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# Knowing For: A New Path in Testimonial Justification

John Allan Scott Camacho

*University of Missouri-St. Louis*, jac68d@umsl.edu

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Knowing For: A New Path in Testimonial Justification

**John Camacho**

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Advisory Committee

Dr. Berit Brogaard, Ph.D.

Chairperson

Dr. John Brunero, Ph.D.

Dr. Jon McGinnis, Ph.D.

Dr. Eric Wiland, Ph.D.

Abstract

John Greco believes that any satisfactory theory of testimonial knowledge should explain its *practical nature*—how testimonial knowledge *pervades* across cases in a way that much of our knowledge is *dependable*. He offers six cases: children know from their mothers, teachers (simple), friends know from each other and citizens (tricky), job interviewers and interrogators know from interviewees (difficult). In §2, I consider Greco's formulation of these cases into the Reasons and Trust (RT) Dilemma: reductionism is too demanding for simple cases and non-reductionism is too easy in difficult cases.

In §3, I begin by reframing Greco's RT Dilemma. I will argue that the horns of Greco's dilemma against reductionism and non-reductionism can be best understood as failing to accommodate the practical facts of testimony. I will then propose an approach to testimonial justification, *knowing for*. Hearers' aims for knowing are related to the way hearers acquire testimonial justification. The purpose of *knowing for* is to give a comprehensive account of testimonial justification that includes reductionism's positive reasons and non-reductionism's trusting relationships. As a result, *knowing for* accommodates Greco's six cases. In §4, I apply *knowing for* to the reductionist conception of positive reasons. In §5, I apply *knowing for* to the non-reductionist conception of a trusting relationship. Even though my view of *knowing for* alleviates both

reductionism and non-reductionism from Greco's RT Dilemma, the unintended consequence is dissolving the debate between reductionism and non-reductionism.

## §1. Introduction

Consider a simple case of testimonial knowledge. Sarah tells her small child, Katie, "There is milk in the refrigerator." Katie listens to her mother's testimony and she knows that there is milk in the refrigerator. Why is Katie justified in believing that this is so? In this case, Katie's justification is based on her *trusting relationship* with her mother. This case is simple, because the hearer is alleviated of the burden of needing additional grounds or evidence for accepting the testimony. Sarah says something to Katie. Based on Katie's trusting relationship with Sarah, she knows it.

Now consider a difficult case of testimonial knowledge. Suppose that Sarah works as a police interrogator who questions uncooperative witnesses. After interrogating a witness for several hours, the person says, "Marie robbed the bookstore." Sarah then researches previous robberies and gathers non-testimonially based *reasons* for corroborating the witness's testimony. This case is difficult, because the hearer is burdened to acquire additional reasons for believing the testimony. Sarah listens to the testimony. However, the witness' testimony does not suffice for Sarah knowing that Marie robbed the bookstore. Sarah must also gather non-testimonially based reasons to know.

In a tricky case originally proposed by Jennifer Lackey, suppose that Sarah is visiting Chicago.<sup>1</sup> She asks a passerby, “Where is the Sears Tower?” The passerby says, “Two blocks east.” For Sarah to know the location of the Sears Tower, her justification depends upon either having non-testimonially based *reasons* or having a *trusting relationship* with the passerby. Sarah may believe that further reasons are required for her to know what the passerby says is true. On the other hand, Sarah may believe that the communal relationship between members of the Chicago community justifies her knowing that the Sears Tower is two blocks east. This case is tricky because either *reasons* or *trusting relationships* could be appropriate for a hearer to believe that the testimony is justified. Sarah listens to the passerby, but does not clearly know why she is justified in believing the testimony.

These cases indicate the methods of testimonial justification. Simple cases suggest that hearers’ *trusting relationships* with speakers ground the hearers’ belief that the testimony is justified; in contrast, difficult cases show that hearers’ *positive reasons* ground the hearers’ belief that the testimony is justified. As for tricky cases, hearers may plausibly believe that either *trusting relationships* or *reasons* ground their justification.

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<sup>1</sup>Jennifer Lackey calls the case CHICAGO VISITOR. She employs the case to reject the Credit Theory of Knowledge as answering the Value Problem. The credit theory has become a popular answer to the Value Problem and the theory is held by many virtue reliabilists such as John Greco and Wayne Riggs. For more on Lackey’s view, see Jennifer Lackey, “Why we don’t deserve credit for everything we know,” *Synthese* 158, 345–361.

John Greco argues that any satisfactory theory of testimonial justification must explain simple, difficult and tricky cases. Call the theory of testimonial justification that explains difficult cases in terms of hearers' non-testimonially based reasons, or positive reasons, *reductionism*.<sup>2</sup> Label the theory of testimonial justification that explains simple cases in terms of hearers' trusting relationship with speakers, *non-reductionism*.<sup>3</sup> Greco turns simple, difficult and tricky cases into a dilemma against reductionism and non-reductionism, what I call, the Reasons and Trust (RT) Dilemma: reductionism is too demanding in simple cases and non-reductionism is too easy in difficult cases. On the demandingness horn, the reductionist standard of positive reasons prevents children from acquiring knowledge. On the easiness horn, the non-reductionist's standard of trusting relationships licenses gullibility, because interrogators are licensed to accept false testimony from witnesses.

Greco's RT Dilemma can be understood as addressing further problems for reductionism and non-reductionism. C.A.J. Coady,<sup>4</sup> Robert

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<sup>2</sup>The label 'reductionism' has been profusely used in the history of philosophy from David Hume to Rudolph Carnap and beyond. The origin of this view is traced back to Hume and the origin of 'non-reductionism' derives from Thomas Reid. In the epistemology of testimony, reductionism and non-reductionism are the two prominent theories of testimonial justification.

<sup>3</sup>The term, 'non-reductionism' is also referred to as 'anti-reductionism.'

<sup>4</sup>C.A.J. Coady, *Testimony: A Philosophical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

Audi<sup>5</sup> and Jennifer Lackey<sup>6</sup> draw out, what I call, the *practical facts of testimony*: (1) testimony *pervades* across many areas of our knowledge and (2) much of our knowledge *depends* on testimony.<sup>7</sup> Both are widely-held truths about testimony. First, testimony is ubiquitous in our knowledge of science, journalism, geography, family history and many other areas. Since reductionism holds that children do not know, this theory fails to accommodate the practical fact that testimonial knowledge is pervasive among children. Second, a massive amount of our knowledge *depends* on testimony. Since non-reductionism holds that interrogators have knowledge, this view fails to accommodate the practical fact that testimony is dependable. In sum, reductionism and non-reductionism fail to explain the pervasive and dependable facts of testimony, respectively.

In this paper, I attempt to rescue both reductionism and non-reductionism from the horns of Greco's RT Dilemma. What I intend to show is that, even though neither reductionism nor non-reductionism gets completely around the horns of Greco's dilemma, the prospects of both theories explaining the practical facts of testimony are optimistic.

In §2, I will outline Greco's Reasons and Trust Dilemma against

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<sup>5</sup>Robert Audi, "The Place of Testimony in the Fabric of Knowledge and Justification," *American Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 34 No. 4 (1997): 405-422.

<sup>6</sup>Jennifer Lackey, "Testimony Acquiring Knowledge from Others," eds. Alvin I. Goldman and Dennis Whitcomb *Social Epistemology Essential Readings*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011), 71-91.

<sup>7</sup>By 'dependable', the view is not necessarily tied to a reliabilist theory of knowledge or any other theory that ultimately turns out true.



reductionism and non-reductionism. In §3, I will then reframe Greco's dilemma. I will argue that the horns of Greco's dilemma against reductionism and non-reductionism can be best understood as failing to comply with the practical facts of testimony discussed by Coady, Audi and Lackey. Given my interpretation of Greco's dilemma, I will then attempt to save reductionism and non-reductionism with the same tool.

