How to Be an Anti-Reductionist

Mona Simion
simionm@cardiff.ac.uk

Christoph Kelp
christoph.kelp@glasgow.ac.uk

Abstract

One popular view in recent years takes the source of testimonial entitlement to reside in the intrinsically social character of testimonial exchanges. This paper looks at two extant incarnations of this view, what we dub 'weak' and 'modest' social anti-reductionism, and questions the rationales behind their central claims. Furthermore, we put forth an alternative, strong social anti-reductionist account, and show how it does better than the competition on both theoretical and empirical grounds.

1. Introduction

Reductionism in the epistemology of testimony holds that you need to have independent inductive reason to trust a speaker in order to be entitled to believe what they tell you. Anti-reductionists disagree. They maintain that testimonial entitlement is easy to come by: roughly, all you need to do is listen to what you are being told.[1]

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[1] We do not mean to suggest that anti-reductionisms and reductionisms in the epistemology of testimony are two uniform, clearly delineated bunches. To the contrary, champions of both views make very distinct claims, concerning very distinct issues related to testimonial entitlement. See Lackey (2008) for a very useful taxonomy. Following champions of the views we discuss here, however – i.e. defenders of social anti-reductionisms – for the purposes of this paper, we are going to focus on the particular difference between reductionism and anti-reductionism when it comes to how heavy an epistemic burden they lay on hearer's shoulders in the testimonial exchange: while the boundaries between the two camps are, by no means, clear, reductionists tend to require hearers to have some variety of access to their reasons to trust their testifiers, while anti-reductionism tends to deny such access is necessary. To put it in different words: if both views stipulate reasons to believe testimony in response to the Source Problem, the Reductionist reasons will be accessible reasons, while Anti-reductionist reasons will carry no such constraint. All this is still pretty vague, but one useful way to see the distinction that we care about here is to think of Pritchard's (2004) taxonomy, distinguishing between what he dubs

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Now, say you like <u>a</u>nti-<u>r</u>eductionism (AR);[2] one question that you will need to answer is how it can be that testimonial entitlement can come so cheaply. After all, people are free to lie. Furthermore, they tend to be self-interested in the first instance and so we'd expect them to lie when this furthers their own interests. Since people's interests very often do not coincide, we'd expect lying to be a very frequent phenomenon. But how, then, could it be that simply taking a speaker's word at face value can give you testimonial entitlement? In what follows, we will call this *the source problem*.

One ambitious solution to the source problem is due to Tyler Burge (1993), who attempts to offer an a priori vindication of testimony as a source of entitlement.[3] In a nutshell, his proposal is that intelligible propositional expressions presuppose rational abilities; so intelligible presentations-as-true come prima facie backed by a rational source. Since reason aims at truth, Burge argues, both the content of intelligible propositional presentations-as-true and the prima facie rationality of their source indicate a prima facie source of truth. Thus, according to Burge, we are *a priori prima facie* entitled to take intelligible affirmation at face value (Burge 1993, 472).

Burge's claim to a priori entitlement naturally correlates with a <u>s</u>trong version of <u>a</u>nti-<u>r</u>eductionism (SAR) according to which no burden lies on the hearer's shoulders when it comes to prima facie testimonial entitlement: "A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him unless there are stronger reasons not to do so" (1993, 467).

Unfortunately, it is far from clear that Burge's solution to the source problem will be ultimately successful.[4] Roughly, here is why:

Credulism, on one hand, and Reductionism on the other. Champions of reductionism include Adler (1994), Audi (1997, 2004, 2006), Fricker (1995), Hume (1739), Lipton (1998), Lyons (1997). For defenses of anti-reductionist (credulist) views, see, e.g. (Kelp 2009, Simion 2016a), (Burge 1993, 1997, 1999), (Coady 1973, 1992), (Goldberg 2006, 2010, 2014), (Goldman 1999), (Graham 2010, 2012, 2015), (Greco Forthcoming, 2015), (Green 2016), (Reid 1764). For hybrid views, see e.g. (Faulkner 2011), (Lackey 2003, 2008), (Pritchard 2004).

[2] There are plenty of reasons to like anti-reductionism; first and foremost, it looks as though a lot, if not most of our knowledge is testimonial. Due to our physical and psychological limitations, we learn a lot of the things we know from say-so. The fact that testimonial knowledge is so ubiquitous makes sense if testimonial knowledge is as easy to come by as the anti-reductionist would have it. But see, e.g. Green (2016) for a nice overview of extant arguments pro and against anti-reductionism.

[3] Since "prima facie intelligible propositional contents prima facie presented as true bear an *a priori prima facie* conceptual relation to a rational source of true presentations-as-true", "we are *a priori* entitled to accept something that is prima facie intelligible and presented as true". "One has a general entitlement to rely on the rationality of rational beings"(Burge 1993, 469).

[4] Many people in the literature have expressed doubts concerning the purity of the a priori nature of Burge's advocated source of entitlement (see, for instance (Audi 2004)). This falls outside the scope of this paper.

