

# Zetetic Rights and Wrong(ing)s\*

Daniel C. Friedman

Forthcoming in *Philosophical Quarterly*  
Penultimate Draft, please cite published version

## Abstract

What do we owe those with whom we inquire? Presumably, quite a bit. Anything beyond what is necessary to secure knowledge? Yes. In this paper, I argue for a class of ‘zetetic rights.’ These are rights distinctive to participants in group inquiry. Zetetic rights help protect important central interests of inquirers. These include a right to aid, a right against interference, and a right to exert influence over the course of inquiry. Building on arguments by Fricker (2015), I defend these rights, and explore cases of their violation: zetetic wrongings. I argue that zetetic wrongings constitute a distinctive, ubiquitous, and significant form of injustice in our epistemic and zetetic lives. To improve our inquiries and avoid epistemic injustice, we need to contend with zetetic wrongdoing. Making this case helps show that a complete picture of epistemic life must account for the deep influence of our cooperative ties to one another.

**Keywords:** epistemic injustice; wrongdoing; inquiry; cooperation; epistemic contribution; rights; zetetic norms; group inquiry

## 1 Introduction

To achieve many of our most important goals as inquirers, we need one another. This fact, for better or worse, necessitates our participation in group inquiries. It also raises a question: what do we owe those with whom we inquire? A natural thought: since we typically inquire to secure true answers, knowledge, and other epistemic goods, what we owe our fellow inquirers is what best promotes this end. Sure, the standard constraints of ethical life apply, but what we owe our co-inquirers is what is involved in reliably and expeditiously getting towards our shared epistemic goal. No more, no less.

---

\*Many thanks to Michael Bratman, Cristina Ballarini, Sarah Brophy, John Collins, Will Fleisher, Miranda Fricker, Jane Friedman, Mikayla Kelley, Krista Lawlor, Taylor Madigan, Austen McDougal, Emily McWilliams, Antonia Peacocke, and Rupert Sparling as well as audiences at a 2023 Pacific APA Symposium Session and the Stanford Working Action Group, for helpful discussion and feedback on the ideas in this paper.

Indeed, this natural thought accords with a traditional picture of the epistemic landscape. On this picture, agents function as essentially individual epistemic units. Individuals conduct their own inquiries, form their own beliefs, and so long as their environments are well-structured, get by. Individuals encounter other epistemic agents, get what they need, and offer what they can spare. On this construal, epistemic exchange and transfer are social in only a thin sense: from individual knower to individual knower (Longino, 2022).

There is much to dislike about such a picture. For one, it threatens to understate the threat posed by prejudice, stereotypes, and other pernicious features of social life to our possession and transfer of epistemic goods. As a vast literature on epistemic injustice and oppression demonstrates, our very status as knowers, as possessors of epistemic goods, is hostage to our social contexts and their maladies (Dotson, 2014; Fricker, 2007).

In this paper, I offer another reason to reject the answer above, and thus the picture from which it emerges. It fails to emphasize our cooperation in our pursuit of epistemic goods, a cooperation that suffuses epistemic life. Here, I focus on cases where our cooperation in pursuit of epistemic goods is manifest, and under-theorized: group inquiry. I argue that participants in group inquiry enjoy rights *qua* inquirer. These rights impose substantive constraints on how group inquiry should proceed. Not only can these constraints come apart from quotidian epistemic operating procedure, but they are significant in their own. Violating these constraints leads to recognizable breakdowns in our inquiries. These are breakdowns a faithful picture of the epistemic landscape, one sufficiently attuned to our cooperative efforts, must highlight. For example:

**CRISPR:** Emmanuelle and Jennifer are leaders of a group inquiry exploring the nature and viability of CRISPR. Their work is complex and at the frontier of biochemistry research. Their teams are inquiring together to figure out whether they can create a ‘single-guide RNA (sgRNA)’ to help direct where the Cas-9 enzyme makes its cuts. After some sketches with a post-doc, Jennifer settles the question with the belief that sgRNA can be created by fusing two smaller RNA’s together, head to tail. She immediately tells the post-doc to order more RNA’s, write up their plan as new lab procedure, and to start documenting their work for the necessary patents.<sup>1</sup>

