in which case they are in conflict with mainstream epistemology of testimony, or else they concede that Morris, even though not primarily creditable for his cognitive success, has knowledge and thereby lose their distinctive response to the Gettier problem. In response to this dilemma, Greco has tried to offer a midway course through the alternatives on offer.<sup>23</sup>

His basic idea is that robust virtue epistemologists should focus on whether the hearer in this case is a *reliable receiver or assessor* of testimony rather than whether the speaker is a reliable testifier or whether the hearer knows that the speaker is a reliable testifier. If that's the right account of testimony, then, as Greco writes:



“[...] we have to divide Lackey’s example into two cases: one where Morris is a reliable receiver of testimony and one where he is not. From the perspective of a virtue theory, it is only in the first sort of case that Morris knows the location of his destination. But in that sort of case, it is also to Morris’s credit that he forms a true belief to that effect. That is, his success is grounded in his ability to discriminate good from bad testimony and is therefore attributable to him.”<sup>24</sup>

Greco’s idea is thus to claim that once we focus on the cognitive abilities which Morris employs in detecting reliable testimony, then we can reasonably claim that insofar as Morris genuinely does have testimonial knowledge in this case then his cognitive success is primarily creditable to his cognitive ability after all, and not primarily creditable to his informant.

As a response to Lackey’s original Morris case this proposal has some merit. As we noted above, it is not all that plausible to suppose both that Morris’s cognitive success is to no significant degree creditable to his cognitive ability *and* that he gains testimonial knowledge in this case. It is thus important that Morris should, as Greco puts it, exhibit some relevant cognitive ability to ‘discriminate good from bad testimony’.

But adding this detail to the example does not get Greco off the hook at all, since all it does is replace the Morris case with the Morris\* case. And yet we have already seen that the problem posed for robust virtue epistemology by the Morris\* case is just as pressing (if not more so, in virtue of trading on more plausible claims). The problem is that while Morris\* undoubtedly does exhibit some relevant ability to discriminate good testimony from bad, it is not Morris\*’s cognitive ability which is the most salient part of the story of why he has testimonial knowledge, but rather his informant’s cognitive ability. So the problem still stands, even if we grant, with Greco, that Morris\* is displaying the relevant cognitive ability.

In support of his response to Morris-style testimonial cases, Greco suggests an analogy with soccer:

“Ted receives a brilliant, almost impossible pass, and then scores an easy goal as a result. In the case we are imagining, it is the athletic abilities of the passer that stand out. The pass was brilliant, its reception easy [...] Nevertheless, Ted deserves credit for the goal. Whatever help Ted got, he is the one who put the ball in the net.”<sup>25</sup>

Greco’s thought is that just as Ted deserves (footballing) credit for the goal, even despite the assistance of a much more skilful fellow player, so Morris (/Morris\*) deserves (epistemic) credit for his cognitive success, and hence can properly count as having knowledge.

On closer inspection, however, this example fails to convince. For the issue that concerns us is not whether Morris\*’s cognitive success *is to some degree* creditable to his cognitive ability but whether it is *primarily* creditable. As we pointed out, the stronger reading is required in order for robust virtue epistemology to deal with the Gettier-style cases. Moreover, it is not in dispute that Morris\*’s cognitive success is to some degree creditable to his cognitive ability, as we also noted

above. So when Greco talks of whether Ted ‘deserves credit’ for the goal, what we really need to ask is whether Ted’s goal is *primarily* creditable to his ability (i.e., and not just whether it is to some degree creditable to his ability, which is not in question). But given how the case is set-up it doesn’t seem at all right to say that Ted’s goal is primarily creditable to him at all, since it is *ex hypothesi* to a large extent down to the amazing pass he received. We can thus grant that the degree to which Morris\*’s cognitive success is creditable to his cognitive ability is roughly equivalent to the degree to which Ted’s goal-scoring success is creditable to his footballing ability without thereby undermining the problem that is posed for robust virtue epistemology by Morris\*-style testimonial cases.<sup>26</sup>

A more radical response to the problem posed by Morris-style cases is offered by Sosa. He argues that in such cases the agent’s cognitive success is “attributable to a complex social competence only partially seated in the individual believer.”<sup>27</sup> It is unclear how to understand this suggestion, and Sosa doesn’t offer much by way of explanation. But we take it that his idea is that while these Morris-style testimonial cases have in common with Gettier-style cases that the agent’s cognitive success is only partially creditable to her cognitive ability, the important difference between the two kinds of cases is that it is only in the testimonial case that the agent’s cognitive success is primarily creditable to a ‘social competence’ which is displayed by the cognitive whole of a ‘testifier-and-testiftee’. In the fake sheep case, after all, the agent concerned is not part of a wider cognitive whole to which the cognitive success could be primarily creditable.

