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Testimony and Trust

This entry discusses how issues to do with trust engage with the epistemology of testimony. The entry is structured as follows. It starts, in section 1, with a discussion of the epistemology of testimony, and argues that trust only matters to the assurance theory of testimony. Section 2 outlines the assurance theory of testimony and shows how trust figures in it. Section 3 raises some problems for the assurance theory and points to an incompleteness in it: some further account is needed as to how trust can provide an epistemic reason for belief. Section 4 introduces the distinction between doxastic and non-doxastic conceptions of trust, where this distinction determines the kind of account that can be provided of how trust provides an epistemic reason for belief. Section 5 discusses what conception of trust best fits the testimonial context and argues that there is no decisive consideration. Sections 6 and 7 then respectively show how the assurance theory might be coupled with doxastic and non-doxastic views of trust; these sections present accounts of how each conception of trust allows an answer to the question of how trust provides an epistemic reason for belief. The balance of argument is presented as favouring the non-doxastic view.

1. The Epistemology of Testimony

The epistemology of testimony aims to explain how it is that we learn facts through communication. I see that it snowed last night by looking out the window; you get to know this by my telling you. Focusing on such paradigmatic cases, the question is: how is it that you can get to know that it snowed last night by my telling you this? This question should be broken in two. What justifies your believing me, or accepting that it snowed when this what I tell you?

And if you do believe me, what determines that you know it snowed rather than merely believe this? Trust is relevant to the discussion of the first of these two questions: it is relevant to the question of our justification for accepting what others tell us. Put simply: when asked why you accepted what I told you, a natural and straightforward answer is that you trusted me. How this natural and straightforward answer is theoretically elaborated then depends on the epistemology of testimony given and the way trust is conceived. With respect to the former, there are, broadly speaking three, possibly four, positions one might take, but while all these positions could employ talk of 'trust', trust is only theoretically significant for the *assurance theory of testimony*. Since it is only the assurance position that needs to be considered properly, I run through the other three positions quickly.

According to the *reductive theory* of testimony, testimonial justification reduces to justification from other sources of belief. Given that human testimony is overly fallible, because too partial, mendacious and questionably competent, credulity is an epistemic failing and we must always support testimonial belief. Focusing on the paradigmatic case of a speaker S telling an audience A that p, A is thereby justified in believing that p if and only if other things that A believes allow A to justifiably judge that this is a good instance of testimony, or that p is probably true given S's testimony (Hume 1740; Fricker 1987). This position could be put in terms of trust, thus: A is justified in believing that p if and only if A is justified in trusting that S's testimony is true. This is an accepted use of 'trust': we similarly speak of trusting that our car will start, or trusting that the ice will hold our weight. Or arriving at work without my keys, I might trust that you will be there to let me in, given that you always come in early. This is the *predictive* sense of trust (Hollis 1998: 10; Faulkner 2011: 145); it does no more than conjoin reliance with a positive belief about outcome: it is to say, for instance, that I rely on the ice holding my weight and believe that it will do so. Trust, so understood could be disappointed but not betrayed. I could not feel betrayed by you if I found that this morning,

exceptionally, you are not at work. I trust that you are at work, I do not trust you to be at work; my expectation is a belief, it is not an expectation *of you*, which you might then let down. However, trust identifies a unique and philosophically interesting notion only insofar as it is understood as the kind of thing that can be let down or betrayed; that is, only insofar as it is understood *affectively* or *second-personally* (Faulkner 2011: 146; McMyler 2011: 122). Since trust figures in the reductive theory only if it is conceived predictively, this theory can be put aside for the present discussion.

According to the *non-reductive theory*, testimony is an epistemically distinctive source of knowledge and warrant. It follows that we possess a general entitlement, or epistemic right, to believe testimony, other things being equal (Reid 1764; Burge 1993). In terms of the paradigmatic case, when S tells A that p, A is justified in believing that p — in the sense that A is entitled to this belief — other things being equal. A thereby does not need to justifiably judge that this is a good instance of testimony but need only not judge that it is a bad instance. This position could equally be put in terms of trust because trust, in its affective sense — and I will only be using it in this sense henceforth — is characterized by both an absence of doubt (Horsburgh 1960; Möllering 2009) and an absence of rational assessment (Jones 1998; Løgstrup 1997). So the claim that we do not need to base acceptance on judgement and that we are entitled to it without supporting reasons could be presented as the claim that we possess an epistemic right to trust testimony. However, as with the reductive theory, talk of trust is playing no substantial theoretical role, it is merely serving as shorthand for this pair of claims. As such, this theory of testimony can equally be put aside in the present discussion.