**Intuition:** Emmanuelle can and should feel aggrieved. She has legitimate standing to criticize Jennifer here, and to hold her to account: ‘Hey, weren’t we trying to figure this out together?’ ‘What about what I think?’ Intuitively, it seems that Jennifer has fallen short of what she owed Emmanuelle. The issue involves more than just any epistemic irrationality on Jennifer’s part. It seems like Jennifer owed Emmanuelle a say.

**Diagnosis:** The context of inquiring together affords Emmanuelle (and Jennifer) certain rights. In **CRISPR** these rights are violated. Emmanuelle’s standing to hold Jennifer accountable stems precisely from violation of these

---

<sup>1</sup>See Isaacson (2021) for an account of CRISPR’s actual development.

rights, precisely because she has been wronged. Accordingly, I claim cases like **CRISPR** illustrate wronging suffered qua inquirer: zetetic (inquiry-related) wronging.

As I argue, zetetic wronging exists and merits serious attention. The claim I defend is not just that the demands of moral and epistemic life can come apart when we inquire together. That much is unsurprising. Rather, my claim is that in the important role we inhabit as inquirers, we enjoy certain rights, and when these are violated, we are distinctively wronged.

My argument proceeds in two stages. First, I argue zetetic wronging exists. This requires elucidating the ties binding us in group inquiry, the relationship of these ties to important normative practices, and how this combination generates plausible rights. Here, my point of departure is Miranda Fricker’s (2015) defense of a fundamental human capability of epistemic giving, the combined capability of *Epistemic Contribution*. I argue that normative pressure to enable exercise of Epistemic Contribution leads to normatively significant demands which take on special importance in the cooperative context of group inquiry. This, in turn, grounds genuine rights we enjoy as inquirers (§2). Second, I argue zetetic wronging matters. I show how examples like **CRISPR** above involve a violation of zetetic rights, thus constituting instances of zetetic wronging (§3). These examples suggest that zetetic wronging is a pervasive and undertheorized species of epistemic injustice (§4).

## 2 Inquiring-Together and Zetetic Rights

To start, let’s get clear on the context in which cases like **CRISPR** occur: group inquiry. Relatively little has been written concerning to what a group inquiry amounts, so I’ll offer a rough sketch.<sup>2</sup>

Group inquiry is a form of shared activity with a distinctively epistemic aim. We can model it as involving agents sharing an intention to answer a shared question (Bratman, 2014). Understanding group inquiry by way of shared intention imputes to each inquirer an intention: that ‘we’ answer the shared question. Such intentions direct inquirers to the shared epistemic goal, but they also involve specification of how to proceed. What sets out this activity as one undertaken together is that inquirers proceed towards a shared goal in a cooperative spirit. Indeed, responsive cooperation is central to shared activity on traditional accounts (cf. Salomone-Sehr, 2022.) Take Michael Bratman (2014, pp. 53–54) who highlights the ‘consistent, coherent, and effective interweaving of the planning agency of one another’ present in our shared activity. Or the commitment ‘as a body’ characteristic of Margaret Gilbert’s influential account (2015). This cooperative spirit is central to group inquiries as well. Group inquirers are disposed to help one another, to avoid impeding one another’s progress, and to allow one another to help chart the course of the activity. In-

---

<sup>2</sup>By contrast with individual inquiry: Archer (2019), Falbo (2022), Kelp (2021), Millson (2020), Palmira (2020), and Pettigrew (n.d.). Some recent exceptions concerning group inquiry: D. C. Friedman (n.d.), Habgood-Coote (2022), and McWilliams (n.d.).

quirers who fail to behave appropriately threaten the shared nature of their inquiry.