The problem with this proposal is that it is entirely antithetical to the spirit of robust virtue epistemology. This, after all, is the view that an agent has knowledge when her cognitive success is because of *her* cognitive ability (only then is her belief apt, as Sosa himself puts it). So construed, robust virtue epistemology is explicitly a form of epistemic individualism, as we noted above. But what Sosa is now claiming is directly in tension with this claim, since he seems to be conceding that at least in some cases an agent can gain knowledge not in virtue of the exercise of their own cognitive ability but instead as a result of the part they play in some wider social epistemic competence.

This is not a minor ‘tweak’ to the robust virtue epistemic proposal, but rather a radical departure, one that requires explanation and motivation. In particular, we need to be told how this claim squares with the more general claims that robust virtue epistemologists make—including Sosa—which seem to commit them to epistemic individualism. Unfortunately, Sosa doesn’t explore this departure from this view, and instead swiftly returns to advancing a standard form of robust virtue epistemology. We are thus left with the choice between a standard construal of robust virtue epistemology, one which is wedded to epistemic individualism but which is confronted by certain problems with regard to the epistemology of testimony; and a radically new

construal of robust virtue epistemology (indeed, a view which may not properly be a form of robust virtue epistemology at all), one which holds out the hope of evading these social epistemic problems but which we have yet to see the details of.<sup>28</sup>

In what follows we will be putting robust virtue epistemology under more pressure on this score by showing that its commitment to epistemic individualism ensures that it is not just in tension with mainstream views with regard to the epistemology of testimony, but is also in conflict with a key commitment of contemporary social epistemology more generally. In particular, we will be offering an argument to the effect that the very combination of robust virtue epistemology and epistemic individualism is untenable. Moreover, we will be working through that argument with Sosa's own version of robust virtue epistemology in mind, in order to demonstrate that this tension exists within his own position, even despite his anti-individualistic response to Morris-style cases.

### 3. AN ANTI-INDIVIDUALISTIC THOUGHT EXPERIMENT

We have seen that Greco's response to the problem posed by Morris-style testimonial knowledge is to appeal to the agent's cognitive ability to detect reliable informants. While this response is in keeping with the epistemic individualism that robust virtue epistemology is standardly wedded to, we noted that it faces some problems. In what follows, we will be presenting an argument to the effect that, *contra* robust virtue epistemology, an agent's cognitive ability to discriminate good from bad testimony cannot possibly ground testimonial knowledge. If that's right, then the upshot of this argument will be that robust virtue epistemology is compelled to jettison its attachment to epistemic individualism. The challenge would then be to account for whether the view that remains really is a *bona fide* form of robust virtue epistemology at all.

Consider Sanford Goldberg's distinction between *direct and diffuse epistemic dependence*:

- (DIR) A subject  $S_1$  **directly (epistemically) depends** on another subject  $S_2$  with respect to  $S_1$ 's doxastic attitude D when the following condition holds: there are variations in  $S_2$ 's epistemic perspective that would make for variations in the epistemic properties of D.
- (DIF) A subject  $S_1$  **diffusely (epistemically) depends** on her community C with respect to her doxastic attitude D when the following condition holds: there are variations in the practices of the members of C, and variations in the states and dispositions of those members, that would make for variations in the epistemic properties of D; and this effect remains even after we subtract the effects of any direct epistemic dependence  $S_1$  exhibits with respect to D.<sup>29</sup>

Knowledge by testimony exemplifies (DIR): when a speaker acquires knowledge by accepting reliable testimony she directly epistemically depends on the speaker. But testimonial knowledge more broadly understood also exemplifies (DIF) in that testimonial exchanges often give rise to knowledge only when communal parties other than the speaker and the hearer are involved in *remotely monitoring and policing* the testimonial exchange in question. In these cases, the epistemic dependence is diffuse because the third party is not directly party to the testimonial exchange between speaker and hearer. That is to say, the hearer epistemically depends on community-wide epistemic monitoring and policing of speakers, thus normally securing a testimonial-friendly environment by rooting out the unreliable ones.