Burge's claim that reasoning aims at truth is at best true of theoretical reasoning. However, we are multi-faceted rational agents, in the sense that we at least also engage in practical reasoning. When it comes to practical reasoning, plausibly, the aim at stake will be a prudential one – say, desire satisfaction.[5] Furthermore, it looks as though the latter can, at least in principle, take primacy over the former, and will plausibly tend to do so in the very cases that motivate the source problem: when practical rationality will require the testifier to lie in order to serve her self-interest, this practical aim will often enough prevail over the epistemic aim of reaching/delivering truth (Simion 2016a, Goldberg 2014).

In the light of these difficulties, in recent years, several philosophers have offered alternative versions of AR that are weaker, in the sense that they are associated with less ambitious proposals concerning the source of hearer's entitlement. One prominent proposal on the market is social anti-reductionism (e.g. Graham (2010), Greco (Forthcoming, 2015)). They key idea of this view is to appeal to facts about the inherently social nature of testimonial exchanges to address the source problem.

Now, depending on the identity of the relevant social facts, the proponents of social versions of AR put forth more or less ambitious varieties of anti-reductionism, in the sense that they place more or less epistemic burden on the hearer's shoulders. One thing these proposals have in common, though, is that since the advocated source of entitlement is taken to be less epistemically secure than in Burge's proposal, the associated anti-reductionist claim is also weaker.

This paper questions the grounds for this correlation: it is argued here that (1) social versions of AR need not imply weaker anti-reductionist commitments and (2) the argument to the contrary made by social anti-reductionists fails. Furthermore, we propose an alternative solution to the source problem that not only falls in the social AR camp but also supports a strong version of AR. This view, we argue, is superiority to its weaker rivals.

In order to achieve this, we will first take a closer look at the source problem and distinguish two dimensions of it (section #2). We will then turn to two of the main varieties of social AR in the literature: moderate and weak social anti-reductionism. More specifically, we will

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[5] Burge (1993) is aware of this. In response, he argues that reason has a "teleological aspect" and that one of its "primary functions" is "that of presenting truth" (475). We can grant Burge as much, However, since a trait can have more than one primary function, and since the requirements associated with the fulfilling of one can override the requirements associated with fulfilling the other in cases of conflict, we take it that more work is needed to appease the reductionist worries. See (Simion 2016a) for discussion.

first turn to Peter Graham's moderate version of AR and identify two problems with his solution to the source problem (sections #3 and #4). Sections #5 and #6 focus on John Greco's weak anti-reductionism. While the view looks promising, especially in that it offers an appealing solution to the source problem, we argue that a social version of SAR, properly understood, does equally well. Since SAR is the simpler and more uniform of the two, there is reason to favor SAR. In section #7 we conclude.

2. Two Dimensions of the Source Problem

It will be useful to first distinguish between two dimensions of the source problem. The first is subjective. Here, the worry is that taking a speaker's word at face value when people may be expected to lie so frequently would amount to a form of gullibility that is incompatible with such entitlement. Call this *the subjective source problem* (SSP). It concerns the hearer's being a conscientious epistemic agent, doing her epistemic job – whatever that might turn out to be – well.

Crucially, there is a further, objective, dimension to the source problem. To see this, note that even if we have our guards up, i.e. we are doing what we can in order to detect lies and other forms of deception, if we are just bad at it, we will hardly ever successfully detect when we are deceived. While, in this case, we cannot be charged with gullibility, the fact that lying may occur frequently continues to threaten testimony as a bona fide source of entitlement. In what follows, we will refer to this as *the objective source problem* (OSP).

These considerations suggest that OSP differs from SSP in that a solution to SSP does not guarantee a solution to OSP. It may be worth noting that the converse also holds. Suppose it turns out that testimony is extremely reliable because, as a matter of fact, speakers lie only very rarely. If so, it is quite plausible that OSP is no longer particularly worrisome. Compatibly with that hearers may be gullible in forming testimonial beliefs, say because they have excellent reason for thinking that others lie quite often. In that case, they will not end up with testimonial entitlements. SSP still stands.

3. Graham's Moderate Anti-Reductionism

In this section, we will look at Peter Graham's moderate version of anti-reductionism (MAR) and how it ventures to tackle both SSP and OSP, starting with the former.

3.1 SSP: Comprehension and Filtering

Here is a rough sketch of MAR: the hearer need not do much: all there is needed for (*prima facie, pro tanto*) testimonial entitlement on the hearer's side is for her to form her beliefs via a properly functioning process of comprehension and filtering that has the function of reliably generating true beliefs. Comprehension will be in charge with uptake, while filtering has the job of detecting indications of untrustworthiness.

Since independent inductive reasons for trusting the speaker are not required, Graham view qualifies as a version of AR. What makes the view modest is the fact that it imposes an active filtering demand on the hearers, which narrows the range of entitlement conferring testimonial exchanges. In this way, it is weaker than SAR, which does not require such filtering. At the same time, MAR is still quite a strong view in the sense that, like SAR, independent inductive reasons are never required for the acquisition of testimonial entitlement. Rather, comprehension and filtering are sufficient.

It will come as no great surprise that the filtering condition is what Graham takes to deal with SSP. The thought here is that even if simply taking a speaker's word at face value is tantamount to an objectionable form of gullibility, doing so after having filtered for indications of untrustworthiness isn't.