The final position to be put aside is the *reliabilist theory* of testimony. According to this theory, A is justified in believing that p on the basis of S's testimony to p if and only if forming belief on this basis is reliable. The locus of reliability might then be identified as S's testimony, or words, (Lackey 2006); A's understanding (Graham 2000); or the conjunction of

these (Goldberg 2010). A reliabilist might then acknowledge that trust is the vehicle by means of which A comes to believe that p, but would give no significance to this fact since what matters are facts about reliability. Since trust is given no epistemological role, this theory, again, is not relevant to the present discussion.

2. The Assurance Theory of Testimony

What reason does A have for believing that p when S tells A that p? According to an assurance theory (Moran 2005; Hinchman 2005; Faulkner 2007a; McMyler 2011; Fricker 2012), A can have two different reasons for believing that p. First, A has that reason described by the reductive theory, which comes from S's telling reliably indicating that p and being judged to do so. This is the reason that S's telling provides as a piece of evidence for p, where to view S's telling as evidence is to view it in the same way that one views the readings of a thermometer. It is to take an 'objectifying' (Strawson 1974) attitude to testimony — an attitude that is liable to provoke S's resentment. It would do so because in treating S's testimony as a piece of evidence, A comes to believe that p *because of her judgement*; but in telling A that p, S expects A to defer to his, S's, authority and believe that p *because of his telling.* The possibility of this reactive attitude then matters to the epistemology of testimony, per the assurance theory, because it reveals that there is a second reason that A can have for believing that p. This reason follows from A taking a 'participant stance' (Holton 1994) and believing that p on S's authority.[1]

To elaborate this reason for belief, Moran (2005) appeals to Grice's (1957) distinction between 'telling' and 'letting know' where Grice (1957: 218) illustrates this with the following two cases: "(1) I show Mr. X a photograph of Mr. Y displaying undue familiarity to Mrs. X. (2) I draw a picture of Mr. Y behaving in this manner and show it to Mr. X". The photograph

lets Mr. X know the facts. And I could let Mr. X know the same facts simply by leaving the photograph around for him to find. The photograph is evidence; the drawing is not. The drawing does not let Mr. X know anything unless he can work out what I am trying to tell him with it. But if Mr. X can recognize what I intend to convey, then he can learn the facts *insofar as* he regards my intention that he come to believe them as a reason for belief. It is, Grice claimed, because I have this intention to convey these facts and intend that Mr. X regard this intention as a reason for belief that my drawing is a telling and not a mere doodle. This is then the basic mechanism by means of which A gains a non-evidential reason to believe that p: in telling A that p, S intends that A regard his intention that A believe that p as a reason for belief.

Two layers then need to be added to this basic mechanism: *assurance* and *trust*. First, in general, we do not regard another's desire that we do something as "any reason at all for complying" (Moran 2005: 14). So why should S's intention that A believe that p suffice to give A reason for belief? To answer this question, Moran adds to Grice's basic mechanism the idea that S intends that A regard his intention that A believe that p as a reason for belief because in intending this S *assumes responsibility* for A believing truly, and thereby "presents himself as *accountable* for the truth of what he says" (Moran 2005: 11). In this way, in telling A that p, S offers A his *assurance* that p.

To clarify this, consider practical reasons. Suppose I decide to φ, and so form the intention to φ. My intention to φ is evidence that I will φ, but my belief that I will φ is not based on the evidence my intention provides but on the decision this intention embodies. Suppose, now, that S tells me that he will φ and I thereby know that S intends to φ. S's intention to φ is equally evidence that S will φ, but (assuming I take participant stance) my belief that S will φ is not based on the evidence that S's intention provides but on the recognition that S's intention embodies the decision to φ (Marušić 2015). Moran's claim is then that something similar holds when S's testimony is fact-stating. When S tells me that p (and I take the participant stance)

my belief that p is not based on the evidence of S's telling but on the recognition that S's intention in telling me that p embodies S's decision to take responsibility for my believing truly.