Let  $H$  be an ordinary, competent epistemic agent embedded in an epistemic community GOOD in which most other speakers are reliable testifiers. In particular, not only does  $H$  possess an ability to discriminate between reliable and unreliable informants, she also regularly exercises that discriminatory ability in the process of acquiring testimonial knowledge. Moreover, in GOOD the testimonial exchanges between  $H$  and various speakers are monitored and policed in a properly and timely fashion. Assume that  $H$  acquires knowledge upon accepting reliable speaker  $S$ 's testimony. The content of  $S$ 's knowledge pertains to an ordinary proposition which pretty much any reliable speaker will know. The robust virtue epistemologist's diagnosis is that  $H$  acquires knowledge through her discriminatory ability.

Now imagine that  $H$  is unwittingly transported to epistemic community BAD which also mostly contains reliable testifiers. The difference is that while the testimonial processes in GOOD are monitored and policed in a *knowledge-enabling* manner, the corresponding processes in BAD are monitored and policed in a *knowledge-precluding* manner *vis-à-vis*  $H$ . That is to say, third party epistemic agents reliably ensure that  $H$  is mostly exposed to unreliable speakers.  $H$  has no inkling of the systematic way in which reliable informants are being screened-off from the testimonial processes. Most of the competent-looking speakers with which  $H$  comes into contact are in actual fact not trustworthy. Now assume that  $H$  forms a true belief on the basis of hearing reliable speaker  $S$ 's testimony. The proposition in question is again an ordinary one which nearly every reliable speaker will know.

The question is: does  $H$  acquire testimonial knowledge in BAD? Here's an important reason to think that she does not. Gettier-style cases demonstrate that knowledge is incompatible with luck in the sense that knowledge requires true belief not just in the actual world but also in a range of nearby possible worlds. As noted above, one way of expressing this point is by saying that knowledge demands safety—i.e., that the knowing agent's true belief could not have easily been false. More precisely, *knowledge requires a safe basis*: if a subject believes truly on a certain basis, then not easily would that subject have formed a false belief on that same basis. Thus understood,  $H$ 's

belief in GOOD is safe because not easily would *H* have acquired a false belief through testimony. Had *H* approached another informant, she would have still ended up with a true belief because nearly all the untrustworthy ones have been weeded out by the third party members of GOOD. But *H*'s belief in BAD is unsafe thus understood. Very easily would *H* have formed a false belief on the same basis. *H* was fortunate that she ended up forming a true belief on the basis of testimony due to the third party members of BAD inadvertently letting a reliable informant slip through their net.<sup>30</sup> Because most speakers with which *H* conversationally interact are unreliable, had *H* formed the same belief on the basis of approaching a different informant, that belief would have been false. Given that knowledge requires safety, it follows that *H* lacks knowledge in BAD.<sup>31</sup>

If the foregoing is right, then *H* has knowledge in GOOD that she lacks in BAD. The pressing problem is whether that epistemic difference is down to a virtue-theoretic difference. Consider again the 'triple-A' structure of knowledge offered by Sosa, such that knowledge is apt belief, where apt belief is belief which is accurate because adroit. If we consider each of the As in turn it looks as if *H* in GOOD and *H* in BAD are virtue-theoretic duplicates.

Obviously there is no denial of accuracy, because the truth of *H*'s belief in both GOOD and BAD is simply built into the example. Nor does it look as if *H* in BAD lacks any pertinent cognitive ability. It is common ground that *H* possesses the ability to discriminate between reliable and unreliable informants in GOOD. As mentioned in §2, Sosa takes it that abilities, cognitive abilities included, have *physical bases* resident in the agent who possesses those abilities. Given that *H* undergoes no physical change when being shifted from GOOD to BAD, whatever abilities she possesses in GOOD are ones she also possesses in BAD.<sup>32</sup> Sosa assimilates abilities to dispositions in that both are grounded by such a physical basis. Notably, dispositional properties are arguably physically necessitated by their intrinsic physical base properties. If the analogy holds, then the fact that *H* in BAD is physically identical to *H* in GOOD is sufficient for *H* to possess in BAD whatever abilities she possesses in GOOD. The fact that *H* in BAD is surrounded—physically and modally—by unreliable informants is neither here nor there. A sugar cube does not lose its water-solubility merely by being moved into an environment in which it would not dissolve if immersed in a water-like substance. This means that *H*'s belief is adroit in both GOOD and BAD in that she has an ability to discriminate reliable from unreliable informants in the two cases.