3.2 OSP: Internalized Social Norms

What about OSP? To answer this question, let's look at the decision-theoretic picture that gives OSP its bite. Here it goes. Speakers are free agents and can choose to not tell the truth. Furthermore, speaker and hearer interests do not necessarily align: plausibly, while hearers care about getting true beliefs, testifiers are rather interested in influencing what a hearer believes (Faulkner 2011). On a simple economic rationality picture, then, rational speakers are bound to prioritize their own interests over hearer's interests, and when the former do not align with the latter, they will be little inclined to tell the truth. In this way, there is a serious threat to testimony as a bona fide source of entitlement and it's just not clear that the filtering requirement will be enough to properly address it.

According to Graham, however, this decision-theoretic picture isn't quite accurate: we don't, as a matter of fact, work like well-oiled economic machines. To see why, think of the ultimatum game:

ULTIMATUM:
There are two players, a proposer and a responder. The proposer is given a sum of money – say, EUR 100. He then must propose a split of the money between the proposer and the responder. The responder's job is to accept or refuse the split. If accepted, both parties receive the amount proposed. If refused, no one gets anything. As such, both parties are better off if the responder accepts the split.

Note that, according to rational choice theory, the proposer should propose EUR 1 for the responder and EUR 99 for the proposer. Also, the responder should accept the offer. After all, the thought goes, EUR 1 is better than nothing.

Across a very wide variety of human cultures, however, that is not what happens. Instead, the proposer tends to offer something in the vicinity of a 40/60 split. Furthermore, in cases where the proposer does offer a much smaller split to the responder, the responder tends to refuse.

Here is one explanation of this behavior, which has been extremely popular with social scientists, whilst also seemingly violating the axioms of rational choice theory. We humans have internalized social norms of fair divisions of goods (Bowles and Gintis (2003), Faulkner (2011), Graham (2010, 2015)). Furthermore, the motivation provided by internalized social norms frequently takes primacy over motivations that accord with rational choice theory. That's why we tend to offer closer to equal splits and refuse splits that we take to be too unequal.

Accordingly, then, just like in the Ultimatum game, when we play the testimony game we don't simply have the kinds of motivations rational choice theory would predict. Speakers have internalized a social norm that prescribes telling the truth informatively, and the motivation provided by this social norm frequently overrides any motivation that rational choice theory predicts we should have: speakers will frequently tell the truth even when it is in their best interest not to (Graham (2010, 223), (2015, 256)). As such, Graham argues, the threat posed by OSP is, to a large extent, averted.

4. Problems for MAR

4.1 Perception

MAR centrally features an active filtering requirement on the hearer's side, on top of merely comprehending the content that is being offered. As a first observation, note that an equivalent feature is missing in Graham's (2012) account of perceptual entitlement: here, a properly functioning uptake mechanism – i.e. perceptual process – is enough. Importantly, that is not to say that perceivers are to lack any sensitivity to defeat; quite to the contrary. It's one thing for me to actively monitor our testimonial exchanges for signs of deception, however, and it is quite another to merely be counterfactually sensitive to such signs. The former, of course, is a much stronger requirement than the latter.

Now, why should testimony and perception differ in this way? Note that Graham had better offer a good answer to this question, as otherwise the difference in treatment would appear to be unmotivated. Key to what he has to say here[6] is the thought that perception is considerably more reliable than (unfiltered) testimony. While the norm internalization story turns testimony into a decently reliable source of beliefs, it still gets it nowhere near the score of perception. To see this, just note that, in addition to all the sorts of things that can go wrong in the acquisition of both perceptual and testimonial belief and despite the detracting influence of norm internalization, the fact remains that people frequently lie. As a result, (unfiltered) testimony is considerably less reliable than perception. The filtering requirement, then, is added in the case of testimony in order to further reduce the differences in reliability between the two.

While we are willing to concede that Graham's motivations seem just fine intuitively, when it comes to matters concerning higher or lower degrees of reliably, intuitions are not the data we should turn to. After all, if this is right, it is an empirical matter of fact. As such, what we need in order to support the Graham view are some variety or another of relevant statistical data.

Luckily, relevant data are, as a matter of fact, available; unfortunately for the Graham view, however, empirical results seem to fail to support MAR. A wide range of studies testing our capacities for deception recognition show that are very bad at it: our prospects of getting it right barely surpass chance (e.g. Kraut 1980, Vrij 2000 and Bond and DePaulo 2006). To see just how well-established this result is in the relevant psychological literature, consider the following telling passage from Levine et al.: "the belief that deception detection accuracy rates are only slightly better than fifty-fifty is among the most well documented and commonly held conclusions in deception research." (1999, 126)[7]

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[6] Graham, personal communication.
[7] Could all these studies be flawed? Since we are not psychologists, we are in no position to settle this question. At the same time, given that there is a general

Crucially, it is not hard to see that if these studies are right and we detect deception with an accuracy rate that is barely above chance, the differences in reliability between those who accept testimony without further filtering and those who do make the additional effort of filtering will be negligible (see Michaelian 2010 for a detailed and illuminating argument of this point).