Trust is then the second layer that needs to be added to this mechanism. It is implicit in talk of *seeing-as*, specifically: *seeing a telling as an assumption of responsibility*, but it needs to be made explicit. The issue is that while we tell one another what we know, we also tell lies. Moreover, were S lying to A, S would equally intend A to believe that p because A recognizes that this is what he, S, intends; and S would equally purport to assume responsibility for A believing truly – only in this case S would not in fact assume this responsibility (Faulkner 2007b; Simpson 1992). Once lies are introduced, it then seems, again, that S's intentions in telling A that p do not suffice to give A reason for belief. What follows is that the assurance theory seems to face a dilemma: either what is needed is a belief to the effect that this is a good case of testimony — the belief that S does, in fact, assume the responsibilities that he purports to assume; or what is needed is an epistemic right not to worry about lies, other things being equal. The dilemma is that insofar as these are the only options, there ceases to be a distinctive assurance position: the epistemology of testimony becomes either reductive or non-reductive.

This dilemma can be seen to be a false one, once trust is fully integrated into the assurance account. Trusting is something we do and an attitude that we can have and take. The *act of trusting* is one of relying on someone doing something, and thus the general form of trust is three-place: A trusts S to φ. In the testimonial context, the action is that of testimonial uptake: A's believing S or accepting S's testimony to p. But acts of trusting crucially differ from acts of reliance in that trusting is necessarily voluntary. Although reliance can be voluntary — one can be confident that someone or thing will prove reliable — it can also be forced: one might have no choice but to take the least bad option. The *attitude of trust* is then characterized as that attitude towards reliance that explains why reliance is voluntary; and when trust is

conceived affectively, as it is here, also explains the susceptibility to feelings of betrayal were the trusted party to prove unreliable. It is only when the reliance is governed by this attitude of trust, that it is an act of trusting.[2] Thus, in the testimonial context the act of trust is properly described as A's believing S, or accepting S's testimony to p, because A trusts S for the truth as to whether p. And this involves more than relying on S for truth because if A found out that S made a wild guess but luckily got it right, A would still feel let down by S, would feel that her trust was betrayed, even if no other harm was done. *Telling the truth* involves a commitment on S's behalf to getting it right, which in turn presupposes that the capacity to take on this responsibility and discharge it. Telling the truth, in short, requires being trustworthy, and this is what A trusts S to be. This is why the dilemma is a false one: in trusting S for the truth, A will thereby not worry about the possibility of S lying or not paying proper care and attention. Insofar as A trusts, A will *see* S's telling *as* the assumption of responsibility is purports to be and for this reason believe that p.[3] This attitude of trust is thereby an essential part of the specification of A's reason for belief — it is the inward facing or internal part of this reason.

3. Criticism of the Assurance Theory

Lackey (2008) raises two problems for the assurance theory. First, suppose that S tells A that p but A has reason to reject what S says in believing that S does not know whether p. Then suppose that T tells A that S is "one of the best in his field": insofar as T's telling A this provides A with a reason for belief "it should be capable of functioning as a defeater-defeater for the original counter-evidence" (Lackey 2008: 225). And the problem is that "it is entirely unclear how a purely non-evidential reason could defeat counter-evidence" (Lackey 2008: 225). The simple response here is to assert the assurance theory's contention that the class of *epistemic reasons* is broader than the class of evidential reasons. It includes the reason provided by a

speaker's assurance. Insofar as A's trusting T yields the (non-evidentially) justified testimonial belief that S is one of the best in his field, then the issue of defeat is entirely clear: there is no problem with a justified belief functioning as a defeater-defeater.

