

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

Assertion is the central vehicle for the sharing of knowledge. Whether knowledge is shared successfully often depends on the quality of assertions: good assertions lead to successful knowledge sharing, while bad ones don't. In *Sharing Knowledge*, Christoph Kelp and Mona Simion investigate the relation between knowledge sharing and assertion, and develop an account of what it is to assert well. More specifically, they argue that the function of assertion is to share knowledge with others. It is this function that supports a central norm of assertion according to which a good assertion is one that has the disposition to generate knowledge in others. The book uses this functionalist approach to motivate further norms of assertion on both the speakers' and the hearers' side and investigates ramifications of this view on other questions about assertion.

Christoph Kelp is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Glasgow. He is author of *Inquiry, Knowledge and Understanding* (2021), and co-editor of *Virtue Theoretic Epistemology* (with John Greco, Cambridge University Press, 2020).

Mona Simion is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Glasgow. She is author of *Shifty Speech and Independent Thought* (2021), and co-editor of *Reasons, Justification, and Defeat* (with Jessica Brown, 2021).



CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY

General Editors

Nomy Arpaly
Brown University
Sanford Goldberg
Northwestern University

Cambridge Studies in Philosophy is the cornerstone of Cambridge University Press's list in mainstream, high-level analytic philosophy. It serves as a forum for a broad range of monographs on the cutting edge of epistemology, the philosophy of language and mind, ethics, and metaphysics.

Recent Titles

RICHARD FUMERTON Knowledge, Thought and the Case for Dualism

JAMIN ASAY The Primitivist Theory of Truth

CRAWFORD L. ELDER Familiar Objects and Their Shadows

SANFORD GOLDBERG Anti-Individualism

MICHAEL J. ZIMMERMANN Living with Uncertainty

LYNNE RUDDER BAKER The Metaphysics of Everyday Life

DAVID COPP Morality in a Natural World

JOSEPH MENDOLA Goodness and Justice

FOLKE TERSMAN Moral Disagreement

ALEXANDER R. PRUSS The Principle of Sufficient Reason

JOSHUA GERT Brute Rationality

NOAH LEMOS Common Sense

MICHAEL SMITH Ethics and the A Priori

KEITH FRANKISH Mind and Supermind

D. M. ARMSTRONG Truth and Truthmakers

WILLIAM S. ROBINSON Understanding Phenomenal Consciousness

ANDREW MELNYK A Physicalist Manifesto

JONATHAN KVANVIG The Value of Knowledge and the Pursuit of Understanding



SHARING KNOWLEDGE

A Functionalist Account of Assertion

CHRISTOPH KELP

University of Glasgow

MONA SIMION

University of Glasgow





CAMBRIDGEUNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, V1C 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316517130
DDI: 10.1017/9781009036818

© Christoph Kelp and Mona Simion 2022

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ısвn 978-1-316-51713-0 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.



For Max and Mia



Contents

| Acknowledgements | | <i>page</i> ix |
|------------------|--|----------------|
| | Introduction | I |
| | o.1 Game Plan | 7 |
| PΑ | ART I KRA: THE KNOWLEDGE RULE OF ASSERTION | 1 |
| I | The Case for the KRA | II |
| | 1.1 Lottery Propositions | II |
| | 1.2 Moorean Conjunctions | 14 |
| | 1.3 Parenthetical Position | 18 |
| | 1.4 Challenges and Prompts | 20 |
| | 1.5 Legitimate Criticisms and Appropriate Responses | 23 |
| | 1.6 Conclusion | 27 |
| 2 | Problems for KRA | 30 |
| | 2.1 The Classical Counterexamples | 30 |
| | 2.2 Conversational Patterns: Turning the Tables on KRA | 38 |
| | 2.3 A Priori Simplicity | 45 |
| | 2.4 Outstanding Problems | 47 |
| | 2.5 Conclusion | 49 |
| 3 | KRA and Sufficiency | 51 |
| | 3.1 The Quantitative Objection | 52 |
| | 3.2 The Qualitative Objection | 59 |
| | 3.3 Back to Goldberg | 67 |
| | 3.4 Conclusion | 69 |
| PA | ART II FFAA: A FUNCTION FIRST ACCOUNT OF ASS | SERTION |
| 4 | FFAA | 73 |
| | 4.1 Etiological Functions and Their Normative Import | 74 |
| | 4.2 The Normativity of Assertion | 82 |