Finally, *H*'s belief in GOOD also seems to be apt. *H* possesses the pertinent ability and the conditions for its successful exercise are optimal. So, in GOOD *H* believing truly manifests her ability. But it is equally difficult to see why *H* in BAD should neither manifest the ability she possesses, nor believe truly through that ability. On the model with dispositions, manifestation of abilities is a *local* matter. If you immerse a sugar cube in water it manifests its ability to dissolve even if it is surrounded by water-like substances which are such that it might easily have been

immersed in one of those and had that been the case it would not have dissolved. Disposition-manifestation does not require safety. Likewise in the case of *H* in BAD. All the local physical facts pertaining to the testimonial exchange between *H* and *S* in BAD are identical to the local physical facts as they obtain in GOOD. So, if *H* manifests her ability to discriminate between reliable and unreliable informants in GOOD, then so does *H* in BAD. In conclusion, if knowledge is apt belief as the robust virtue epistemologist contends, then there is no virtue-theoretic difference between *H* in GOOD and *H* in BAD. But since there clearly is an epistemic difference, this view cannot in general be correct.

While it is instructive to focus on Sosa's particular formulation of robust virtue epistemology in order to make this point, note that this argument has a general application against any form of robust virtue epistemology which is allied to epistemic individualism. For insofar as such a view treats knowledge as being cognitive success that is because of the knowing agent's cognitive ability, then it will be subject to this objection. That Sosa, who as we noted above elsewhere appears to opt-out of epistemic individualism, is also subject to this complaint reveals just how deeply entrenched epistemic individualism is within the robust virtue epistemic account of knowledge.

#### 4. RESPONSES

One response to this argument would of course be to contend that robust virtue epistemologists should reject epistemic individualism. Given how Sosa responds to the Morris-style cases, this might make a lot of sense. Note, however, that the challenge is then to spell-out just how the view should be understood if it is cast in this way. Sosa's view is a good example of the problems in store here. For as we saw in the last section, the very way that Sosa understands cognitive abilities seems to commit him to epistemic individualism. In general, epistemic virtues are most naturally characterised as cognitive abilities that supervene on internal, physical features of the agents whose abilities they are. But if that's right, then epistemic individualism is not a thesis that the robust virtue epistemologist can give up on very easily.

A second response might be to reject the very idea of diffuse epistemic dependency. But this is a key commitment of contemporary social epistemology, and hence to take this route would put robust virtue epistemology into conflict with contemporary social epistemology. Clearly, then, this is not a dialectical option that can be taken lightly either.

Is there a way that the robust virtue epistemologist might respond to our argument while preserving their commitment to epistemic individualism (and without denying any central tenets of

contemporary social epistemology)? One possibility in this regard is to modify the robust virtue epistemic proposal. For example, John Turri argues that we should add to Sosa's account of knowledge as apt belief. In particular, he argues that knowledge does not just require apt belief but also *ample* belief.<sup>33</sup> Ample belief, according to Turri, is when the safety (i.e., and not just the truth) of the belief is because of the agent's cognitive ability.

By way of illustration, consider Sosa's twist on the archery example.<sup>34</sup> A master archer dispatches an arrow, which propels through the bull's-eye. Unbeknownst to her, a protecting angel with a wind machine ensures that the shot would still hit the target had a natural gust suddenly diverted the arrow, which it might easily have. While the archer's success is because of her ability (in that the angel did not in fact intervene), the safety of her success (i.e., the fact that her success could not have easily been failure) is not because of ability but is rather due to the willingness of the angel to intervene. Using Turri's terminology, this means that the archer's success, while apt, was not ample. Can this distinction between apt and ample success be applied to the epistemic case to offer the robust virtue epistemologist a way of responding to our argument?

Given that the belief that *H* forms in BAD is unsafe, it follows trivially that her belief in BAD is not ample. So, it looks as if the virtue-theorist is home free if only she identifies knowledge with ample belief. Indeed, there is independent support for such identification. For while *H*'s true belief in BAD is due to the manifestation of her discriminatory ability, *her exercising that ability in BAD is unreliable*. A cognitive ability is reliable only if it produces mostly true beliefs in the actual world and in a range of nearby possible worlds. The fact that exercising *H*'s discriminatory ability in BAD is unreliable therefore implies that the beliefs *H* forms on the basis of its deliverances are unsafe.