Lackey's second objection starts with the observation that we do not trust everyone. Rather, we discriminate in whom we trust. Specifically, we trust only those we believe to be either antecedently trustworthy or likely to be moved to trustworthiness by our trust. If one trusted in the absence of these beliefs "it will simply be a matter of luck" if the speaker turns out to be trustworthy; and such luck "is incompatible with the hearer forming epistemically justified beliefs solely on the basis of the speaker's testimony" (Lackey 2006: 246). But in this case, it is this background of belief, which informs our discriminations, that matters epistemically. It is this background of belief that grounds any reason for belief that trust ostensibly supports. In response, suppose it is allowed that our background of belief is sufficient to justify every actual case of testimonial belief. This is a presupposition of a reductive theory, and it is plausible (Faulkner 2002). Given this supposition, it follows that in every case of actual trust, we could argue for the truth of what is said. But allowing so much is no criticism of the assurance theory. Its starting point is that confronted by a piece of testimony, we have two categorically different kinds of reasons for belief: (third-personal) reasons of evidence, and (second-personal) reasons of trust-cum-assurance. This allows for the possibility that we *could* go out on a limb and trust in the absence of evidence, and even in the face of counter-evidence. And it allows that our grounds for belief can be second-personal even when we have plenty of evidence that would allow us to argue for the truth of what is said. That is, even if A has ample evidence to believe that p, when this is what S tells her, in trusting S for the truth, A will base her belief on S's assurance (defer to S's authority) rather than this evidence.

However, both these responses to Lackey's criticism assume that the assurance theory has some account of how trust-cum-assurance provides an epistemic reason for belief. The external aspect of this reason has been characterized: assurance provides a reason insofar as it embodies the decision to assume responsibility. But some account is yet to be given of the internal aspect; that is, of how the attitude of trust rationalizes testimonial uptake. To elaborate this point, suppose that A trusts and, as such, bases her belief on S's ostensible assurances rather than the evidence. This supposition is compatible with two possibilities, which are the good and bad cases familiar to epistemology. In the good case, S knows that p, and genuinely assumes responsibility for A's believing truly. The assurance, one might say, is *genuine*. In the bad case, either S lies, and so does not assume responsibility for A believing truly, or S does not know whether p, and so cannot discharge the responsibility assumed. The assurance one might say is *empty*. From A's perspective, these good and bad cases can be subjectively indistinguishable: in both cases, uptake might proceed from A's trusting S for the truth. As such, it is natural to assume that the reason for belief provided by trust will be essentially the same in both cases. Objectively, this reason for belief will be better in the good case since it then it is coupled with a genuine assurance: things are the way that A takes them to be in trust. But in both cases, A has that reason for belief that comes from trusting S for the truth. The further account needed is then one of this subjective or rationalizing reason for belief; specifically, some answer is needed to the question of *how is it that trust makes testimonial uptake epistemically reasonable?*

4. Our Trust in Testimony: Doxastic and Non-Doxastic Conceptions

According to doxastic views of trust, A's trusting S to φ either involves or entails the belief that S will φ. It is this belief that explains the willingness of A to rely on S φ-ing. Thus, in the

testimonial context, trusting S for the truth involves believing that S is telling the truth (Adler 1994; Hieronymi 2008; McMyler 2011; Keren 2014; Marušić 2015).[4] On this conception, the answer to the question of how trust provides reason for belief is straightforward. If A's trusting S to tell the truth involves believing that S will tell the truth, then conjoining this belief with the fact that S tells A that p gives A reason to believe that p. Trust gives a reason for belief because belief can provide reason for belief

According to non-doxastic views of trust, A's trusting S to φ neither involves nor entails the belief that S will φ. Thus, and for instance, for Holton (1994: 66) trusting S to φ is a matter of reliance from within the "participant stance"; for Hawley (2014: 10) it is a matter of relying on S φ-ing when believing that S has a commitment to φ-ing; for myself, Faulkner (2011: 146), and Jones (1996: 8) it is a matter of relying on S φ-ing and expecting S to be moved by this fact to φ. None of these further conditions — operating within the participant stance, believing the trusted to have a commitment, and expecting something of the trusted — involve or entail the belief that trusted will act in the way one relies on them acting. On this conception, there is no simple answer as to how trust provides a reason for belief.