I will defend the view *knowing for*. Roughly, hearers' aims for acquiring testimonial knowledge are related to testimonial justification. *Knowing* that the speaker's testimony is *for* a police investigator, who will have specific attitudes and conduct certain actions, plays a role in determining what counts as the appropriate method of testimonial justification. Positive reasons and trusting relationships are two methods of testimonial justification. On this view, hearers' beliefs and actions with the speaker's testimony is vital to the way that they become justified in knowledge. *Knowing* that the testimony is *for* children, interrogators or tourists, who have different aims for seeking knowledge, explains why reasons are appropriate for investigators and trusting relationships are appropriate for children. Thus, *knowing for* is a comprehensive theory of testimonial justification, because it encompasses reductionism's positive reasons and non-reductionism's trusting relationships to explain Greco's six cases.

In §4, I will apply the view of *knowing for* to the reductionist conception of a positive reason and the non-reductionist conception of a trusting relationship. First, I will argue that positive reasons must be commensurable with hearers' aims for knowing. Reductionism does not completely avoid the Greco's dilemma but the view gets closer to explaining the practical fact that testimony is pervasive. Second, I begin by analyze empirical research about children's trusting relationships with their mothers. I will go on to identify empirically what counts as a trusting relationship between children and mothers. In the spirit of knowing for, I will then detail future experiments that test whether children and interrogators acquire testimonial knowledge based on a trusting relationship. The hope is to pave a way for non-reductionism to be compatible with the practical fact that testimony is dependable and avoid the Greco's dilemma. Generally, if one is either a reductionist or non-reductionist, my view of *knowing for* should be very attractive. Positive reasons and trusting relationships are compatible with the practical facts of testimony, because both are based on the same foundation, *knowing for*. At the same time, accepting *knowing for* includes the unintended consequence of dissolving the disagreement between reductionism and non-reductionism. The problem of testimonial justification—explaining why hearers are justified in believing testimony—is not an issue between reductionism's positive reasons versus non-reductionism's trusting

relationships; rather, the problem of testimonial justification becomes an issue of explaining the *relation* between the methods of testimonial justification (positive reasons and trusting relationships) and hearers' aims for knowledge.

## §2. Greco's Reasons and Trust Dilemma

Hearers acquire testimonial knowledge in this general way: (a) speakers have knowledge, (b) speakers transmit true or reliable testimonially-based beliefs to hearers and (c) hearers believe that the testimony is justified. If speakers do not know or transmit false or unreliable testimony, hearers cannot acquire knowledge from testimony. The issue of testimonial justification is explaining the specific way that hearers are justified in believing the testimony.

Reductionism defends two claims: (1) "*Reduction Component*" that testimonial knowledge is reducible to other basic epistemic sources including perception, memory and inductive inference and (2) "*Positive-Reasons Component*"—non-testimonially-based positive reasons necessarily and sufficiently justify hearers' beliefs in the testimony. The former is a metaphysical thesis about the nature of testimony, and the latter is a claim about testimonial justification. Generally, a 'positive reason' is non-testimonially based evidence that justifies hearers' beliefs in the testimony. Hearers acquire positive reasons for belief by making

deductive or inductive logical inferences from their perceptual faculty or memory. In this way, the reductionist story of testimonial justification is compatible with a principle of rationality—hearer knows that P based on having a *positive reason for* believing that P. David Hume and Elizabeth Fricker support versions of reductionism. Fricker claims, “The thesis I advocate...is that a hearer should always engage in some assessment of the speaker for trustworthiness. To believe what is assumed without doing so is to believe blindly, uncritically. This is gullibility.”<sup>8</sup> ‘Assessment’ is understood as requiring positive reasons for testimonial justification. Hence, reductionism criticizes hearers, who immediately accept testimony without positive reasons, for being gullible or irrational.

Non-reductionism proposes two theses: (1) *Distinctiveness Component*—testimonial knowledge is an irreducible basic epistemic source similar to perception, memory and induction—and (2) *Entitlement Component*—hearers are entitled to believe a speaker’s testimony as knowledge in the absence of defeaters. Thomas Reid and Tyler Burge advocate versions of non-reductionism.<sup>9</sup> Burge claims,

Our entitlement to ordinary perceptual belief is usually sufficient for perceptual knowledge. It is usually sufficient even though we may be unable specifically to rule out various possible defeating conditions. If there is no reason to think that the defeating

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<sup>8</sup>Elizabeth Fricker, “Against Gullibility” in *Knowing from Words*, ed. B.K. Matilal and A. Chakrabarti (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004): 145.

<sup>9</sup>Given my criteria between reductionism and non-reductionism, theories such as interpersonal relationship views are counted as non-reductionist views, because justification is nonevidential and the interpersonal relationship is central to the epistemology of testimony.

conditions threaten, one has knowledge despite ignoring them. Something similar holds for acquisition of belief from others. Other things equal, ordinary interlocution suffices for knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

Burge proposes that an interlocution explains why testimonial knowledge is on par with perception, induction and memory as an irreducible or basic epistemic source. However, for Burge, entitlement is not equivalent to justification, because a subject must articulate her reasons for justification. Alternative views have emerged to identify the irreducible epistemic source. For example, John Hardwig claims, "The trustworthiness of members of epistemic communities is the ultimate foundation for much of our knowledge"<sup>11</sup> If one accepts that testimonial knowledge is an irreducible epistemic source, one is committed to non-reductionism. For the purpose of this paper, I will narrowly deal with the non-reductionist theory which holds that a *trusting relationship* explains why testimonial knowledge is a basic epistemic source. Since hearers have a trusting relationship with speakers, hearers become justified in accepting a speaker's testimony as knowledge except in the face of defeaters. These are *defeating reasons* or *reasons against* accepting testimony. There are psychological and normative defeaters. Psychological defeaters are a hearer's experiences, doubts or beliefs

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<sup>10</sup>Tyler Burge, "Content Preservationism," *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 102, No. 4, (1993): 457-488, 485.

<sup>11</sup> John Hardwig, "The Role of Trust in Knowledge," *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 88, No. 12, (1991): 693-708, 694.

which indicate that hearer's belief is unreliably formed or false.<sup>12</sup>

Normative defeaters are experiences, doubts or beliefs that a hearer ought to possess, because they indicate that the hearer's belief is unreliable or false given the available evidence. Hearers must be aware of defeaters; if not, they commit epistemically unacceptable practices that undermine testimonial justification.<sup>13</sup>

John Greco gives the following cases of testimonial knowledge:

difficult (1 and 2), tricky (3 and 4) and simple (5 and 6).

Case 1. A seasoned investigator questions a potentially uncooperative witness.

Case 2. A job applicant tells you that he has no criminal record.

Case 3. You ask directions from a stranger in an unfamiliar city. For example, where is the train station?

Case 4. You ask your friend whether he intends to come to your party, and he says yes.

Case 5. A third-grade teacher tells her student that France is in Europe.

Case 6. A mother tells her adolescent child that there is milk in the refrigerator.<sup>14</sup>

Testimonial knowledge ranges from mildly helpful information to powerful truths. Every day, children know about the locations of several kinds of drinks and foods in refrigerators. Students learn about the Earth's distance from the sun and who will not attend the school dance. Journalists interview sources to find the next story; investigators figure

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<sup>12</sup>Jennifer Lackey, "Introduction" in *Epistemology of Testimony* (eds.) Jennifer Lackey and Ernest Sosa (Oxford: Oxford University, 2006) 1-21, 4.

<sup>13</sup>Jennifer Lackey, "Introduction," 4.