Of course, this bad news for Graham. After all, recall his reason for treating perception and testimony differently. Since people frequently lie testimony is considerably less reliable than perception. Adding a filtering requirement was to reduce this difference by increasing the reliability of testimony. What the above considerations indicate is that filtering fails to deliver the goods. As a result, Graham's motivation for giving perception and testimony different treatments fails.[8]

4.2 The Ultimatum Game with High(er) Stakes

Even if it's now no longer clear that we have reason to weaken SAR along the lines suggested by Graham, it may well be that we can hold on to SAR and adopt Graham's solution to OSP. That would mean at least some progress on the problems for SAR.

Unfortunately, there is reason to believe that Graham's proposal on this front is also not fully satisfactory. To see why, let us first go back to the ultimatum game. Recall that Graham endorsed one particular explanation of the phenomenon offered by social scientists: while strictly speaking irrational from the perspective of choice theory, what is going on here makes sense from a social science perspective: people internalize social norms and their acts become strongly determined by this internalization.

Now, notably, this explanation of the ultimatum game has not remained unchallenged by rational choice theorists. To see why, consider a high stakes version of the game, where the sum to be divided

consensus in the relevant literature, it does not seem tendentious to work on the assumption that the consensus view is correct.

[8] Might there be other reasons for thinking that (unfiltered) testimony is less reliable than perception that would serve to motivate a filtering requirement? Perhaps. That said, the onus is of course on Graham to produce the relevant argument. What's more, there are a couple of lessons that the discussion of lying teaches are suggest that this will at least not be a trivial task. First, not any old difference in reliability we may discover will serve to motivate a difference in treatment between testimony and perception. Second, whether filtering improves the reliability of testimony in a relevant way is an empirical question, which cannot be settled from the armchair. And, finally, to make the motivation stick, Graham will also have to show that whatever reliability-diminishing features of testimony he may come up cannot already be dealt with by SAR's anti-defeat condition.

is very large, say a billion Euros. Intuitively, if we were in the respondent's shoes and we were offered a million Euros, no matter how unfair we might find the offer, we would take it.

And indeed, studies show that as the sum at stake increases, the proportion of the endowment offered decreases. Also, rejection rates decrease drastically when stakes increase: " … among respondents we find a considerable effect of stakes: while at low stakes we observe rejections in the range of the extant literature, in the highest stakes condition we observe only a single rejection out of 24 responders" (Andersen et al. 2011).[9]

What high stakes versions of the ultimatum game suggest, then, is that the explanation in terms of internalized social norms may not be quite right: something else might be going on, at least in higher stakes versions of the ultimatum game. But if there must be some other explanation in high stakes version of the ultimatum game, it's no longer clear that the explanation in terms of internalized social norms is correct even in the low stakes versions of the game. After all, if whatever explains the behavior in the high stakes version of the game will also work for its low stakes cousin, simplicity and uniformity will enjoin us to favor it over the explanation in terms of internalized social norms.

Of course, that is not to say that the defender of the account in terms of social norms internalization could not offer a plausible non-uniform account, together with a good reason to believe such an account is, in fact, preferable on relevant grounds.[10] Several people in the literature suggest that norm conformity may take a variety of shapes: according to Christina Bicchieri (2006), for instance, norm conformity varies between different types of norms. Jonathan Heidt (2001) argues that responses to moral factors might be more emotional than rational, in which case a non-uniform explanation seems to not be easily dismissible. Heinrich and Heinrich (2007) argue that humans are becoming more and more prone to cooperate, which suggests an evolutionary explanation to why we do so in the first place. If that is the case, that is, if our tendency to cooperate is itself in motion, again, it is not clear that we should expect a uniform account in this regard.[11]

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[9] Although, of course, what counts as 'high stakes' itself might vary across cultures. In societies with exposure to western market economies even when the stakes were set at what amounted to 2 weeks wages, there was still no change in behavior (Henrich et al., 2004).

[10] Thanks to an anonymous referee for pressing us on this count.

[11] Crucially, according to (Heinrich and Heinrich 2007), we are evolving from merely cooperating within very small, close communities, to large-scale cooperation. See the next section for discussion of social cooperation in connection with social roles.

Unfortunately, none of this is of much use for Graham. Here is why: recall that Graham's key motivation for his solution to OSP is that reflection on the ultimatum game teaches that people's behavior is driven by internalized social norms even when this runs counter to their interest. As a result, testimony was taken to be, as a matter of fact, a reliable source: people do reliably tell the truth because they have internalized the social norm requiring them to do so, even in cases where this runs counter to their best interest. Note, however, that what the discussion above suggests is that social norms, at best (if at all) will act accordingly in low stakes cases – where the corresponding loss is not significant. As soon as the stakes are raised, however, things change: conformity is out, self-interest-guided behavior is in. And even if it turns out that this does not dislodge the norm-internalization account for low stakes cases, the fact that self-interest rules in high-stakes cases still means trouble for Graham. After all, the source problem now reappears for Graham, albeit in a new guise. Whereas in the original version of OSP, the worry was that lying may occur frequently enough to threaten testimony as a bona fide source of entitlement, the new worry is that lying may occur frequently enough in high stakes cases to threaten testimony in this way. And, of course, Graham's appeal to norm internalization will simply not help with this version of OSP.