Before considering how these views of trust might each be added to an assurance theory to complete it, let me consider which view of trust best fits the testimonial context.

5. Metaphysical Issues: Trust as it is found in Testimony

While the doxastic theory of trust promises to make the epistemology simpler it confronts various metaphysical worries (see also Keren – this volume). These are three-fold, with each worry being a fact that seems to motivate a non-doxastic conception of trust. First, it seems that in some circumstances *one can decide to trust*. For example, Holton (1994: 63) gives the

example of a drama class where you are spun around until you lose your bearings and are then encouraged to fall with your hands at your side and let the other class members catch you. If you let yourself fall, then you rely on the others catching you. And it seems that one can choose to so rely with a positive attitude that makes this reliance an act of trust. Equally, one can rely on someone again after being let down, choosing to give them the benefit of the doubt and continuing to trust, where Løgstrup (2007: 78) talks about this choice involving "the renunciation of attitudes or movements of thought and feeling that are incompatible with trust". However, one cannot decide to believe something, so if trust involves belief, one could not decide to trust either. Second, it seems that up to a point trust has a certain *immunity to doubt*. In trusting someone to do something, one will not worry about them not doing it and will demonstrate a certain insensitivity to the evidence that they will not. In this respect, Jones (1996: 11-12) compares trust to emotions in that it blinkers vision through making the positive salient and the obscuring the negative. But beliefs are not, or should not be, similarly insensitive to evidence. Third, *too much reflection can undermine trust*. "Trust is a fragile plant", Baier (1986: 260) says, "which may not endure inspection of its roots, even when they were, before inspection, quite healthy." But reflection on whether the trusted is trustworthy should be able to consolidate one's belief that they are so.

These metaphysical considerations are not decisive: advocates of a doxastic conception of trust can say something to each of them. Hieronymi (2008), for instance, draws a distinction between trust and *entrusting.* In the drama case, either one trusts because, after deliberation, one reaches the conclusion that one's class members are trustworthy; or, if one cannot make this judgement, one merely entrusts them with one's safety: choosing to rely on them and being disposed to resent them if one is not caught. Cases where one gives others the benefit of the doubt are equally cases of entrusting, not trust. That one demonstrates a certain immunity to doubt when one trusts, Keren (2014) argues, can then be explained by the fact that in trusting

someone to do something one has a *pre-emptive reason* not to take precautions against the possibility of their not doing that thing. This idea fits the testimonial case well: in trusting S for the truth as to whether p, A thereby has a pre-emptive reason not to consider evidence that not-p. The idea that trust gives one pre-emptive reasons is then compatible with both doxastic and non-doxastic conceptions of trust. And it provides grounds for a further response to Lackey's question about defeat: insofar as in trusting T, A gains a pre-emptive reason to ignore evidence that S is not one of the best in his field, A thereby gains a reason to ignore her original counter-evidence. The mechanism of defeat is that of pre-emption. The fact that reflection undermines trust can then be explained if, following Hieronymi (2008) and McMyler (2017), it is held that the belief that the trusted is trustworthy is itself a *trusting belief* or one that must be held on second-personal grounds, and not third-personal grounds. Reflection undermines trust because it seeks a third-personal, or evidential, grounds for the belief in trustworthiness, but grounded in this way, the belief in trustworthiness ceases to be trusting — it ceases to be a *trusting* belief.

On the other side, Hieronymi (2008: 219) and McMyler (2011: 132) have argued that non-doxastic conceptions of trust get its metaphysics wrong. Their argument starts from cases where S tells A something out of the ordinary or something that matters much to A, and then asks to be trusted. For instance, Hieronymi (2008: 219) imagines an accused friend asking you to trust her when she tells you that she is innocent. In this case, the demand to be trusted is the demand to be believed. This is captured by doxastic theories: to trust your friend for the truth is to trustingly believe that she is telling the truth when she tells you that she is innocent, and so to believe that she is innocent. But it is not so obvious that non-doxastic accounts give this result; thus Hieronymi (2008: 219) quips "[y]our friend does not want you merely to rely on her claim from a participant stance"; nor, one might add does your friend merely demand that you rely on her believing her to have committed to the truth; or rely on her expecting this to

motivate her to tell you the truth; since it seems that you can do all these things and still believe your friend is guilty.