The problem, however, is that it is unclear whether robust virtue epistemology, so construed, really is still a *robust* version of virtue epistemology. As we noted in §1, what is distinctive about robust virtue epistemology is that, unlike modest virtue epistemology, it offers a purely virtue-theoretic account of knowledge. In particular, what sets it apart from modest virtue epistemology is that it does not need to adduce a separate anti-luck condition like safety in order to deal with the kind of knowledge-undermining epistemic luck in play in, for example, Gettier-style cases. But what is it about the view that knowledge is ample belief that makes it any different from a modest virtue epistemology in which a virtue-theoretic proposal is supplemented with an anti-luck condition?<sup>35</sup>

The upshot is that once we introduce the distinction between direct and diffuse epistemic dependence, then there is reason to think that knowledge cannot be exhaustively explained in virtue-theoretic terms, at least insofar as the robust virtue epistemologist wishes to retain her adherence to epistemic individualism. Moreover, we have noted that the idea that robust virtue

epistemology could just simply jettison a commitment to epistemic individualism is far from being above contention. Epistemic virtues are usually characterised, quite naturally, as cognitive abilities that supervene on internal, physical features of the agents whose abilities they are. But our argument shows that there are epistemic differences between virtue-theoretic duplicates, thus understood. Finally, while the virtue epistemologist might eschew the significance of Goldberg's distinction by rejecting the existence of diffuse epistemic dependency, since this is a characteristic commitment of contemporary social epistemology, this option is not very appealing either. The challenge posed for robust virtue epistemology by our argument is thus quite pressing indeed.<sup>36</sup>