<sup>14</sup>John Greco, "Testimonial Knowledge and the Flow of Information" in *Epistemic Evaluation* (eds.) John Greco and David Henderson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012 Forthcoming), 8.

out who robbed the bookstore. These cases lead to contrasting views of testimonial justification. Sometimes, justifying testimony is quick and *simple*. If your mom says that the milk is in the refrigerator, you listen and know where the milk is. In other cases, we are unsure about exactly how to justify testimony. Testimonial justification is *tricky*. Moreover, justifying a speaker's testimony can be a lengthy and *difficult* process. For example, jurors may take months or years to be justified in believing a witness' testimony. In difficult cases, testimony is imperative to whether hearers acquire knowledge. It's remarkable that testimonial knowledge works at all.

Greco argues that reductionism and non-reductionism fail to satisfactorily explain simple, tricky and difficult cases. He formulates simple and difficult cases into the *Reasons and Trust Dilemma*:

1. Either testimonial knowledge requires reasons on the part of the hearer or it does not.
2. If Reductionism is true, then testimonial knowledge requires reasons on the part of the hearer. Testimonial knowledge becomes too demanding; at least, cases of school teachers' and mothers' testimony to small children will not be included as knowledge that should be included.
3. If Non-reductionism is true, then testimonial knowledge does not require reasons on the part of the hearer. Testimonial knowledge becomes too easy; at least, cases of police investigators and job interviewers will not count as knowledge that should be included.
4. Therefore, an adequate account of testimonial knowledge, which includes both simple and difficult cases as genuine knowledge, is impossible.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>John Greco "Testimonial Knowledge and Flow of Information" in *Epistemic Evaluation*, (eds.) John Greco and David Henderson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 9-10.

A unified theory is challenging. The force of the dilemma lies in developing a theory that is neither too demanding that it omits cases 5 and 6, nor too easy and losing the explanation to cases 1 and 2. The epistemic standards of testimonial justification fluctuate between demanding and easy. Testimonial knowledge for police investigators and job interviewers (difficult) favor reductionism. Greco claims, “The investigator asks questions and the witness answers them, but clearly the investigator should not just believe whatever the witness says.”<sup>16</sup> Investigators and interviewers demonstrate expert perception and induction in discerning true from false testimony. Requiring positive reasons to justify speakers’ testimony seems right. But when the same standard of requiring reasons is applied to simple cases, the reasons become too demanding for children to accept testimony from their elders.

Testimonial knowledge for children knowing their mothers’ testimony favors non-reductionism. Greco affirms, “Here it is at least plausible that something epistemically special is going on—that testimonial justification and knowledge depends on a *trusting relationship* between speaker and hearer that is present in this example

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Greco emphasizes a relationship as something epistemically special. Others such as Jennifer Lackey may consider this emphasis as an interpersonal view of testimony. For my purposes, I align with Greco and develop the view as a possible non-reductionist theory.

<sup>16</sup>John Greco, “Recent Work on Testimonial Knowledge” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 49, 1 (2012): 15-28, 20.



but not in the first.”<sup>17</sup> The *trusting relationship* between children and mothers allows children to accept their mother’s testimony as knowledge. Intuitively, children appear to know without reasons. Children listen to people with whom they have a close relationship, and gain knowledge. If children do, in fact, have testimonial knowledge, non-reductionism is true about children knowing in the absence of defeaters. But, of course, non-reductionism cannot help but also fail to appreciate the positive reasons in difficult cases. Greco’s attack is limited to versions of non-reductionism which hold that a trusting relationship makes testimonial knowledge a basic epistemic source. Hearers are entitled to accept testimony based on a trusting relationship with speakers. However, a trusting relationship is not sufficient for interrogators’ justification. Interrogators need to be sure that the speaker’s testimony is true. And yet, if interrogators need positive reasons for justification, this reductionist view cannot explain why children know. This is the puzzle. Next I will strengthen Greco’s RT Dilemma. As a result, the horns of the RT dilemma are understood as general problems for reductionism and non-reductionism.

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<sup>17</sup>John Greco, “Recent Work in Testimonial Knowledge,” 20.

### §3. Knowing For

This section has two objectives. First, I will argue that Greco's RT Dilemma draws attention to two practical facts about testimony. Greco's objections leveled against reductionism and non-reductionism can be understood as both theories failing to appreciate these practical facts. Second, I will provide the groundwork for solving Greco's dilemma by defending a novel view called *knowing for*. I will argue for a relation between testimonial justification and hearers' aims for knowledge. The hope is to explain why both positive reasons and trusting relationships are satisfactory methods of testimonial justification for different cases. In the next section, I will employ the view of knowing for to revise the conceptions of positive reasons and trusting relationships for solving for Greco's RT Dilemma.

Greco argues that reductionism and non-reductionism fail as satisfactory theories. Reductionism fails because it excludes children from acquiring testimonial knowledge from their parents or teachers. The intuition is that children, in fact, seem to know when reductionism claims that they do not know. Non-reductionism fails because it includes interrogators as acquiring knowledge from uncooperative witnesses. The intuition is that interrogators, in fact, seem not to know when non-reductionism claims that they know. Greco's RT Dilemma seems right but why is it so?

On my view, Greco's RT Dilemma highlights two practical facts about testimony. First, testimony is *pervasive* within our knowledge. Second, much of our knowledge *depends* on testimony. C.A.J. Coady, Robert Audi and Jennifer Lackey emphasize these widely-held truths. Coady claims:

It seems then that testimony is very important in the formation of much that we normally regard as reasonable belief and that our reliance upon it is *extensive*. Furthermore, this reliance is not limited to the everyday or the merely practical, since highly developed theoretical activities are also marked by a reliance upon testimony. This is particularly noticeable in the social sciences and in such studies as history but it is also a feature of the physical sciences... Inasmuch as a social science has a strong historical element, like anthropology, then it will have a similar reliance on testimony, but even such a discipline as psychology is very *dependent* upon testimony for its data, as is evident from the perusal of texts on social psychology or even perception.<sup>18</sup>

Coady emphasizes that testimony plays a role in our everyday and theoretical activities. Robert Audi highlights the role of testimony in epistemology:

Testimony is a *pervasive* and *indispensable* source of knowledge and justification, and it may be significant for the theory of communication and the psychology of belief acquisition as it is for epistemology. It is a central concern of social epistemology, in which philosophers have shown increasing interest.<sup>19</sup>

Audi distinguishes the practical fact that testimony is pervasive and the fact that it is a dependable source of knowledge. Audi also points out the implications of not recognizing the practical facts of testimony. He claims,

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<sup>18</sup>C.A.J. Coady, *Testimony: A Philosophical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 8.

<sup>19</sup>Robert Audi, "The Place of Testimony in the Fabric of Knowledge and Justification" *American Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 34 No. 4, (October 1997): 405-422, 405.

Much of human experience is occupied with speaking or listening to others, and in life as we know it we could not have much knowledge, if indeed we could know anything at all, without relying on what others tell us.<sup>20</sup>

Jennifer Lackey suggests the universal acceptance of these practical facts of testimony.

Virtually everything we know *depends* in some way or other on the testimony of others—what we eat, how things work, where we go, even who we are. We do not, after all, perceive firsthand the preparation of ingredients in many of our meals, or the construction of the devices we use to get around the world, or the layout of our planet, or our own births and family histories. There are all things that we are told....Scientific discoveries, battles won and lost, geographic developments, customs and traditions of distant lands—all of these facts would be completely lost to us. It is, therefore, no surprise that the importance of testimony, both epistemological and practical, is nearly universally accepted.<sup>21</sup>

Coady, Audi and Lackey first point out that testimonial knowledge is ubiquitous. Testimony pervades across countless areas and practices in science, law, geography, history, communication, psychology, family and many others. This is a descriptive fact about our everyday social practices. Second, testimony is *dependable* in a way that makes our practices mostly accurate. If we reject that testimony is a dependable source of knowledge, then a problem arises. We would not actually know much of what we take ourselves to know. In light of the practical facts, I reframe Greco's RT Dilemma to RT Dilemma\*. Hopefully, the

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<sup>20</sup>Robert Audi. "Testimony as a Social Foundation of Knowledge" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (October 2011): DOI: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2011.00525.x, 1-25, 1.