The short response here is that any account of trust, be it doxastic or not, should hold that trusting a telling involves believing a speaker, which entails believing what is told. When S tells A that p, then A will believe S and so believe that p insofar as A trusts S for the truth. This should be a datum that any view of trust must accommodate; thus, and for instance, Holton (1994) argues that, while trust does not involve belief, in trusting one *comes to believe*. So Hieronymi's (2008: 221) developed criticism is that there is something unstable about beliefs based on trust insofar as trust does not involve a belief in trustworthiness. The instability is that reflection on these beliefs should prompt their suspension because, unless it involves belief in trustworthiness, trust is not a truth-conducive process of belief-formation. Whether this further claim is true depends on what account is given by the non-doxastic theorist of how trust provides a reason for belief. On the account outlined in section 8 below, this further claim is false: a belief in trustworthiness turns out *not to be necessary* for conceiving of trust as a truth-conducive process.

But before turning to the epistemological question of how the trust supplies a reason for belief, it is worth noting that cases like the accused friend are also difficult for a doxastic view of trust. Since if trust involves belief, one could trust only for reasons that one could believe.[5] But then it follows that one should not be able to imagine a case where the balance of evidence points to your friend's guilt, but where you can still trust your friend when he tells you that he is innocent. However, it seems that in imagining the case of the accused friend, it is easy to imagine the case takes this form, since this is a staple of Hollywood plots. But insofar as this can be imagined, one allows that trust can be demanded and given even when the evidence would otherwise make belief impossible (see Faulkner 2018). The difficulty for doxastic accounts of trust is how this could be possible. And here the strategy that Hieronymi

(2008) proposed in response to Holton's (1994) drama case is inadequate: entrusting is not enough since the demand for trust is the demand to be believed.

6. The Assurance Theory combined with a Doxastic View of Trust

The doxastic view of trust can be combined with an assurance theory of testimony (Hieronymi 2008; McMyler 2011; Marušić 2015). Doing so promises to make the epistemology very simple: the explanation of A's being assured by S's telling her that p is that in trusting S for the truth, A believes that S is trustworthy.

However, there is a challenge associated with this combination of views. Recall that trust was introduced in response to the recognition that the duplicitous and the incompetent equally proffer assurance. This recognition entails that being an assurance is not sufficient for being a reason for belief. What is needed for sufficiency is the further claim that A sees the telling as an assurance — as opposed to an empty one — where this seeing-as follows from A's attitude being one of trust. However, if trust involves or entails the belief that the trustee is trustworthy, the question is raised as to what grounds we have for this belief. And here, again, the options can seem to be: either this belief is justified on the basis of our background belief, which is to say the evidence (and the epistemology becomes reductive); or we have an epistemic right to presume that others are trustworthy (and the epistemology becomes non-reductive). Either way, the problem re-emerges that there ceases to be a distinctive assurance position.

The response to this epistemological challenge is given by the idea that a belief in trustworthiness is itself a *trusting belief*, and so grounded on second-personal rather than third-personal considerations. That is, in believing p on the basis of trusting S, when S tells her that

p, A believes that p on the basis of recognizing S's utterance embodies a decision to take responsibility for her, A, believing truly. But in recognizing this A equally has a basis for believing that S is telling her the truth, or is trustworthy. Thus, A's testimonial belief that p *and* A's belief that S is trustworthy are justified *on the same second-personal basis*. Here is McMyler (2011: 137, n.15): "[t]he attitude of trusting a person to φ itself involves believing that the person will φ, where this belief is justified by an irreducibly second-personal reason for belief. This is what makes this trusting belief different from other forms of belief – this is what makes it the case that this belief doesn't involve the truster's coming to her own conclusion about things." Otherwise put: this is why the doxastic conception of trust does not introduce evidential considerations, and insinuate a reductive theory of testimony; it is why it does not, as Moran (2005: 24) says, create "disharmony" in the testimonial relationship.