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> For an excellent discussion of the ‘good-luck-bad-luck’ structure of Gettier-style cases, see Zagzebski, L. (1999). ‘What is Knowledge?’, *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, (eds.) J. Greco & E. Sosa, pp. 92-116, Oxford: Blackwell.
- <sup>2</sup> This example is due to Chisholm, R. (1977). *Theory of Knowledge* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, p. 105.
- <sup>3</sup> For some helpful surveys of the literature on virtue epistemology, see: Axtell, G. (1997). ‘Recent Work in Virtue Epistemology’, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 34, pp. 410-30; Greco, J. (2002). ‘Virtues in Epistemology’, *Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, (ed.) P. Moser, pp. 287-315, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Baehr, J. (2004). ‘Virtue Epistemology’, *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (eds.) B. Dowden & J. Fieser, [www.iep.utm.edu/virtueep/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/virtueep/); and (2008). ‘Four Varieties of Character-Based Virtue Epistemology’, *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 46, pp. 469-502; Greco, J., & Turri, J. (2009). ‘Virtue Epistemology’, *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (ed.) E. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology-virtue/>; Kvanvig, J. (2010). ‘Virtue Epistemology’, *Routledge Companion to Epistemology*, (eds.) S. Bernecker & D. H. Pritchard, pp. 199-207, London: Routledge; Turri, J., & Sosa, E. (2010). ‘Virtue Epistemology’, *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Philosophy*, DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195396577-0123. Note that we will here treat cognitive ability and epistemic virtue as interchangeable notions. While this is potentially controversial, nothing hangs on this distinction for our purposes.
- <sup>4</sup> Of course, not all virtue epistemologists think that virtue epistemology should be in the business of offering a theory of knowledge. See, for example, Code, L. (1987). *Epistemic Responsibility*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England; Kvanvig, J. (1992). *The Intellectual Virtues and the Life of the Mind*. Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; Montmarquet, J. (1993). *Epistemic Virtue and Doxastic Responsibility*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield; Hookway, C. (2003). ‘How to Be a Virtue Epistemologist’, *Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology*, (eds.) M. DePaul & L. Zagzebski, pp. 183-202, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Roberts, R., & Wood, W. J. (2007). *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Nevertheless, as we explain below, there is a rich vein of thinking within virtue epistemology which does aim to offer an account of knowledge, and it is that brand of virtue epistemology which is our concern here.
- <sup>5</sup> Versions of the safety condition for knowledge have been offered by a number of authors: Luper, S. (1984). ‘The Epistemic Predicament’, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 62, pp. 26-50; and (2003). ‘Indiscernability Skepticism’, *The Skeptic: Contemporary Essays*, (ed.) S. Luper, pp. 183-202, Aldershot: Ashgate; Sainsbury, R. M. (1997). ‘Easy Possibilities’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 57, pp. 907-19; Sosa, E. (1999). ‘How to Defeat Opposition to Moore’, *Philosophical Perspectives* 13, pp. 141-54; Williamson, T. (2000). *Knowledge and its Limits*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pritchard, D. H. (2002). ‘Resurrecting the Moorean Response to the Sceptic’, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 10, pp. 283-307; (2005). *Epistemic Luck*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; and (2007). ‘Anti-Luck Epistemology’, *Synthese* 158, pp. 277-97. For a comprehensive and up-to-date discussion of the merits of the safety condition for knowledge, see the exchange between Pritchard (*Forthcoming*). ‘There Cannot be Lucky Knowledge’, *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (eds.) M. Steup & J. Turri, Oxford: Blackwell, and Hetherington, S. (*Forthcoming*). ‘There Can Be Lucky Knowledge’, *Contemporary Debates in Epistemology* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), (eds.) M. Steup & J. Turri, Oxford: Blackwell.
- <sup>6</sup> One clear statement of such a view can be found in early work by Greco where he develops his own variant of virtue epistemology known as agent reliabilism. See, for example, Greco (1999). ‘Agent Reliabilism’, *Philosophical Perspectives* 13, pp. 273-96; and (2000). *Putting Skeptics in Their Place: The Nature of Skeptical Arguments and Their Role in Philosophical Inquiry*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. For example, after setting out the problem posed by Gettier-style cases and noting that his position cannot deal with this problem, he writes:  
 “Accordingly, the [virtue-theoretic] conditions that agent reliabilism sets down as necessary for knowledge are not also sufficient for knowledge; something else must be added.” (Greco, 2000, pp. 251-2)
- <sup>7</sup> True—as Sosa (2007). *A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 96, notes—in Gettier-style cases the subject’s cognitive abilities help explain why she holds the relevant belief. Crucially, however, they do not explain why that belief is true. The general point is that A can explain why B exists without explaining why B instantiates property F. To use Sosa’s example, having been produced by a Volvo factory may be part of the explanation for why there is this defective car in existence, but it may be improper maintenance which explains why this car is defective. Since knowledge by robust virtue-theoretic lights requires not merely that the subject’s belief exist in part because of her cognitive abilities, but also that her belief be true because of those abilities, agents lacks knowledge when their beliefs are Gettierized.
- <sup>8</sup> Note that a further motivation for robust virtue epistemology, which we will not be exploring here, is the idea that it is uniquely placed to deal with the problem of accounting for the special value of knowledge. See, for example, Greco (2009). ‘The Value Problem’, *Epistemic Value*, (eds.) A. Haddock, A. Millar & D. H. Pritchard, pp. 313-21, Oxford: Oxford University Press. For a critical discussion of this claim, see Pritchard (2009). ‘The Value of Knowledge’, *Harvard Review of Philosophy* 16, pp. 2-19; and Pritchard, D. H., Millar, A., & Haddock, A. (2010). *The Nature and Value of Knowledge: Three Investigations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, chs. 1-2. For two recent surveys of the literature on the problem of epistemic value, see Pritchard (2007). ‘Recent Work on Epistemic Value’, *American Philosophical Quarterly* 44, pp. 85-110; and Turri, J., & Pritchard, D. H. (2011). ‘The Value of Knowledge’, *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, (ed.) E. Zalta, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-value/>.

<sup>9</sup> See Sosa (1988). ‘Beyond Skepticism, to the Best of Our Knowledge’, *Mind* 97, pp. 153-89; (1991). *Knowledge in Perspective: Selected Essays in Epistemology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2007; and (2009). *Reflective Knowledge: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; Zagzebski (1996). *Virtues of the Mind: An Inquiry into the Nature of Virtue and the Ethical Foundations of Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; and 1999; Greco (2003). ‘Knowledge as Credit for True Belief’, *Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology*, (eds.) M. DePaul & L. Zagzebski, pp. 111-34, Oxford: Oxford University Press; 2007; (2008). ‘What’s Wrong With Contextualism?’, *Philosophical Quarterly* 58, pp. 416-36; and 2009.

<sup>10</sup> While there are differences between the kinds of robust virtue epistemologies on offer in the literature, these differences are not particularly relevant here, and hence in what follows we will tend to focus on Sosa’s version of this proposal. For a broader critical discussion of robust virtue epistemology, see Pritchard (2011). ‘Anti-Luck Virtue Epistemology’, *Journal of Philosophy*.