<sup>21</sup>Jennifer Lackey, "Testimony Acquiring Knowledge from Others" in *Social Epistemology: An Anthology* (ed.) Alvin Goldman and Dennis Whitcomb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011): 71-91, 71.

reconstruction will also make apparent the solutions for reductionism and non-reductionism.

The RT Dilemma\* is the following:

1. A satisfactory theory of testimonial justification must accommodate the practical facts that testimonial knowledge is pervasive and dependable.
2. If reductionism is true and does not include children as acquiring testimonial knowledge from their parents or close ones, reductionism fails to explain the practical fact that testimony is pervasive.
3. If non-reductionism is true and includes interrogators as acquiring testimonial knowledge from uncooperative witnesses, non-reductionism fails to explain the practical fact that testimonial knowledge is *dependable*.
4. Therefore, reductionism and non-reductionism fail to accommodate the practical facts of testimonial knowledge.

RT Dilemma\* showcases the roles that the practical facts play in Greco's dilemma. The practical fact of pervasiveness is a problem for reductionism. Reductionism's positive reasons requirement narrows the cases of genuine testimonial knowledge. If reductionism cannot capture all of these cases, such as children acquiring testimonial knowledge, the view faces counterexamples. As a result, reductionists need a flexible theory that aligns with the pervasiveness of testimony. On the other hand, the practical fact of dependability is a problem for non-reductionism. Non-reductionism's trusting relationship between speakers and hearers is not always a dependable way for hearers to acquire knowledge. If non-reductionism cannot capture the fact that we depend upon testimony, such as interrogators acquiring testimonial knowledge,

non-reductionism is unsatisfactory. Non-reductionists need an accurate theory that accommodates the fact that testimony is dependable. In sum, reductionist accounts need to be more flexible and non-reductionist accounts need to be more accurate. How can this be done? On my view, both theories advance their agendas so long as they are grounded in a similar way.

I motivate the view of *knowing for* with two assumptions. The first assumption is that testimonial knowledge is a relation between speakers and hearers. The assumption derives from separate claims by Linda Zagzebski and Robert Audi. Zagzebski describes a central feature of knowledge, “Knowing is a relation between a conscious subject and an object, where the object (but possibly not the immediate object) is some portion of reality. The relation is cognitive. That is to say, the subject thinks, not just senses or feels the object. More specifically, knowing includes believing.”<sup>22</sup> The take-home point is that knowledge involves a relation. Zagzebski considers this idea to be a widely-held assumption. If testimonial knowledge is an instance of knowledge, generally, we may also say that testimonial knowledge involves a relation. Audi supports this idea of testimony:

Testimony is normally social in having a recipient as well as an attester. But we might allow, as a limiting case, solitary testimony, as with what one writes in a diary. Even that kind of attestation is implicitly social. It is at worst an idealization to conceive

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<sup>22</sup>Linda Zagzebski, *On Epistemology*, (Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2009), 3.

testimony as social. We ourselves are hearers of even our silent affirmations; our later selves are a potential audience for earlier entries in a diary.<sup>23</sup>

Audi suggests that testimony involves a relation between speakers and hearers. The relation is not necessarily social, because we can be both speaker and hearer of our own testimony. For example, a relation exists between speakers and their diaries. Consider a person at time, T1, who writes words in her diary and then the same person reads her words at time, T2. The person who is the speaker at T1 is the same person who is the hearer at T2. The same person is related to herself at different times. Moreover, a relation exists between my current self and the self who hears my own silent affirmations. I can speak the words that I form and be the only person who hears them. Given that knowledge is a relation and testimony is a relation, it is obvious that testimonial knowledge is a relation between speakers and hearers.

The second assumption is that testimonial justification comes in degrees. This is also a widely-held assumption and can be indirectly attributed to Susan Haack,

Ordinary usage of 'knows,' etc., is shifting and conflicting because of an underlying tension: justification comes in degrees, knowledge doesn't. Justification comes in degrees; or, to put the point another way, one may be more or less justified in believing something. For instance, we speak of someone's having good but not conclusive evidence; of someone's belief being flimsy evidence; of someone's having some justification for believing

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<sup>23</sup>Robert Audi, "Testimony as a Social Foundation of Knowledge" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, (2011) DOI: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2011.00525.x, 1-25, 3.

such-and-such, but failing to take account of that fact that so-and-so; of jumping to conclusions; of incomplete or—instructive ambiguity—‘partial’ evidence.<sup>24</sup>

Haack’s view of the tension between knowledge and justification is applicable for explaining testimonial knowledge and justification.

Hearers’ testimonial knowledge is definitive. Nevertheless, hearers

become justified in believing testimony in different ways. For children to

drink milk, a trusting relationship gives them an ‘adequate’ or maybe a

‘partial’ justification for knowing; on the other hand, positive reasons

mostly give us ‘conclusive’ justification. For the interrogator who wants

to know who robbed the bookstore, a trusting relationship with the

speaker is flimsy method of justification. Hence, the objection goes that a

trusting relationship does not explain the practical fact that testimony is

dependable. If justification comes in degrees, then a trusting relationship

is located toward the weaker side of the spectrum. A trusting relationship

is sometimes dependable enough for hearers to know. However, if the

knowledge is for interrogators, a trusting relationship is not dependable

enough to provide sufficient justification. Interrogators need conclusive

justification. Children do not always need conclusive justification.

Suppose that a child looks in the refrigerator and perceives the milk and

infers that there is milk in the refrigerator. This child has conclusive

justification. However, it is excessive to require that the child *always*

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<sup>24</sup> Susan Haack, ‘Know’ is Just a Four-letter Word in *Evidence and Inquiry Towards a Reconstruction in Epistemology*, 2nd ed. (2009): 301-330, 302.



perceive and inductively infer that the milk is in the refrigerator for the child to know. If justification is understood in terms of positive reasons, then the objection goes that requiring a positive reason does not explain the practical fact that testimony is pervasive, because a positive reason is an instance of conclusive justification and we can be justified without having conclusive justification. Haack is correct that justification comes in degrees. The way that positive reasons and trusting relationships work in some cases but not all cases supports Haack's view of a spectrum of justification. Positive reasons and trusting relationships appear located on opposite ends of this spectrum. As a result, what epistemologists need is a comprehensive theory of testimonial justification that includes both positive reasons and trusting relationships. If we accept that testimonial knowledge is a relation between speakers and hearers and testimonial justification comes in degrees, the idea of *knowing for* has traction.

We acquire testimonial knowledge for many aims. We aim to know where the milk is, because we want to drink it. We aim to know who robbed the bookstore, so that we can arrest them. We aim to know the location of the Sears Tower in order to visit it. We even aim to know because we are curious. Testimonial justification is related to our aims, specifically with respect to identifying the appropriate method for justifying testimony. The virtue of positive reasons prevails in difficult cases. Interrogators are *required* to have reasons in order to know. The

idea seems right, but why is it? One answer is that if the interrogator is justified in knowing the witness' testimony, the hearer will likely arrest someone for committing a crime. Testimonial justification is difficult. The virtue of trusting relationships flourishes in simple cases. A child has a trusting relationship with her mother and knows that the milk is in refrigerator based on that trust. Why is this idea right? If the child is justified in knowing her mother's testimony, she will likely use the milk to drink it. Testimonial justification is simple. Surely, one may say, a child knows the location of the milk based on trusting her mother. Both theories seem right. How can this be so? My answer is that Greco's cases reveal a neglected feature of testimonial justification; that is, hearers' aims for knowing is related to the methods of testimonial justification, positive reasons and trusting relationships. If my view can explain why positive reasons and trusting relationships are plausible, then the view may provide insights for enhancing both theories.