The problem with this strategy, however, is that the fact that trust involves a belief in trustworthiness was meant to explain how it is that trust makes it epistemically reasonable to accept an ostensible offer of assurance, and so form a testimonial belief. However, on the proposed account the belief in trustworthiness is grounded on the second-personal facts, which is to say the ostensible assurance given. But if the belief in trustworthiness has this ground, it cannot itself offer rationalizing grounds for taking an ostensible assurance to be genuine. What follows is that the doxastic view of trust cannot explain how it is that trust makes testimonial belief epistemically reasonable; it cannot explain why we take assurances to be genuine when we know they are often offered by the duplicitous and incompetent, and so empty. It cannot explain this given that it rightly rejects all attempts to ground this belief in the evidence as being untrusting.[6]

The non-doxastic view of trust, in my opinion, fares better here. It can explain how trust can provide a reason for belief that is grounded in something other than second-personal considerations, but which is nevertheless not evidence. I turn to this view of trust now.

7. The Assurance View Combined with a Non-Doxastic View of Trust

The principle challenge to combining the non-doxastic view of trust with an assurance theory of testimony is epistemological: explaining how trust so conceived could supply a reason for belief. The nature of this challenge might be put like this: one can have practical reasons for trusting, which would be considerations that "show trust useful, valuable, important, or required" (Hieronymi 2008: 213). In the drama case, for instance, one is encouraged to let oneself fall in order to cultivate trusting relations with other class members. However, these practical reasons for trusting do not support the belief that the trustee is trustworthy. So in the testimonial case, these practical reasons do not support the belief that the speaker is telling the truth. As such, if it is also the case that the attitude of trust itself neither involves nor entails this belief, it becomes problematic how trust could make testimonial belief epistemically reasonable. Certainly, this is a challenge that non-doxastic views of trust have to address; I describe the account I have outlined elsewhere (Faulkner 2011).

The starting point is the observation made by Jones (1996: 8), amongst others, that "trust essentially involves an attitude of optimism that the goodwill and competence of another will extend to the domain of our interaction with her." So considering A's trusting S to φ, which in the testimonial case is A's trusting S to tell the truth, A's willingness to rely on S φ-ing or telling the truth is an expression of this positive and optimistic attitude (Faulkner 2017 and Løgstrup 1997). In trusting S to φ, or to tell the truth, A takes an optimistic view of S's motivations and competencies. The expectation constitutive of trust follows: it is that A expects it *of* S that were A to rely on S φ-ing, or telling the truth, S would view A's reliance *as a reason* to φ, or tell the truth (Faulkner 2007a: 882). Insofar as holding S to this expectation is a way of thinking well of S, in trusting S, A will then presume that S would be sensitive to this reason,

and give it due deliberative weight. It follows that, other things being equal, A will presume that S will be moved by this reason and so φ, or tell the truth, because of it. But to presumes that S will φ, or tell the truth, for this reason is just to presume that S is trustworthy. Thus, in trusting S to φ, or tell the truth, A thinks well of S and thereby presumes that S is trustworthy and so will φ, or tell the truth.

A presumption is not a belief; this is a non-doxastic view of trust. A presumption is not evidentially constrained in the way a belief is constrained. Thus, A can continue, up to a point, to think well of S even in the absence of evidence, or even in the face of counter-evidence – as the accused friend case illustrates. Equally, a presumption cannot justify belief in the way that belief can justify belief. However, it can play the epistemic role demanded: the presumption that S is trustworthy, and so telling the truth, makes it epistemically reasonable for A to take S's telling at face value as the assumption of responsibility that it purports to be. This reason is not grounded on those second-personal facts that justify A's resulting testimonial belief, as is proposed by the doxastic view; rather, it is grounded, ultimately, on A's "optimistic world-view" (Uslaner 2002: 25) or A's "zest for life" (Løgstrup 1997: 13 and 36).