Furthermore, cases of group inquiry are themselves ubiquitous. We try to figure out how to live together, the laws of nature, where the nearest restroom is. In all these absolutely crucial cases and more, we take up the distinctive role of group inquirer. Now such inquiries can involve complicated structures of authority, decision-making, and democratic buy-in. But, whichever way such inquiries are structured, our role as group inquirer is a crucial one across our lives (Harman, 1986, ch. 5). Such crucial roles in central projects typically engender various rights, obligations, and restrictions. How so for group inquiry? To answer this question, we must clarify the nature of rights and their relationship to wrong(ing)s.

## 2.1 Rights and Wrong(ing)s

In what follows, I adopt the framework of an interest-based account of rights (Raz, 1984).<sup>3</sup> On this account:

‘x has a right if and only if x can have rights, and, other things being equal, an aspect of x’s well-being (his interest) is a sufficient reason for holding some other person(s) to be under a duty’ (Raz, 1984, p. 195).

Group inquirers enjoy distinctive rights, and their interests qua group inquirer are sufficient for holding co-inquirers under duties. These rights and correlative duties concern certain actions/omissions in the conduct of inquiry. Such actions/omissions will affect interests inquirers possess. In making my case, I’ll highlight which interests these are and against which harms candidate zetetic rights protect.

I intend an inclusive conception of rights, here. On my conception, we have rights generated by certain meaningful projects in which we engage: rights qua citizen, rights qua moral community member, and rights qua inquirer. Of course, rights in some contexts are weightier than others: my right to party (for which I should fight!) or rights as member of the country club pale in comparison

---

<sup>3</sup>I follow the account of zetetic rights Atkins (2023) in so doing. Atkins’ fascinating proposal focuses on the obligations inquirers face to inquire further given that the answers to their questions may (or may not) undermine the interests of another. Atkins is thus able to offer an elegant explanation of cases which typically are addressed by theories of ‘doxastic wrongdoing.’ Our accounts differ insofar as the obligation to ‘do one’s homework’ is incurred only when certain reputational interests or social standing are at stake. By contrast, the zetetic rights I describe below emerge in virtue of the particular nature of our group inquiries, the cooperative demands they engender and the normative practices they engage. Thus, zetetic rights on my account emerge whether the question of inquiry affects one’s social standing, or whether it is entirely mundane. Still, I take these approaches to be compatible. It may often be the case that when inquiring together into a question whose answer may affect one’s social standing that the zetetic rights I describe below are operative, as are the degrees of inquiry right, Atkins describes. To what extent such inquiry right is distributed across the inquiring collective, to it as a body, and/or incurred by inquirers part of the group endeavor are questions worth addressing in future work.

with my right to due process or my rights as member of a legislatively protected class. A full picture of rights will sort through how various projects and the rights they engender weigh against one another.

In conceiving of rights in this inclusive way, I do not assume that all rights (especially zetetic ones) will earn their keep in virtue of their relationship to the moral.<sup>4</sup> Some may only be justified then by the harm they prevent or interests they promote in the practice-relative sense, e.g. my right qua chess player to absolute silence. These may come to constitute only *pro-tanto* rights.<sup>5</sup> Still, the zetetic rights under discussion are normatively significant.

We will get a grip on zetetic rights by considering cases of their violation. These instances will constitute wronging qua inquirer—zetetic wronging. Here it is important to differentiate between genuine rights-violations and mere infringement. Following Watson (2021), we can understand the former as involving an unjustifiable disregard and failure to act in accord with the correlative duties associated with an agent’s right. Cases of mere infringement, by contrast, involve only not acting in accordance with those duties. To see the contrast, consider a helpful example from McGlynn (2023, p. 29):

‘Suppose I grab your mobile phone out of your hand and throw it in a river; this clearly infringes on your rights to have and use your phone. But if I know you are about to call in a bomb-hoax to the local hospital, this infringement might be completely justified. If, however, I grab your phone because I think no one should be allowed to use electronics, I violate (and not merely infringe) upon your right to have and use your phone.’