Hearers' aims for knowing are related to testimonial justification.<sup>25</sup> To motivate this view consider Case 7:

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<sup>25</sup>One may believe that my view is similar to Jeremy Fantl and Matthew McGrath's recent work on encroachment. Fantl and McGrath focus on knowledge-attributions and motivate the view given Keith DeRose's low and high stake bank cases. In a similar vein, simple, tricky and difficult cases can be understood as involving low and high stake cases. The difference is that my view of *knowing for* is supposed to explain why we even consider the stakes to be high and low in the first place. Fantl and McGrath discuss only knowledge-attributions given the pragmatic conditions of the case. See Jeremy Fantl and Matthew McGrath *Knowledge in an Uncertain World*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Case 7. Tom, Jeff and Kim are roommates. Jeff and Kim are close friends with each other. Tom is not close friends with Jeff and Kim. In addition, Jeff and Kim usually tell each other accurate testimonially-based beliefs. One night, Tom answers the door and after greeting the person, he asks Kim, "What time did Jeff say that he left Halo Bar?" Kim responds, "11:00pm." Tom further says, "Well, the cops are at the door and they want to know. Are you sure?" Kim hesitates, "Hold on! I'm not *that* sure!"

Kim knows that Tom left the Halo Bar at 11:00pm. Kim's *friendship* with Jeff plays a role in partially justifying her knowledge. Furthermore, Kim has background knowledge that Jeff usually tells her accurate testimony. Kim may even feel confident in knowing that Tom left Halo Bar at 11:00pm. Now, if Tom wants to know the time and asks Kim, she says, "11:00pm." Yet, once the cops want to know and Kim knows that Tom will tell the cops, Kim resists saying a definitive time. Suppose that Kim does not believe that Jeff did anything wrong. Her reticence to tell Jeff an explicit time remains appropriate, but why? The idea is that *knowing for* Kim is, in some way, different than *knowing for* Tom and also *knowing for* police officers. This is the rough intuition. *Knowing for* friends, strangers, children and police investigators appears different. Why is this so? On my view, hearers' aims for knowing are related to hearers' method of testimonial justification, positive reasons or trusting relationship. If Tom acquires testimonial knowledge from Kim, Tom's aim is to tell the information to police officers. Tom's justification must be strong. If the police officers acquire knowledge, their aims include beliefs and actions toward Jeff. Suppose that the officers aim to arrest Jeff. Their justification

should be even stronger than Tom's justification. Reductionism's account of positive reasons is an appropriate method of testimonial justification for the officers and Tom. Kim's aims are different from Tom's and the police officers' aims. Kim's justification is based on her trusting relationship with Jeff. Kim's justification is sufficient for her to know but it is not strong enough for Tom and the officers to know given their aims. As soon as Kim knows that Tom will use her testimony to tell the police officers, Kim says, "Hold on! I'm not that sure!" Furthermore, neither Tom nor police officers have a trusting relationship with Jeff. Non-reductionism's account of a trusting relationship is an appropriate method for justifying Kim's knowledge. Generally, Case 7 is a device to bring out the relation between hearers' aims for knowing and methods of testimonial justification.

One may believe that testimonial justification is related to the social roles among friends, strangers, children and interrogators. Based on such social roles, hearers become justified in particular ways. For example, if two people are friends and both have the social role of friendship with the other, then both people are permitted to trust what the other says. If the friends did not have this social role and are strangers, then the people would need positive reasons to accept the other's testimony. The problem with this 'social role' view is that hearers' social roles do not entirely inform the appropriate way to justify

testimony. If we alter the aims for knowing, then some close friends would rely on their trusting relationship; however the same friends would also need positive reasons. For example, some friends may trust each other when the knowledge is trivial. Greg asks Amanda, "Where is the meeting?" Amanda responds, "At the coffee shop." Greg may think, "Now, I know that the meeting is at the coffee shop." Why? Greg trusts Amanda. However, if Greg is delivering a speech that can drastically help or harm his career, Greg may want to be sure that the meeting is in the coffee shop. Greg may not merely trust Amanda but want positive reasons for justification. In this way, hearers' aims for knowing seem related to knowledge.

The view of *knowing for* becomes transparent:

Knowing For: A hearers' aim for acquiring testimonial knowledge is related to what counts as the appropriate method of testimonial justification.

The methods of testimonial justification include, but are not limited to, reductionism's positive reasons and non-reductionism's trusting relationships. The crux of the view lies in specifying what hearers' aims are. I define 'aims' as hearers' attitudes and actions. Hearer's 'attitudes' include the following: beliefs, desires, intentions and goals. Hearer's 'actions' involve directed or intentional actions and excludes merely bodily movement. Hearers strive to know in order to form other beliefs or have other attitudes. For example, I ask Dave who won the football

game between the University of Missouri and University of Georgia. I want to know in order to form beliefs about which team is better than the other. Or, I may ask Dave because I bet that University of Georgia would win, and I plan to use my winnings to pay back my student loans. However, I may want to know just to know. Regardless of what aim the knowledge is for, there is one. In simple cases, when a child asks about the location of milk, we assume that the testimonial knowledge is for satisfying the hearer's desire to get milk. In difficult cases, the testimony is for knowing whether a person committed a crime. The simplicity and difficulty of these cases depends, to some extent, on what the testimony is for. A child satisfying her desire to drink milk is less important of an aim than an officer arresting someone. Given the significance of the hearers' aims, it is obvious for why reductionism and non-reductionism appear right at first glance. The reductionist's positive reasons are appropriate for the officer to be justified in arresting someone. The non-reductionist's trusting relationship is appropriate for the child to be justified in satisfying her desire to drink milk. There is a balance between the methods that hearers justify testimony and hearers' aims for acquiring knowledge. Arresting a person is serious, so your justification better be strong. A child drinking milk is trivial, so your justification can be something accordingly weak. Both reductionism and non-reductionism can seek this balance between testimonial justification and the hearers'

aims. In this way, there is little disagreement between both theories. Instead of worrying about the legitimacy of either camp, the issue is establishing the balance between the methods of testimonial justification and hearers' attitudes and actions. The view of knowing for is compatible with tricky cases.

What does knowing for say about tricky cases? Some tricky cases, such as direction cases, do not suggest a particular method of testimonial justification. For example, consider Lackey's original Chicago visitor case. Morris is a tourist in Chicago and he asks a passerby on the street for directions to the Sears Tower. The passerby says, "Two blocks east." Why is Morris justified? I'm not sure. No information suggests that Morris has a trusting relationship with passerby citizens in Chicago or any sort of communal relationship with people. Morris does not acquire positive reasons. The view of *knowing for* remains useful, because this view does not commit one to a particular method of testimonial justification. Any method of testimonial justification is compatible with my view so long as the method takes into account hearers' aims for knowing. For example, if you are a tourist, who wants to visit the Tower, then believing that testimony is justified may be based on a tour guide's testimony. However, suppose that you are a cartographer, who is creating a map of the city of Chicago. You would not request testimony from a city guide; rather, you would likely ask your excellent research assistant. You may

not merely accept what your assistant says, but further request that the researcher give primary and secondary sources. You may believe that since you are creating a map of the city, you must precisely know the locations of the city's buildings. Testimonial knowledge *for* visiting the Sears Tower as opposed to creating a map is justified in different ways.

Let us return to the origin of this inquiry. The problem for reductionism and non-reductionism is that neither captures Greco's difficult, tricky and simple cases as genuine knowledge. My proposal of *knowing for* accomplishes this task. Why is a seasoned investigator justified in believing a potentially uncooperative witness? Why is a job interviewer justified in believing that the interviewee does not have a criminal record? If you want to know the location of a train station and you ask a stranger for directions, why are you justified in believing the passerby? If you ask your friend whether she will go to the party, how do you know what she says is true? If a third-grade teacher tells her student that France is in Europe, then why does the third-grade student know? And finally, if a mother tells her adolescent child that there is milk in the refrigerator, why is the child justified in believing that this is so? *Knowing for* holds that hearers' aims for knowing is related to the correct method of testimonial justification. The investigator's aim to possibly arrest someone, job interviewer's aim to hire someone in their company, your aim to visit the Sears Tower, your aim to go to the party, a child aim to



know that France is in Europe and drink milk are related to determining the appropriate way to be justified in believing a speaker's testimony. Overall, my view progresses the stagnant debate between reductionism and non-reductionism.