This account of the epistemic reason that trust provides then fits into an assurance account of the reason A has for accepting S's testimony to p in the following way; and here I return to the good and bad cases described above. In the good case, S tells A that p knowing that p and recognizing A's need to know whether p. Moreover, it is because he, S, knows that p and recognizes A's need to know whether p, that S tells A that p — thereby intending A to believe that p on his authority. In trusting S for the truth as to whether p, A expects S to be trustworthy — or tell her, A, that p just because he knows that p and recognizes her need to know whether p. Moreover, trusting S for the truth, A not only expects this of S, A presumes this of S. In presuming that S is trustworthy, A will then take S's intention that she, A, believe that p as a reason to believe that p. In so doing, she will believe that p on S's authority, and

thereby regard S's telling as the assurance it purports to be. And things will be as they purport. Since S knows that p, S can genuinely offer his assurance, and A thereby gains a *justifying reason for belief* — a reason based, by way of A's trust, on S's decision to tell A what he knows to be the case. By contrast, in the bad case, in trusting S for the truth, A expects and presumes various things about S's position and motivation which turn out to be false. There is no actual desire to inform or credible assumption of responsibility for A's trust to latch onto; S's assurance is empty. It follows that A's testimonial belief, *while epistemically reasonable, is unjustified*. This description of the good and bad cases then explains why it is that trust renders A's testimonial belief *epistemically* reasonable: it does so, even in the bad case, because there is a route to the truth of A's belief from the presumptions constitutive of trust in the good case.[7]

Set up this way the assurance theory has a significant epistemological advantage over reductive, non-reductive and reliabilist theories: its account of how testimonial beliefs are justified is explanatory, which is to say, *it can explain why it is that these beliefs are true*. Normally, the advantage of the assurance theory is stated to be phenomenological: the other theories do not get the facts about our testimonial relationships right; hence, for instance, Moran's (2005: 24) claim that reductive theories put speaker and audience into "disharmony" with one another. While this phenomenological advantage should not be understated, the epistemological advantage is too often missed. This point might be made by comparison with reliabilist theories; consider, for instance, Lackey (2008)'s view that, when A acquires the testimonial belief that p on the basis of S telling A that p, the justification this testimonial belief possesses is fundamentally determined by the reliability of S's utterance. On this account, statements "are the central bearers of epistemic significance" (Lackey 2008: 72); and their significance is that they are reliable, or not. Here facts about reliability are taken to be epistemologically basic. There is no discussion as to why a given statement might or might not be reliable. But were an explanation of the reliability facts sought, it would be delivered by

reference to the facts that an assurance theory takes to ground testimonial justification, namely facts to do with speakers' attitudes towards utterance and how these engage with audiences' expectations of speakers. That is, if the statement S produces in telling A that p is reliable, it will be so, in normal conditions, because S has decided to tell A what he knows to be the case, and thereby has taken responsibility for A believing truly.[8]

8. Notes

[1] Reasoning about whether to accept what S says is compatible with deferring to S's authority. The claim that there are two kinds of reason for belief is the claim that there are two kinds of grounds for belief; and A could reason about whether to accept what S says and on this basis decide to believe that p on S's authority.

[2] Marušić (2015: 186-7) sharply distinguishes trust and reliance: reliance is an action, trust is an attitude. Conceiving of trust in solely attitudinal terms pulls one away from the three-place predicate, see (Faulkner 2015; and Domenicucci and Holton 2016).

[3] Thus, in telling A that p, S thereby invites trust (Hinchman 2005).

[4] Hinchman (2005: 578) says, "[t]rust is not belief, although it may give rise to belief."

[5] This is something Hieronymi (2008) argues at length.

[6] Of course, it is possible to say that in trusting one takes a view of the situation wherein one accepts the offer of assurance and thereby gains a reason for accepting this offer of

assurance; it is possible to claim that trust bootstraps a reason for itself. The problem is then the plausibility of this claim compared to non-doxastic accounts of a trusting party's reason.

[7] By analogy: the hallucinatory perceptual appearance of p renders the percipient's perceptual belief that p epistemically reasonable because and insofar as there is a route to the truth of this belief from the perceptual appearance of p in the veridical case.

[8] I develop this criticism in Faulkner (2013); and develop a parallel criticism of non-reductive theory in Faulkner (forthcoming).

9. Related Topics

- TRUST AND RELIANCE by Sanford Goldberg
- TRUST AND BELIEF by Arnon Keren
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