5. Greco's Weak Anti-Reductionism

5.1 SSP: Social Roles

Just how far does the gullibility worry extend? It's hard to deny that simply taking the speaker's word at face value will amount to objectionable gullibility in some cases. Thus consider:

Case 1. An FBI agent questions a suspect in a murder mystery.
Case 2. A used car salesman tells you that the vehicle is in mint condition.

By the same token, it's plausible that testimonial entitlement requires independent inductive reason to trust the speakers here.
But what about these cases:

Case 3. A teacher tells his pupil that two plus two is four.
Case 4. A mother tells her child that they are moving to Norway.

Here it is far from clear that taking the speakers' word at face value will amount to gullibility. On the contrary, it is intuitively plausible that, in these cases, the hearers will acquire testimonial entitlement even if they do not have independent inductive reasons to trust the speakers.

As Greco (2015: 287) forcefully argues, it now looks as though accounts of testimonial entitlement face the following dilemma:

> GRECO'S DILEMMA:
> 1. Either testimonial entitlement requires independent inductive reason on the part of the hearer or it does not.
> 2. If it does not, then testimonial entitlement is too easy to come by (e.g. in Cases 1 and 2).
> 3. If it does, then testimonial entitlement is too hard to come by (e.g. in Cases 3 and 4).
> 4. Therefore, an adequate account of testimonial entitlement is impossible: a given account must make testimonial entitlement either too easy for some cases or too hard for others.

Now, as Greco is quick to observe, the dilemma presupposes that either independent inductive reasons to trust the speaker are *always* required for testimonial entitlement or else that they are *never* required. In other words, we will get the dilemma only if we have to choose between reductionism on the one hand and a view like MAR or SAR on the other. Fortunately, however, these are not our only options. There is another way of being an anti-reductionist. This alternative, which Greco himself prefers, amounts to a mere denial of reductionism. The key idea of this weak form of anti-reductionism (WAR) is that while testimonial entitlement will sometimes require us to have independent inductive reasons to trust the speaker, at other times, we can have it simply by taking the speaker's word at face value.

It's easy to see the attractions of WAR vis-à-vis both SAR and MAR. Once we resist the idea that SSP properly targets all cases of testimonial belief, we can require independent inductive reasons for the cases that it does affect. Since WAR offers a reductionist treatment of the cases for which the gullibility worry does arise, it improves on SAR, which would appear to blatantly succumb to the problem even in these cases. Importantly, however, it also promises to improve on MAR. After all, even if there is reason to believe filtering does not improve the reliability of testimony, it may seem plausible enough that positive inductive reason to trust speakers does. Finally, since an anti-reductionist treatment of the remaining cases is independently

plausible, it would appear that WAR does all it needs to do in order to deal with SSP.

Of course, a key question for WAR is exactly when independent inductive reasons are required and when they aren't. It is here that Greco's specifically social version of AR comes in. More specifically, he claims that whether or not independent inductive reasons are required for testimonial entitlement depends on the social roles of the participants to the conversation. If they belong to the same community of knowers, testimonial entitlement is easy to come by: all they need to do is take the speaker's word at face value. On the other hand, if they do not belong to the same community of knowers, hearers shoulder a more substantive epistemic burden: they need positive reasons to trust the speaker (2015, 292).

Now, one question that immediately arises is why there is this difference in epistemic burden on the hearer; another is how the source problem is addressed, i.e. why we should think that when speakers belong to the same community of knowers, they can acquire testimonial entitlement simply by taking the speaker's word at face value.

The first part of Greco's answer is that participants to testimonial exchanges within a community of knowers engage in a different kind of activity than participants to testimonial exchanges who do not belong to a community of knowers. More specifically, the former centrally involves the *distribution* of information within a community of knowers, whereas the latter centrally involves the *acquisition* of information for the community. Crucially, these two activities have different functions, which, in turn, give rise to different normative requirements. Agents who are engaged in acquiring information for their community have a *gatekeeping function*. They are in charge with letting only genuine information into the system and sifting out misinformation. Note that there is a premium on *avoidance of error* here. That's why we find demanding normative requirements for testimonial entitlement in this kind of case: in order to ensure avoidance of error positive reasons for trusting the speaker are required. In contrast, agents who are engaged in distributing information within a community are in charge with efficiently distributing high quality information within a community of knowers. Note that what matters here is *productivity* in the distribution of truths. That's why the normative requirements for testimonial entitlement are laxer here: allowing hearers to take speakers' words at face value is a

highly productive way of distributions information within the community.[12]

Finally, Greco maintains that the detective and the salesman cases are cases of information acquisition: the corresponding social roles place the agents in importantly different epistemic communities. As a result, testimonial entitlement will be subject to demanding normative requirements: independent inductive reasons for trusting the speaker are needed. In contrast, children and their parents are a paradigmatic case of epistemic agents belonging to the same epistemic community, as are pupils and their teachers. For that reason, the normative requirements at issue in these exchanges are the more lenient ones: taking the speaker's word at face value is just fine, positive reasons are not needed.

5.2 OSP: Practical Interests

It might be thought the Greco's account of how functions give rise to different norms holds the key to his solution to OSP. In particular, it might be thought that when testimonial entitlement comes on the cheap, the relevant information has already been subject to serious gatekeeping by another member of the community. That's why testimony within a group can be a bona fide source of entitlement.