Broadly speaking, what should we do with reductionism and non-reductionism? Any staunch reductionist or non-reductionist is an opponent to my view of *knowing for*. However, recent work in the epistemology of testimony includes this trend of rejecting both reductionism and non-reductionism. Audi claims, "It should be evident that I am rejecting both wholesale reductionism and wholesale anti-reductionism."<sup>26</sup> Others reject the debate and offer alternative analyses of testimony. Lackey claims,

In showing the need for positive epistemic work from both the speaker and hearer, then, we have seen that testimonial justification or warrant is neither reducible to nor completely independent from sense perception, memory, and inductive inference. Thus, insofar as we wish to make genuine progress in the epistemology of testimony, we need to move beyond the debate between reductionism and non-reductionism.<sup>27</sup>

Speakers and hearers must perform positive epistemic work. Neither reductionism nor non-reductionism can account for the positive epistemic work from speakers and hearers; thus, Lackey rejects the reductionism and non-reductionism. In this way, Lackey may agree with my assumption that testimonial knowledge is a relation between

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<sup>26</sup>Robert Audi, "Testimony as a Social Foundation," 22.

<sup>27</sup>Jennifer Lackey, *Learning from Words*, 194.

speakers and hearers, because both hearers and speakers are related by their positive epistemic work. However, on my view, the debate between reductionism and non-reductionism diminishes, because both theories are grounded in the same way, *knowing for*. After we recognize that there is a relation between the methods of testimonial justification and hearers' aims for knowledge, we can explain why positive reasons are appropriate for interrogators to know and trusting relationships are appropriate for children to know. We must cast out the labels of 'reductionism' and 'non-reductionism' because explaining why hearers are justified in believing testimony is answered by explaining the relation between the methods of testimonial justification and hearers' aims for knowledge. In the next two sections, I apply *knowing for* to the conceptions of a positive reason and a trusting relationship.

#### **§4 Improving Positive Reasons**

According to Greco and others, the reductionist positive reasons requirement is too demanding for some hearers to know. It comes as no surprise that the reductionist camp has dwindled in number, while the non-reductionist camp grows.<sup>28</sup> Until this point, I have discussed *knowing for* as a comprehensive view of testimonial justification. In this section, I

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<sup>28</sup>Supporters of non-reductionism include the following: Alvin Plantinga (1993), Alvin Goldman (1999), Timothy Williamson (2000) and Ernest Sosa (2006).

will apply *knowing for* to the reductionist conception of a positive reason.

A positive reason is typically defined as non-testimonially based evidence to be justified in believing the testimony. Examples of non-testimonially based evidence include perception, memory, deductive or inductive logical methods. More precisely, the view asserts,

Positive Reason: For consideration C, to be a reason, R, for hearer, H, to justify believing that P, there must be some C that is reducible to perception, memory and induction, C must be non-testimonially based belief and the truth of C evidentially supports the truth of P.

Here, 'consideration C' is understood as perceptual, memory or inductive-based knowledge. All positive reasons are considerations but not all considerations are positive reasons. Considerations, which are not reasons, can affect what it takes to be a reason for believing that the testimony is justified.<sup>29</sup> For considerations to be positive reasons, the truth of the consideration must evidentially support the truth of the testimony. Now, let us see how the idea of *knowing for* can be applied here.

To maneuver the conception of a positive reason away from Greco's horn that positive reasons are too demanding, this conception

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<sup>29</sup>Jonathan Dancy discusses four sorts of considerations that are not themselves reasons. The list includes enablers, disablers, intensifiers and attenuators. These considerations work concomitantly with the other considerations to determine what counts as a positive reason. Reductionists can appeal to these considerations, which are independent of the speaker's testimony, to explain how a hearer has a positive reason for testimonial justification. See Jonathan Dancy. *Ethics without principles*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004.

proposes that what counts as a positive reason must be commensurable with hearers' aims for knowing.

Commensurability Principle: For consideration, C, to be a reason, R, for a hearer, H, to justify believing that P, there must be some C such that the evidential support is commensurable with the degree of significance that knowing how believing that P is justified affects H's aims for acquiring testimonial knowledge.

The Commensurability Principle states that the evidential support for P is also commensurable with the degree of significance of knowing for the hearer. The degree of significance is how a hearer's testimonial knowledge that P affects the H's aims. All hearers believe and act differently after acquiring testimonial knowledge. These attitudes and actions affect the hearer in a multitude of unpredictable ways. One may encourage a value metric of the hearer's attitudes and actions. Knowing the value of the hearer's attitudes and actions would determine the sort of positive reason to know. However, this view need not be restricted to merely a value metric. For example, suppose that you have waited all of your life to visit the Sears Tower. You have a passion for architecture and love its king design. You are walking in Chicago and become lost trying to find it. As you look for directions, you consider asking a random passerby similar to most tourists. However, based on your passion for the Sears Tower's architecture, you really don't want to waste your time depending on a random person. Instead, you go out of your way to gather positive reasons by finding an expert tour guide and even use your binoculars to

find the building's location. In this case, assigning a value to your attitudes and actions appears inappropriate because it is based on your passion to visit the Sears Tower. As a result, I would encourage reductionists not to restrict or even necessarily identify exactly what degree of significance that the testimony holds for speakers; rather, they should develop the conceptual tools that include most, if not all cases of testimonial knowledge as genuine. If reductionism can accommodate how what counts as a positive reason for testimonial justification is different for each hearer, then reductionism is not as demanding as Greco would have us believe. For example, we would say that something is wrong in a court case when the judge, who rules over the case, does not actually hear the speaker's testimony. If the judge is going to rule in a particular case, then she must hear it for herself. However, would we also say that something is wrong if a citizen, who is also epistemically interested in knowing the speaker's testimony, does not hear it with their own senses? Both the judge and citizen want to know what the person said. However, the citizen is merely curious about the case. It seems that if the citizen listens to the testimony from other speakers or through a transcript, the citizen knows. For the judge and citizen, the evidential support is commensurable with the degree of significance of their aims for knowledge.

This account of positive reasons picks out why some considerations become reasons for this hearer and not reasons for another hearer. The virtue of this account is to achieve some flexibility for justifying testimony. Despite the generally correct characterization that reductionism is too demanding, on my view, what counts as a positive reason for this or that hearer fluctuates between different hearers' aims or their attitudes and actions. Since every hearer will inevitably believe and act differently based on the speaker's testimony, this account of positive reasons accommodates how hearers must acquire different sorts of positive reasons and why those reasons are appropriate in some cases but not others. Generally, the traditional reductionism account has yet to explain why children know. However, my view casts a wider net in apprehending the practical fact that testimony is pervasive.

## **§5 Improving Trusting Relationships**

Non-reductionism holds that hearers know if and only if (1) speakers have a trusting relationship with speakers (2) there are no defeaters. The methods of testimonial justification include a trusting relationship and the absence of defeaters. A trusting relationship is a promising candidate as an irreducible epistemic source, because it

explains the practical fact that testimony is pervasive.<sup>30</sup> Melissa Koenig, a developmental psychologist, claims,

[Children and adults] ordinarily take people at their word. When a speaker reports some fact, the listener believes the report simply because of the trust they place, not in the utterance, but in the speaker. The speaker, in these cases, is the object of appraisal and it is based on her authority that testimony is accepted.<sup>31</sup>

Here, Koenig emphasizes that the trust between speakers and hearers is a regular occurrence. Hearers know, not based on the content of words, but the speaker's authority. If we accept the practical fact that testimony is pervasive and non-reductionism does not burden hearers by requiring that they have positive reasons, then the non-reductionist component of a trusting relationship is useful. However, Greco argues that non-reductionism fails to explain why interrogators acquire testimonial knowledge. His criticism can be best understood as non-reductionism failing to explain the practical fact that testimony is dependable. A trusting relationship is a low degree of justification. Thus, a trusting relationship is not dependable enough to provide sufficient justification when the knowledge is for interrogators or other difficult cases. The path for a solution is to revise the conception of a trusting relationship in order to also explain the practical fact that testimony is dependable.