<sup>11</sup> See Goldman, A. (1979). ‘What Is Justified Belief?’, *Justification and Knowledge*, (ed.) G. Pappas, pp. 1-23, Dordrecht: Reidel, p. 13; and (1986). *Epistemology and Cognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 51. Goldberg claims that Goldman’s process reliabilism is a branch of what he calls ‘process individualism’. See Goldberg, S. (2010). *Relying on Others: An Essay in Epistemology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 36. More generally, Goldberg argues that the view he dubs ‘knowledge individualism’, according to which all of the epistemic conditions on knowledge pertain to cognitive processes inside the agent herself, is falsified by ordinary cases of testimony. In conversation with one of the authors of this paper Goldman expressed his sympathy with the view we are here calling weak epistemic individualism, a view that is closely related to knowledge individualism.

<sup>12</sup> See Goldman, 1986, pp. 62-3 & pp. 111-2.

<sup>13</sup> The *locus classicus* for defences of mentalism is Conee, E., & Feldman, R. (2004). *Evidentialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. For a set of critical discussions of this proposal, see Dougherty, T. (ed.) (2011). *Evidentialism and its Discontents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. The *locus classicus* for defences of the extended mind hypothesis is Clark, A., & Chalmers, D. (1998). ‘The Extended Mind’, *Analysis* 58, pp. 7-19. While there has not been much discussion in the literature of the epistemological ramifications of the latter proposal, one exception is Pritchard (2010). ‘Cognitive Ability and the Extended Cognitions Hypothesis’, *Synthese* 175, pp. 133-51.

<sup>14</sup> For more technical details and discussion see McLaughlin, B. (1995). ‘Varieties of Supervenience’, *Supervenience: New Essays*, (eds.) E. Savellos & Ü. Yalcin, pp. 16–59, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; Kallestrup, J. (2011). *Semantic Externalism*, London: Routledge.

<sup>15</sup> See Jackson, F., & Pettit, P. (1993). ‘Some Content Is Narrow’, *Mental Causation*, (eds.) J. Heil & A. Mele, pp. 259-82, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>16</sup> See Sosa, 2007, p. 29.

<sup>17</sup> Note that it is common in the literature to move interchangeably between the claim that when a subject knows her cognitive success is *creditable* to her cognitive ability, and the claim that when a subject knows her cognitive success is *of credit* to her. We take this to be a mistake, and that it is, properly speaking, the former claim which is the one intended here. After all, the latter claim brings with it an evaluative dimension which is moot. That one’s cognitive success is creditable to one’s cognitive agency is one thing; that it is of credit to one (even *qua* cognitive agent) quite another. In what follows, where we cite epistemologists as talking of ‘credit’ rather than ‘creditable’, we will translate this claim, without comment, in terms of the latter locution. For further discussion of this point, see Pritchard, Millar & Haddock, 2010, §2.4.

<sup>18</sup> According to Greco (2009). *Achieving Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, ch. 5, when a subject has knowledge the overarching element in the causal explanation of her cognitive success is her cognitive ability. Greco relativizes the possession of such abilities to environments, which are “sets of relatively stable circumstances”. See Greco, 2009, p. 22 & p. 77; cf. Greco (2007). ‘The Nature of Ability and the Purpose of Knowledge’, *Philosophical Issues* 17, pp. 57-69. As we argue elsewhere—see Kallestrup, J., & Pritchard, D. H. (Forthcoming). ‘Virtue Epistemology and Epistemic Twin Earth’, *European Journal of Philosophy*—environments should be understood as the normal circumstances in which the agent is typically located and where she acquires the pertinent abilities through learning and sustains them through practice. These abilities are possessed as long as they are reliably manifested in these environments. Importantly, in so far as environments in that sense approximate worlds, such environmental dependence is compatible with the claim that the agent’s cognitive abilities weakly supervene on her internal physical constitution. We are grateful to an anonymous referee for urging us to clarify this aspect of epistemic individualism.