Distinguishing cases of rights-violation from mere infringement is important because it is violation of an agent’s right, not infringement, which wrongs them.<sup>6</sup>

To sum up, zetetic rights involve duties toward other co-inquirers concerning actions (and omissions) in the course of inquiry, given certain interests inquirers possess. Violation of zetetic rights will involve disregarding unjustifiably the duties associated with these rights. When an inquirer’s zetetic rights are violated, and not merely infringed, she is zetetically wronged. Which rights do inquirers enjoy qua group inquirer?<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Zetetic Rights Unpacked

Our initial conception of a group inquiry gives us the start of an answer. Recall, the cooperative nature of group inquiry involves rational pressure to treat our co-inquirers in certain ways, affording them certain privileges, and working

---

<sup>4</sup>I differ here from Watson (2021) whom I read, along with Croce (2023), as committed to the idea of epistemic rights as ultimately a species of moral rights.

<sup>5</sup>There is debate about whether all, some, or no moral rights are *pro-tanto* in this way. I assume here that the zetetic rights I consider, which need not be moral in nature, can be understood as *pro-tanto*, even if moral rights cannot.

<sup>6</sup>See Anscombe (1990, p. 152); Owens (2012, p. 46); Thompson (1992, p. 122).

<sup>7</sup>My focus here is on the rights we enjoy in the context of our inquiring together. I leave aside consideration of the rights we enjoy, if any, qua individual inquirer.

together in concert with them to pursue our shared epistemic goal.<sup>8</sup> From this, natural expectations emerge. Some of these expectations arise from the nature of engaging in cooperation towards a shared goal. We can expect co-inquirers to help us, to avoid impeding our progress, and to give us a chance to exert influence over the course of inquiry.

Other expectations may be set as we specify the terms of our zetetic engagement: you'll do this experiment; I'll tackle that data-analysis. Real world group inquiring will invariably involve a mix of both: some specification upfront of how we proceed and thus what we can expect from one another, and further expectations emerging as we proceed, given the cooperative underpinnings of our inquiry. These cooperative expectations look like apt starting points for explicating genuine rights inquirers possess.

There is no guarantee that every pressure operative in a group inquiry carries normative significance. In group inquiry specifically, however, the cooperative pressures just described acquire unique importance. This is because of the way they interact, promote, and even constitute the exercise of a normatively significant human capability. It is the interaction of these pressures with a genuinely reason-giving interest which transforms such rational pressures to cooperate into those which are genuinely normative, those which can ground rights.

The normatively significant human capability I have in mind is what Miranda Fricker calls 'Epistemic Contribution.' This is a central human capability, 'on the part of the individual, to contribute to the pool of shared epistemic materials—materials for knowledge, understanding, and very often for practical deliberation' (Fricker, 2015, p. 78).

Epistemic Contribution is a combined capability, one which requires both an internal capacity (to produce this epistemic material), and the uptake of one's social world (to take these proposed contributions seriously) for its successful exercise. When either of these pieces falter, Epistemic Contribution is frustrated. Along the internal dimension, this may occur because individuals are unable to produce/gather epistemic inputs. Along the social dimension, it may occur when, 'social arrangements [are] such as to reliably ensure that these epistemic inputs are rejected or under-rated owing to the sorts of epistemically irrelevant factors: deliberate suppression of others' epistemic contributions, whether by way of coercion, legal prevention, or manipulation of local credibility relations' (Fricker, 2015, p. 85).

Fricker argues that Epistemic Contribution exists generally as the kind of capability which undergirds our important epistemic relationships. It merits, if anything does, a place on a universal list of canonical human capabilities (Fricker, 2015, p. 79). More generally, Fricker argues, Epistemic Contribution figures in the rationale for free speech, and helps ensure non-domination.