I motivate non-reductionism by giving two studies on its empirical

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<sup>30</sup>There are many versions of non-reductionism, specifically disagreement about what is the irreducible feature of testimonial knowledge.

<sup>31</sup>Melissa Koenig and Paul Harris "The Basis of Epistemic Trust" *Episteme: A Journal of Social Epistemology* Vol. 4 Issue. 3, (2007): 264-284, 277.

plausibility. First, I will give empirical research that suggests children employ *defeaters* for rejecting a speaker's testimony. If children employ defeaters, then the study leans toward the non-reductionist requirement that hearers accept testimony in the absence of defeaters. I'll then delve into empirical research on what makes a trusting relationship so *epistemically special*. After I evaluate the research, I apply the notion of *knowing for* to the non-reductionist conception of a trusting relationship. Given my revised conception of a trusting relationship, I'll propose future empirical research for non-reductionism to account for the fact that testimony is dependable. Koenig discusses a study that displays children's ability to employ defeaters for rejecting a speaker's testimony as knowledge. Dias and Harris and Leever and Harris independently showed that four-, five- and six-year old children are capable of early syllogistic reasoning.<sup>32</sup> In a study conducted by Lee, Cameron, Doucette and Talwar, they support that children use defeaters before accepting testimony as knowledge. The team found that children in preschool use their prior knowledge when evaluating what someone says.<sup>33</sup> A speaker

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<sup>32</sup> Dias, M. G., & Harris, P. L. "The effect of make-believe play on deductive reasoning," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, (1988): 6, 207–221. Dias, M. G., & Harris, P. L. "The influence of the imagination of reasoning by young children," *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, (1990): 8, 305–318. Leever, H. & Harris, P.L. (2000). Counterfactual syllogistic reasoning in normal 4-year-olds, children with learning disabilities, and children with autism. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 76, 64-87. Leever, H. & Harris, P.L. (1999). "Persisting effects of instruction on young children's syllogistic reasoning." *Thinking and Reasoning*, 5, 145-173.

<sup>33</sup> Melissa Koenig, "Selective Trust in Testimony: Children's Evaluation of the Message, the Speaker, and the Speech Act" in *Oxford Studies in Epistemology Volume 3* (ed.)



says to the children, “As the speaker was away, a ghost jumped out of the book and broke a drinking glass.” Three-year olds accept the speaker’s statement as true, however, most six-year olds say that the speaker broke the glass. Even though the speaker may not have broken the glass, some children minimally believe that the ghost did not break the glass.

Koenig argues,

This early ability to distinguish true from false assertions is some of the first evidence we have of children’s capacity for distinguishing between testimonial input that is consistent with their beliefs and input that goes against their beliefs. This sensitivity to counterevidence is part of what makes it possible to credit children, even toddlers, with testimonial knowledge.<sup>34</sup>

These children’s *capacity to discriminate* is how they choose between the testimony from others and what they believe. Here, we can identify their capacity to discriminate and background knowledge of ghosts and drinking glasses as giving them defeaters. The children, who say that the speaker broke the glass, know that the ghost did not break the glass. In this sense, six-year-olds have a defeater or *reason against* accepting testimony as knowledge—ghosts cannot break drink glasses. On the other hand, the three-year old children, who accept the speaker’s testimony that the ghost broke the glass, lack such a defeater.

Importantly the empirical research demonstrates that some six-year olds

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Tamar Szabo Gendler and John Hawthorne, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 253-273, 255.

<sup>34</sup> Melissa Koenig, “Selective Trust in Testimony: Children’s Evaluation of the Message, the Speaker, and the Speech Act,” 255.

have defeaters. Since the empirical research demonstrates that some children employ defeaters for rejecting testimony, we can now turn to an empirical analysis on a trusting relationship.

Paul Harris and Kathleen Corriveau, who are child developmental psychologists, tested 147 five-year-old children, who have three different types of attachments with their mothers: avoidant, secure and anxious. These attachment types are interactive behaviors. Avoidant attachment is a child who rarely or does not seek proximity to or contact with the mother.<sup>35</sup> The child is preoccupied with play when the adult enters the room. The child does not display a desire for contact. If an adult picks up the child, the child merely accepts the contact. A secure attachment is a child who can be comforted by strangers, “but it is clear that she wants her mother.”<sup>36</sup> The child clearly desires contact but displays relatively little effort to gain contact. An anxious attachment is the child who displays “moderate –to–strong seeking of proximity to their mother.”<sup>37</sup> Proximity seeking behavior includes a child purposefully approaching the adult by creeping, crawling or walking. The child may clamber up or grasp the adult in order to gain contact. In the groups, 26 children were

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<sup>35</sup> E. Waters, J. Crowell, M. Elliott, D. Corcoran and D. Treboux “Bowlby’s Secure Base Theory and the Social Personality Psychology of Attachment Styles: Work(s) in Progress” *Attachment and Human Development*, 4, 230-242. For my purposes, I am using an abstracted pdf version:  
[http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/measures/content/ss\\_scoring.pdf](http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/measures/content/ss_scoring.pdf).

Quotes and page numbers are from here.

<sup>36</sup>E. Waters et. al, “Mary Ainsworth Strange Situation Classification,” 11.

<sup>37</sup> E. Waters et. al, “Mary Ainsworth Strange Situation Classification,” 13.

avoidant attachment, 96 children had secure attachment and 25 had anxious attachment relationships. All of the children were shown pictures of 50-50 animal hybrids, such as a cow-horse.<sup>38</sup> Remember, since the ambiguous objects are 50-50 hybrids, children are neither right nor wrong for choosing the mother's or stranger's testimony. The mother and stranger told the children different names of the object, such as either a horse or a cow. After receiving conflicting testimony, children chose which speaker was correct. In the results, Harris claims, "Children with an avoidant attachment to their mother treated her no differently from a stranger, whereas the other two groups trusted the claims made by their mother over those made by the stranger."<sup>39</sup> Children with avoidant attachment were slightly more likely to pick the stranger's, 53%, than the mother's testimony, 47%. For secure attachment relationships, children sided with their mother 64% of the time and 34% chose the stranger. In anxious attachment relationships, 75% of the children accepted their mother's testimony and picked the stranger 25% of the time. But, what exactly is it about their relationship that is epistemically significant? According to the study, the explanation for why children accept their mother's testimony is not having any sort of relationship with their mothers; rather, children need a secure or anxious relationship

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<sup>38</sup> See images at Appendix 1 on p. 37.

<sup>39</sup> Paul Harris and Kathleen H. Corriveau "Young Children's Selective Trust in Informants" *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society Biological Sciences* 366, (2011): 1179-1187, 1181.

to accept testimony. Children in anxious and secure relationships were statistically more likely to accept their mother's testimony than children in avoidant attachment relationships. An implication is that we can narrow the candidates of special irreducible features to secure and anxious relationships. For instance example, Frederick Schmitt who supports non-reductionism claims, "Children are so constituted psychologically that they tend to prefer their caretakers or parents as sources of information and also as sources of information about where to get information."<sup>40</sup> Every child is not psychologically disposed to prefer their parent's testimony. Schmitt's view is only accurate about children with anxious and secure attachment relationships. He further argues, "The process of selecting testimony is a social process in which the child's disposition to prefer caretakers as sources of information cause the child to defer to the caretaker's choices of testimonial sources for the child. And this social selection process is metareliable."<sup>41</sup> Schmitt claims that children further depend on their caregivers to tell them the correct sources of information. If children with anxious and secure relationships depend on their parent's testimony in a strong way as Schmitt suggests, the apparent question is, "What constitutes a secure and anxious relationship that makes it epistemically significant?"