<sup>19</sup> Lackey, J. (2007). ‘Why We Don’t Deserve Credit for Everything We Know’, *Synthese* 158, pp. 345-61, p. 352.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> That is, most epistemologists of testimony are inclined towards some version of *anti-reductionism*, which is epistemically more liberal than its reductionist counterpart. It is precisely because of their anti-reductionism that most epistemologists would tend to treat Morris\* as having testimonial knowledge. Reductionists, in contrast, would tend to regard Morris\* as lacking knowledge in this case. While reductionism is not a popular view in the epistemology of testimony, it does have some adherents. See, for example, Fricker, E. (1995). ‘Telling and Trusting: Reductionism and Anti-Reductionism in the Epistemology of Testimony’, *Mind* 104, pp. 393-411. For a very useful survey of contemporary work on the epistemology of testimony, with special focus on the reductionism/anti-reductionism distinction, see Lackey, J. (2010). ‘Testimonial Knowledge’, *The Routledge Companion to Epistemology*, (eds.) S. Bernecker

↗ D. H. Pritchard, pp. 316-25, New York: Routledge. See also Carter, J. A., ↗ Pritchard, D. H. (2010). 'Epistemology of Testimony', *Oxford Bibliographies Online: Philosophy*, DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780195396577-0119.

<sup>22</sup> See endnote 21.

<sup>23</sup> See Greco, 2007.

<sup>24</sup> Greco, 2007, p. 63.

<sup>25</sup> Greco, 2007, p. 64.

<sup>26</sup> As should be clear from the quotation just given, Greco is here responding to the dilemma posed for robust virtue epistemology in the specific form that Lackey expresses—i.e., in terms of whether the cognitive success in question is 'of credit' to the agent rather than 'creditable' to the agent's cognitive ability (see endnote 17). Still, if this move works as a defence of robust virtue epistemology, then it will need to deal with the 'creditable' reading since, as noted above, that's the specific sense in which the view is defended.

Note that there is something else problematic about the example that Greco offers. In order to see this, imagine that Morris had formed his testimonial belief not by for the most part trusting the word of an informant, but by seeking out a knowledge-source who he knew was reliable in this regard (e.g., a local policeman who was already known to him). In this case it is not in question even by robust virtue epistemic lights that Morris would gain knowledge, and yet trust plays no essential role in this case. But isn't such a case very much like the 'Ted' example, in that it is case in which an expert is making it easy for us to gain knowledge? If that's right, then this is a good reason for being suspicious that the Ted case is analogous to the original Morris case after all. Given that even if we grant that the case is analogous it still doesn't demonstrate what Greco thinks it demonstrates, we will not be exploring this concern further here. For further discussion of this response to Greco's example, see Pritchard, Miller ↗ Haddock, 2010, ch. 2, §6.

<sup>27</sup> Sosa, 2007, p. 97.

<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it can be shown that this social version of robust virtue epistemology is problematic in other respects too. See Kallestrup ↗ Pritchard, *forthcoming*, for a line of argument against robust virtue epistemology which is just as applicable to social as opposed to individualistic versions of this thesis.

<sup>29</sup> Goldberg (2011). 'The Division of Epistemic Labour', *Episteme* 8, pp. 112-25. See also Goldberg, 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Of course if *H* had formed a belief with a different content on the basis of *S*'s testifying to that effect, then *H* would have formed a true belief. We assume throughout that the testimonial belief *H* forms has a fixed content.

<sup>31</sup> Reflect that the thought experiment could be set up the other way around. *H* lacks knowledge in BAD due to epistemic monitoring and policing that precludes knowledge. Then *S* travels unwittingly to GOOD where she intuitively knows due to epistemic monitoring and policing that enables knowledge. Everything else remains the same.

<sup>32</sup> Goldberg, 2011, briefly offers a similar example, but since his hearer in the bad case has always been embedded in an environment in which unreliable testimony is rife, it is open to the virtue-theorist to deny that the hearer ever possessed the relevant discriminatory ability. Goldberg does stress that the two hearers are physical duplicates. But that may be incoherent if such diachronic, epistemic differences have an impact on the hearers' cognitive lives. In any case, the travelling story circumvents that move.

<sup>33</sup> See Turri, J. (2011). 'Manifest Failure: The Gettier Problem Solved', *Philosophers' Imprint* 11, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3521354.0011.008>. Note that Turri also argues that knowledge requires, in addition, what he calls 'adeptness', though we can set this complication to one side for our purposes here.

<sup>34</sup> For example, in Sosa, 2007, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> Indeed, Pritchard defends a hybrid view according to which knowledge requires safety in addition to a virtue-theoretic component, though he is clear that this proposal is meant to be an *alternative* to robust virtue epistemology, rather than a version of it. See Pritchard, 2011, and Pritchard, Millar ↗ Haddock, 2010, ch. 3.

<sup>36</sup> Thanks to an anonymous referee for *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* for feedback on an earlier version of this article. This paper was written while DHP was in possession of a Philip Leverhulme Prize.