On reflection, however, we think that this cannot be the whole story. After all, the core of OSP – i.e. how, in the face of the fact that we may expect lying to occur frequently enough, testimony can be a bona fide source of entitlement – is simply not addressed. Why is it that, within the same epistemic community, one is entitled to take speakers' word at face value? That said, given how central the idea of the kinds of epistemic community that are exemplified by Cases 3 and 4 is to Greco's account of the epistemology of testimony, it would be surprising if they played no role in the solution to the source problem. We can think of at least two ways in Greco could bring the kinds of community he has in mind into play here.

First, he could claim that for the kinds of communities he has in mind, there is particularly strong gatekeeping. As a result, in general, the probability of receiving a true belief via testimony within an epistemic community of the relevant kind is high enough that it remains

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[12] Greco appeals to Craig's (1990) account of the concept of knowledge in order to motivate his view. Even if Craig's story will do the trick for Greco, we don't think that it is essential to the success of his argument. Since not everyone buys Craig's approach to epistemology, it's worth seeing that Greco's view does not depend on it in its own right.

above the threshold of what is required for testimonial knowledge even after we factor in the probability of receiving a false belief due to lying. Even if we grant that this line works for some of the communities Greco has in mind (e.g. expert-laymen communities where the expert testifies on his domain of expertise), the prospects that it will work in general are not so bright. After all, some communities feature ordinary (non-expert) agents who form their beliefs in ordinary ways, i.e. without engaging in especially strong gatekeeping (e.g. family communities in which people may tell each other all sorts of things, including what they read in the tabloids).

Fortunately, there is another and better way of bringing epistemic communities to bear on the source problem. The thought here is that members of epistemic communities are less likely to lie to one another. The key question is, of course, why one should think that this is so. Here is one promising answer that suggests itself:[13] belonging to the same community means having at least some joint practical interests, be it joint individual interests or joint community interests. Crucially, false beliefs may lead to actions that may be counter-conducive to these interests. When one shares in a joint interest, then, it will also be in one's interest that those whom one shares this interest with have true beliefs rather than false ones. In this way, there is independent reason for members of communities not to lie to other members of their communities. That's why the possibility of lying looms much less large within groups. And that's how Greco's idea of an epistemic community may allow him to make progress on OSP.

6. The Case against WAR and for SAR

While Greco's version of WAR may look attractive, we think that there is ultimately reason to resist it. Crucially, however, what we will offer here is not a knock-down argument against the view, but rather reason to think that it does not do better than SAR. Since between the two SAR is the simpler view, this will suffice to make a case for SAR over WAR. Along the way we will develop how we think a champion of SAR can (and should) deal with SSP and OSP.

6.1 SSP Again

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[13] According to Greco (pc) shared interests as one central feature for delineating the communities at stake.

Let's remind ourselves of one of Greco's crucial cases:

Case 4. A mother tells her small child that they are moving to Norway.

Greco's explanation of the intuition that no positive reasons are needed for the child to enjoy epistemic entitlement is, roughly, the following: in virtue of their social roles, the child and the mother belong to the same epistemic community. As such, what is at stake here is transmission of information within the social system, which is governed by lenient norms; therefore, an anti-reductionist treatment recommends itself.

Now consider:

Case 5. A small child tells her mother that the closure principle for knowledge holds.

We take it that we all share the intuition that, in this testimonial exchange, the mother is not entitled to believe the corresponding content. Furthermore, if she is to permissibly do so, she should have independent reason to trust her child's word. The trouble for Greco is that WAR predicts that the mother is entitled to believe what her child tells her. To see this, recall that, in Case 4, the child turned out to be to believe her mother in virtue of the fact that the mother belongs to the same epistemic community as the child. It is hard to deny, however, that *belonging to the same epistemic community* is a symmetric relation. This means that the mother belongs to the same epistemic community as the child if and only if the child belongs to the same epistemic community as the mother. In that case, however, WAR predicts that the testimonial exchange is governed by the lenient norms relevant to the distribution function of testimony and testimonial entitlement comes on the cheap here.[14]

Just why does Greco's account fail? Here is one suggestion that looks attractive, at least at first glance. The view is too coarse-grained. The only distinction countenanced is between agents who share an epistemic community and agents who don't. In this way, Greco's treatment of the former agents is horizontal in the sense that, as soon as two agents belong to the same community, they are on equal footing when it comes to testimonial entitlement. What cases like Case 5 suggest is that more structure is needed to give an adequate account of the testimonial entitlement for agents who share an epistemic community. Even within an epistemic community, there is an expertise

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[14] Note, also, that similar contrast cases can be built with students and teachers, experts and laymen and so on.

scale and testimonial entitlement comes on the cheap for agents further down on this scale, but not the other way around. What's needed, then, is a vertical treatment even for agents who belong to the same epistemic community.[15]

Consider, however:

Case 6. Your doctor tells you that you should not worry, the tumor is benign.

Case 7. Blushing, sweating heavily, babbling like never before and looking the other way, your doctor tells you that you should not worry, the tumor is benign.