With respect to the former, Fricker reads the classical Millian argument for free speech as instrumental in nature, oriented towards helping us secure knowledge. In cases where Epistemic Contribution is thwarted, Fricker claims, we would be hard-pressed to secure such knowledge. Much of the exchange of

---

<sup>8</sup>As I theorize them, these are pressures of instrumental rationality at this juncture.

evidence and beliefs which occurs in a free speech society, where contrast and disagreement push us towards knowledge, might be arbitrarily dismissed or ignored without respect for the exercise of Epistemic Contribution. As she writes, ‘The imperfectly free speech situation threatens to corrupt the evidence base for knowledge to such an extent that certain kinds of central social knowledge would not be achieved. This means that wherever there is a significant failure of Epistemic Contribution, the very point of free speech (to produce knowledge in the social body) is compromised... Epistemic Contribution turns out to be a condition of the Millian defence of free speech’ (Fricker, 2015, p. 90).

With respect to the latter, Epistemic Contribution is part of the very means by which agents are able to contest decisions in such a way as must be preserved to promote relations of non-domination. If I cannot receive even a ‘fair hearing’ concerning my grievances over interference to my projects, it seems difficult to ensure that such interference does not come to constitute an objectionable form of domination. Epistemic Contribution is the very capability to contest such interferences. Thus, Epistemic Contribution is truly central in our normative lives.

I’ll now argue that Epistemic Contribution undergirds zetetic rights. Recall the Razian approach to rights described in §2.1. For X to have a right, it must be the case that an interest of X’s is a sufficient reason to hold others under a duty. Epistemic Contribution helps explain the sufficiency, i.e. significance, of reason here. Since Epistemic Contribution is so central to important human aims, it is plausible that we possess significant reason to promote its exercise. This reason stems from our significant reason to promote human flourishing, broad possession of social knowledge, free speech, and non-domination.

The exercise of Epistemic Contribution will constitute an important interest group inquirers possess. This is because of how central successful exercise of Epistemic Contribution is to group inquiry. Indeed, Epistemic Contribution’s exercise is intimately bound up with group inquiry’s aims and characteristic forms of practice. One of the opportunities for epistemic agents to ‘contribute to the pool of shared epistemic materials’ is in the very practice of coming to answer shared questions, where this requires gathering and evaluating epistemic considerations which point to an answer. It is ubiquitous in our practice of inquiring-together that individuals offer up epistemic inputs to one another. We balk at inquiries where this fails to occur (like **CRISPR**).<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, the connection between the cooperative pressures of inquiry

---

<sup>9</sup>Worry: Do we really balk at thwarted opportunities to contribute to the shared epistemic pool, or do we just balk at ‘inquirers terminating inquiry without the other’s consent.’ A reviewer suggests a case in which one inquirer has finished up all the work on the question, but so long as she refrains from ‘terminating the inquiry’ by reporting the results, perhaps nothing is amiss. Moreover, simply ‘okay-ing’ another’s work may prove unlikely to constitute ‘contributing to the pool of epistemic materials.’ Reply: My claim is that we would often object to having failed to have been afforded an opportunity to contribute to the shared pool of epistemic materials in cases like **CRISPR**. This involves opportunities to assess important epistemic contributions to the direction of our inquiry, as well as help guide the direction our inquiry goes. In the case described, it seems perfectly plausible to react roughly as follows: ‘you did all this work and made important choices on central questions and the directions our research takes without me.’ One difference that must be tracked is to what extent ‘finishing up

to aid, to avoid impediment, and to allow one another to exert influence, help promote and even constitute the exercise of Epistemic Contribution.

To see this, consider a historically faithful re-telling of **CRISPR**. As things actually proceeded, team members did their best to avoid getting in each other's way, to re-stock reagents, to share lab-space. Moreover, team members in such contexts helped one another, deployed their skills to pursue the experimental paths their fellows suggested. Team members afforded one another the opportunity to help chart how inquiry proceeded by offering epistemic inputs: how to prepare experiments, which tests to use, which results were meaningful. These are familiar features of most of our group inquiries. They also directly support the functioning of Epistemic Contribution.<sup>10</sup>

Helping one another and avoiding getting in one another's way just are two ways to allow for the acquisition of the epistemic inputs one can offer up to the collective. Leaving one another the opportunity to offer up these inputs, just is to enable contribution to the shared pool of information the group inquiry can use. Helping co-inquirers by contributing evidence that helps their own assessment of the situation just is an exercise of Epistemic Contribution. Of course, we may structure our inquiry at the outset to spell out how this will go. That, in turn, may involve agreement that you will take a step back at a certain juncture, or that we will defer to me at another. But this comes on top of the general pressures of our cooperative endeavor to allow for the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, and when reached via consent, is compatible with such underlying pressures.