vii



| V111 | VIII Contents | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| 4·3 4·4 | Function First or Rule First? Conclusion | 89 96 |
| 5 FF. 5.1 5.2 5.3 | AA and KRA Extant Accounts The Status and Rationale for KRA: A Function First Account Conclusion | 98 110 115 |
| 6.1 6.2 6.3 | AA and the Duty to Believe Testimonial Injustice and the Duty to Believe Extant Accounts The Duty to Believe: A Function First Account Conclusion | 118 119 124 132 |
| PART I | II KNOWLEDGE AND LANGUAGE | |
| 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 | A and Constitutivity Extant Arguments against KAA A New Argument against KAA Objections and Replies Constitutivity without KAA Conclusion | 139 141 148 152 155 |
| 8.1 8.2 8.3 | A and Epistemic Contextualism DeRose's Argument Why DeRose's Argument Is Unsuccessful DeRose's Argument Turned on Its Head Conclusion | 159 160 162 165 |
| A.1 A.2 A.3 Append Append Bibliog | 1 2 | 177 178 180 186 191 195 |
| Index | | 205 |



Acknowledgements

We have been thinking and writing about the nature and normativity of assertion for many years now, and we have benefitted from an extraordinary amount of support from our peers and mentors for this research. We would like to thank Kristoffer Ahlstrom-Vij, Bob Beddor, Sven Bernecker, Corine Besson, Alexander Bird, Michael Blome-Tillman, Emma Borg, Cameron Boult, Michael Brady, Elke Brendel, Fernando Broncano-Berrocal, Jessica Brown, Herman Cappelen, Adam Carter, Matthew Chrisman, Annalisa Coliva, Juan Comesaña, Robert Cowan, Marian David, Katherine Dormandy, Julien Dutant, Miguel Egler, Claire Field, Giada Fratantonio, Lizzie Fricker, Miranda Fricker, Manuel Garcia-Carpintero, Mikkel Gerken, Olav Gjelsvic, Sandy Goldberg, Emma Gordon, Peter J. Graham, John Greco, Patrick Greenough, Alex Gregory, Thomas Grundmann, Josh Habgood-Coote, Michael Hannon, Anandi Hattiangadi, Katherine Hawley, Frank Hofmann, Joachim Horvath, Christoph Jaeger, Jonathan Jenkins-Ichikawa, Matt Jope, Jesper Kallestrup, Klemens Kappel, Dirk Kindermann, Igal Kvart, Christos Kyriacou, Jennifer Lackey, Maria Lasonen-Aarnio, Janet Levin, Max Lewis, Clayton Littlejohn, Fed Luzzi, Jack Lyons, Susanne Mantel, Deborah Marber, Aidan McGlynn, Matt McGrath, Conor McHugh, Robin McKenna, Anne Meylan, Lisa Miracchi, Luca Moretti, Jennifer Nagel, Nikolaj Nottleman, Jonas Olson, Erik Olsson, Orestis Palermos, Carlotta Pavese, Andy Peet, Tommaso Piazza, Christian Piller, Duncan Pritchard, Andrew Reisner, Wayne Riggs, Sven Rosenkrantz, Lewis Ross, Sarah Sawyer, Susanne Schellenberg, Johanna Schnurr, Nick Shackel, Susanna Siegel, Martin Smith, Justin Snedegar, Ernie Sosa, Rachel Sterken, Ema Sullivan-Bisset, Kurt Sylvan, Alessandra Tanesini, Jonathan Way, John Webber, Alan Weir, Daniel Whiting, Asa Wikforss, Robbie Williams and Tim Williamson. We are convinced that we have missed people who deserve to be acknowledged by name and hope they will accept our apologies. Many thanks also to two anonymous referees



Acknowledgements

--

from Cambridge University Press, who gave us excellent and very detailed comments on the book.

A few chapters of the book rely on previously published work: Chapter 2 draws heavily on our co-authored *Journal of Philosophy* article 'Criticism and Blame in Action and Assertion' (2017). Chapter 3 is based on Simion's *Synthese* article 'Assertion: Knowledge Is Enough' (2016), and Chapters 4 and 5 on Kelp's *Nous* article 'Assertion: A Function-First Account' (2018). Chapter 8 draws on Simion's 2019 *Mind & Language* article 'Assertion: The Context Shiftiness Dilemma'. Finally, Appendix A relies on our co-authored *Synthese* article 'Commodious Knowledge' (2017). We want to thank the editors of these journals as well as the anonymous referees who provided us with excellent comments on these articles.

Finally, many thanks to Sandy Goldberg and Hilary Gaskin at Cambridge University Press for all the excellent advice, support and efficiency.