Plausibly, you and your doctor belong to the same social network/epistemic community. Furthermore, even if some reader were to not share the intuition here, note that Greco is going to have to say that we do, if WAR is to keep with its original picture. After all, it is no less plausible that doctors and patients belong to the same community of knowers than that mothers and children or teachers and their pupils do. In other words, if it's plausible that the agents in Cases 4 and 5 belong to the same epistemic community, then the same goes for Cases 6 and 7. While this is all good and well for Case 6, Case 7 means trouble for Greco. After all, even though you and your doctor belong to the same epistemic community you are not entitled to trust her word on the nature of the tumor; if anything, you are entitled to suspect that the exact opposite is the case. Note also, that the move from a horizontal to a vertical account of intra-community testimonial entitlements won't solve this problem for Greco. After all, the doctor is clearly the expert here and so we do have the right kind of vertical direction of information flow going on: downhill on the expertise scale.

Now, here's one piece of philosophical trivia: Case 7 features undercutting defeaters. Blushing, sweating heavily, babbling and looking the other way are the paradigm cases of defeaters cited in the literature. If that is the case, the defender of WAR could argue, all that's needed here is to supplement the account with an anti-defeat condition. After all, any account of entitlement will need this anyway, independently of the details. So, champions of WAR could argue, there's nothing problematic about the fact that WAR cannot account for all cases in the absence of such proviso.

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[15] Note that Greco may plausibly enough hold on to the idea that one's position on the scale is determined by one's social role. On this view, then, the expertise scale is kind of a social hierarchy such that one's position in it is determined by one's social role (parent, teacher, etc.)

And there is even more good news for champions of WAR: (depending on how it will be spelled out), the added anti-defeat condition is likely going to take care of cases of 'uphill' testimony also: after all, plausibly, the young age of the child, together with the high sophistication needed for merely understanding the content of the assertion in Case 5 constitutes itself in quite a serious defeater too. As a result, champions of WAR may just be able to stick to Greco's horizontal account of testimonial entitlement within epistemic communities.

In a nutshell, then, once supplemented with a workable anti-defeat condition, WAR looks promising again: Be it transmission or acquisition, the thought would go, hearers need to be sensitive to defeaters. In the case of transmission, that is all the work resting on the hearer's shoulders. In cases of acquisition, though, more is needed: on top of this anti-defeat sensitivity, positive reasons to trust the speaker's testimony are also required in order to enjoy epistemic entitlement.

That said, once we supplement WAR by an anti-defeat condition, which does serious epistemic work across a range of cases, it is no longer clear how much of the motivation to endorse a dual account of testimonial entitlement will remain. That is because, at least at first glance, a classical, strong variety of anti-reductionism, equipped with an anti-defeat condition, will do just fine in accounting for the reductionist intuitions in the Greco cases too.

Recall, first, the two cases:

Case 1. An FBI agent questions a suspect in a murder mystery.
Case 2. A used car salesman tells you that the vehicle is in mint condition.

And now recall Burge's classic statement of SAR:

> "A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him unless there are stronger reasons not to do so" (Burge 1993, 467).

Note that it is plausible that, in both Cases 1 and 2, the hearers have fairly serious undercutting defeaters for believing what they are told. In Case 1, the fact that the testifier is a suspect generates such a defeater, while, in Case 2, it is the fact that the person who is telling you about the condition of the car is a used car salesman. As such, in order to acquire testimonial entitlement, our agents need positive reason for thinking that these undercutting defeaters do not obtain (in other words, they need defeater defeaters).

The important point here is, of course, that even if SAR grants a prima facie entitlement to take a speaker's word at face value, this is compatible with SAR requiring positive reason for trusting the speaker in individual cases. In fact, there is reason to believe that SAR's treatment of Cases 1 and 2 promises to be even better than many reductionist alternatives. After all, what many reductionist accounts of testimonial entitlement require in terms of independent inductive reason for trusting the speaker is something like reason to think that she is in general a reliable testifier (perhaps on the topic at hand). The trouble is that this won't do the trick in all cases. To see this, consider Case 1. It may be that the speaker is in general a reliable testifier (perhaps even on the topic of murder cases). But that's not enough for the agent to acquire testimonial entitlement here. After all, the fact that, as a suspect, she has such excellent reason to lie on this particular occasion will constitute an undercutting defeater despite her general reliability (on the topic). What this suggests is, of course, that we not only need positive reasons, we need a particular variety thereof, the kind of considerations that are able to defeat the present defeaters. In other words, an explanation in terms of the anti-defeat condition is the most plausible option here.

As a result, there is reason to believe that if WAR can solve SSP, the same goes for SAR. If so, of course, WAR fails to improve on SAR on this count.

6.2 OSP Again

Even so, WAR still offers an appealing solution to OSP. Since, however, the most promising version of this solution crucially invokes the idea of an epistemic community, it is hard to see how it could be available to champions of SAR.

The good news is that it doesn't have to be. There exists an equally promising account that will work even on SAR. In order to get there, we would like to first look at an alternative explanation of what is going on in ultimatum games.