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<sup>40</sup>Frederick Schmitt, "Social Epistemology" in *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology* (eds.) John Greco and Ernest Sosa (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999): 354-382, 367.

<sup>41</sup>Frederick Schmitt, "Social Epistemology," 367.

One response is a version of Jennifer Lackey's criticism against the Interpersonal View of Testimony (IVT). This view holds (1) the features of an interpersonal relationship between speakers and hearers, including a speaker giving her assurance or inviting the hearer to trust, confer epistemic value on the hearer's acquired testimony (2) epistemic justification is non-evidential.<sup>42</sup> Lackey questions the epistemic relevance of a speaker giving her assurance or inviting a hearer to trust.

Analogously, one may question that epistemic relevance of a secure or anxious relationship. Instead of attributing knowledge to children, we should recognize that children are making poor inferences. Children infer from their mother's social behavior, proximity and physical contact with them to the idea that their mother transmits reliable testimony. But, what is epistemically relevant about proximity and physical contact? This is a false correlation argument. Children can *appropriately* infer from their mother's emotional social interaction that the mother is a good person or someone who makes one feel protected, but these reasons are inappropriate when applied to justifying the name of an ambiguous cow-horse or bear-pig object. The mother's social interaction does not clearly bear any epistemic import onto whether or not she is a reliable testifier. Any non-reductionist, including Schmitt, needs to explain the epistemic significance of a trusting relationship.

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<sup>42</sup>Advocates of this view include Ross (1986), Hinchman (2005), Moran (2006) and Faulkner (2007).

Another response for the epistemic significance of a trusting relationship comes from Harris, who provides a parting shot against entitlement theories of justification about children,

Despite a long-standing assumption, especially within philosophy, that young children don't doubt what they are told, it is clear that children can be more or less skeptical. They are willing to put their questions to someone they know, and they often (but not always) accept what that person says. They hesitate to place their trust in a stranger. Indeed, even their trust in someone they know is not automatic. Its strength varies, depending on the type of emotional relationship that the child has to the person in question.<sup>43</sup>

Initially, Harris endorses non-reductionism, because children, in fact, do accept testimony depending on their kind of relationship with the speaker.<sup>44</sup> However, it is not a ringing endorsement. Harris rejects the non-reductionist's Entitlement Component that children blindly accept testimony as knowledge. Instead, children observe whether speakers are reliable testifiers. Children doubt what others tell them. Children's trusting relationships with their caregivers varies based on their emotional relationship with caregivers. Importantly, notice that Harris equates the trusting relationship as an emotional relationship. The problem then for advocates of a trusting relationship is to explain how a trusting relationship is not exclusively an emotional relationship but also an epistemic one.

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<sup>43</sup>Paul Harris and Kathleen H. Corriveau "Young Children's Selective Trust in Informants," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society Biological Sciences* (2011): 366, 1179-1187, 1181.

<sup>44</sup>After a prolonged period of neglect, children in Romanian orphanages in the Ceausescu regime displayed indiscriminate trust towards familiar and unfamiliar adults.

The idea of knowing for is helpful to defend non-reductionism. Proponents of non-reductionism can create future empirical research to confirm or deny: (1) the epistemic relevance of trusting relationships and (2) whether a trusting relationship can explain the fact that testimony is dependable. For the first task, empirical research can test a trusting relationship in different scenarios. For example, if children know that getting the right answer leads to their receiving either chocolate or broccoli to eat, then the question becomes would children in avoidant attachment relationships accept their mother's testimony more than a stranger's testimony? Do the results change when knowledge is for broccoli as opposed to chocolate? If a child wants to eat chocolate more than broccoli, then knowing that the testimony is for chocolate creates an extra incentive to be right. Children with an avoidant attachment relationship with their mothers may accept their mother's testimony when the stakes are higher.

Second, non-reductionism can get closer to capturing the fact that testimony is dependable. Non-reductionists can examine research that tests whether interrogators and uncooperative witnesses, in fact, build trusting relationships with each other without positive reasons. Suppose that two interrogators work the good cop/bad cop routines or similar ones to form a trusting relationship with uncooperative witnesses. If cops know the speaker's testimony based on good cop/bad cop routines or

any strategy without positive reasons, then non-reductionism can show why a trusting relationship explains why testimony is dependable. Empirical research on the effectiveness of similar tactics that build trusting relationships will determine the success or failure of this version of non-reductionism.

## §6 Conclusion

This paper began by examining Greco's everyday cases of testimonial knowledge. All six cases exemplify two practical facts: testimony is pervasive and dependable. Greco turns these cases into the RT Dilemma that challenges the dominant reductionist and non-reductionist theories of testimonial justification. According to the dilemma, both reductionism and non-reductionism fail to capture the practical facts of testimony. My contribution is to solve Greco's dilemma by explaining all six cases in the same way, *knowing for*. Hearers' aim for knowing is related to the appropriate way for hearers to justify their testimonial beliefs. Testimonial justification is a matter of degrees. *Knowing for* is capable of explaining the spectrum of testimonial knowledge that encompasses positive reasons and trusting relationships; while at the same time, abandoning the debate between reductionism and non-reductionism. After explaining Greco's cases, I apply *knowing for* to develop enhanced conceptions of a positive reason and a trusting



relationship. On my view, positive reasons are more flexible account of positive reasons that leans closer to explaining the pervasive fact of testimony. Moreover, I considered empirical research on children's trusting relationships with their mothers. I argue that additional studies are needed on children and proposed new experiments on interrogators to determine whether a trusting relationship is a dependable epistemic source. Even though, I have yet to offer a complete theory of testimonial knowledge, any theory of testimonial justification must consider the arguments presented here.

**Appendix A: Examples of 50-50 hybrids**

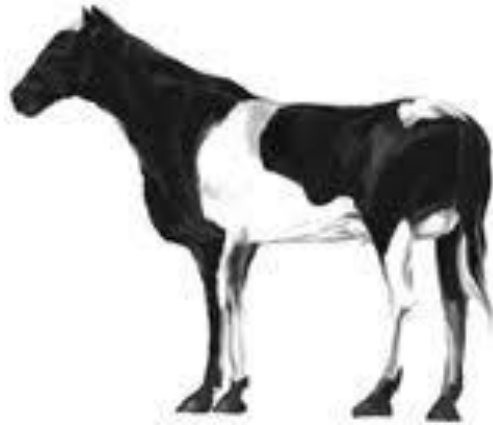


Figure 1. 50-50 Horse-Cow

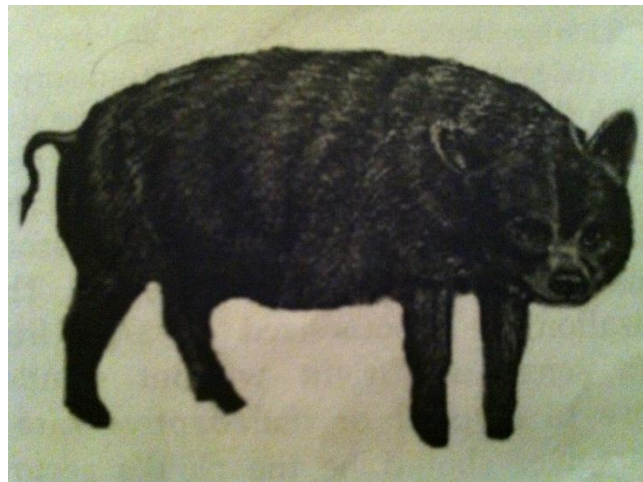


Figure 2. 50-50 Pig-Bear

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