According to rational choice theorists, behavior in high stakes ultimatum games suggests a different explanation of the initial data: the existence of the social norm – independently of whether it is internalized or not – affects the utility profile at stake for both parties. *Ceteris paribus*, norms license sanctions of violations and individuals get psychological benefits from engaging in sanctioning when faced with norm violations. Also, norms engender obligations towards people, and failing to live up to these obligations may cause

psychological harm in those affected. On the other hand, of course, stakes also affect the utility profile. For respondents, when they are sufficiently low, the benefit of sanctioning, respectively the costs of effrontery outweigh the financial benefit. If the stakes are sufficiently high, however, the financial benefits outweigh the benefits of sanctioning. Proponents also stand to gain form conforming with the social norm – in terms of good reputation, social approval and so on. Also, there's the benefit involved in the decreasing risk of being subject to sanctioning.

According to these champions of choice theory, then, in ultimatum games, the two parties are, in fact, maximizing their expected utility; financial benefits, though, are not the only things that translate into expected utility: social benefits count quite heavily in the balance. Furthermore, it is argued, where there is a social norm, *conforming enjoys default rationality*. Violations, of course, can also be rational: when your life is at stake, for instance, you are likely not to be counted on to respect much in the way of any norms, social norms included. However, strong overriding reason is needed to get one to leave the default position (e.g. Bolton (1991), Ochs and Roth (1989)).

If that is the case, however, that is, if the default position in production of testimony is norm compliance, it makes sense that the default position for the hearer is entitlement to 'buy the product'. Here is, then, the alternative, <u>s</u>ocial <u>s</u>trong <u>a</u>nti-<u>r</u>eductionist picture proposed by this paper (SSAR): hearers are prima facie entitled to their testimony-based beliefs. Even though speakers are free to deceive, no positive reasons to trust one's testifiers are needed, nor is it the case that hearers need to do filtering work.[16]

The objective source of this entitlement resides in the existence of social norms[17] forbidding improper testimony[18] – be it deceiving, un-evidenced or the like. Conforming to the norms enjoys default rationality. Violations, of course, can also be rational: when your life is

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[16] Note that, crucially, what matters for us in this paper is a normative claim: we are asking: what is the default permissible position for hearers? The reductionist answers: disbelief (in the sense of not believing), unless positive reasons to believe are present. Why? Because the default permissible position for speakers is to say what coincides with their purposes, which may or may not be the truth. Our account argues (based on the relevant decision literature): norm conformity on the speaker side (telling the truth) is the default permissible position. Therefore, believing is the default permissible position for hearers.

[17] For a contractarian incarnation of strong social anti-reductionism, see Simion (2016a).

[18] For knowledge accounts of epistemically proper assertion, see e.g. (Kelp Forthcoming), (Kelp and Simion 2017), (Simion 2016b), (Williamson 2000). For justification views, see (Douven 2006) and (Lackey 2007). For a defense of a truth norm of assertion, see (Weiner 2005).

at stake, for instance, you are likely to lie if needed. However, strong overriding reason is needed to get one to leave the default position. Since the utility picture is such that overriding requires unusually strong reason, it is likely to not happen very often: the (social) costs are too high. This, in turn, explains why testimony can be a bona fide source of entitlement, despite our incapacity to spot deception. In this way, SAR addresses OSP.[19]

At the same time, SSAR is subjectively adequate, i.e. it can escape SSP. Even though taking a speaker's word at face value is sometimes tantamount to gullibility, this isn't always the case. All that is need to offer a workable solution to SSP, then, is an explanation of the cases in which trusting a speaker does amount to gullibility. These cases are dealt with by the anti-defeat condition on testimonial entitlement.

It may be worth noting that Greco's social roles can play an important role here too: often enough social roles social roles are defeater generators: the social roles of being a suspect or a used car salesman (Cases 1 and 2) are two clear examples. In the presence of defeaters, defeater defeaters will be necessary for testimonial entitlement. In other words, proper testimonial belief on the part of the hearer will require positive reasons in order to believe what she is being told. In this way, while SSAR does grant prima facie testimonial entitlement for taking a speaker's word at face value, this is compatible with the idea that in individual cases strong (and sometimes even highly specific) reasons are needed before hearers may believe that they are being told.

7. Conclusion

Social anti-reductionism takes the source of testimonial epistemic entitlement to reside in the intrinsically social character of testimonial exchanges. This paper has argued in favor of an ambitious variety thereof. According to the view defended here, due to the social norms governing testimonial exchanges, hearers are *prima facie* entitled to believe based on mere speakers' say so.

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[19] Importantly, no access to information about norm compliance on the part of the hearers is needed. Norm compliance is enough to meet OSP. To see the difference, take driving. Drivers reliably conform to traffic norms. They will reliably stop the car at the red light. In the light of this, I am entitled to cross the street on a green light. I don't need to know that the drivers will stop. Children, for instance, don't have the cognitive sophistication for any of this. They are (objectively) entitled to cross the street in virtue of norm compliance on drivers' side itself, not in virtue of having epistemic access to it.

Of course, like with all other types of entitlement, testimonial entitlement too lives and dies with defeat responsiveness. In the presence of defeaters, e.g. when there is reason to believe speaker's interest in lying overrides the social benefits involved in norm compliance, hearers will need positive reasons to trust their testifiers. However, insofar as norm compliance is the default for speakers, all else equal, entitlement to believe is the default for hearers.[20]

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