An inquirer's ability to exert influence over the course of inquiry, then, will proceed in part via her ability to acquire evidence and the uptake of her social world—here her fellow inquirers. This clearly comes to enable, and even constitute, the exercise of Epistemic Contribution. This suggests that exercising

---

all the work on the question' involved substantive epistemic choices, or was rather run-of-the-mill zetetic labor that could be expected to be approved, or was in keeping with disciplinary norms. My sense is that the case the reviewer describes is read under the latter description, in which case fewer genuine opportunities to contribute, by helping assess where inquiry should go and the probative force of results, were likely to have been thwarted. Of course, in some cases we may have the standing to balk at such behavior and refrain from doing so for other kinds of reasons. Finally, the epistemic significance of assessing another's research must not be understated. It is a significant epistemic contribution to investigate and assess the probative results that alter the trajectory an inquiry may take even as they bring investigation to its terminus. So in cases where such assessment is sufficient to have contributed, this is so because it is just as serious epistemic work as is the 'primary inquiring' requiring similar epistemic capacities, skills, and virtues. Thanks to a reviewer for helpful discussion on this point.

<sup>10</sup>Worry: Doesn't this just stem from a general right to non-interference? Reply: Not quite. A right to non-interference can take many forms and may be substantially diminished or altered within the context of joint activity. There's no guarantee that what non-interference constitutes in group inquiry involves getting out of one another's way, any more than non-interference in basketball would mean refraining from calling for you to pass the ball. What non-interference demands in joint activities is set, in part, by the aim of such activities and the other normatively important considerations which inhere within them. In the case of group inquiry, the exercise of Epistemic Contribution is one such normatively important consideration which helps fix to what, if anything, non-interference demands. It would be a mistake then to think a general right to non-interference alone can tell us much about how group inquiry should proceed, and the normatively weighty rights we enjoy as co-inquirers.



Epistemic Contribution will be an important interest individuals possess qua group inquirers.

Notably, co-inquirers can exert influence over inquiry in other ways. Inquiry is an activity which involves aims of both epistemic accuracy alongside distinctively practical efficiency and creativity. Laudable inquirers are not just those who get the right answers, or resist premature belief-formation, but those who ask penetrating questions, grasp and design probative experiments, and efficiently execute them (Steglich-petersen, 2024). So the cooperative pressures of group inquiry are sensitive to a practical dimension of exerting influence alongside the form of theoretical influence characterized by offering up epistemic inputs.

These standard cooperative pressures of group inquiry are directly conducive to enabling the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, and sometimes constitute it. Thus, all the ingredients necessary for understanding zetetic rights are now on the table. Given the significant reason to promote the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, and its status as a central interest to inquirers, we can conclude co-inquirers can be held to duties to aid, avoid impediment, and allow one another to exert influence over inquiry's course, insofar as these enable and come to constitute the exercise of Epistemic Contribution.

Interim summary: we face general normative pressure to promote non-domination where possible, and support free speech. The exercise of a central human capability for Epistemic Contribution promotes these ends, and we thus face general normative pressure to promote its exercise. Epistemic Contribution plays a particularly central role in group inquiry.

Here then, correlative with the duties just defended, are three candidate rights enjoyed by group inquirers:

1. **Right to Zetetic Aid:** an inquirer's right to help from co-inquirers in pursuing the answer to the shared question.
2. **Right to Avoid Impediment:** an inquirer's right to be free from unnecessary thwarting of one's contributions towards answering the shared question.
3. **Right to Zetetic Influence:** an inquirer's right to genuine opportunity and standing to offer up epistemic inputs and specify practical details of the inquiry's unfolding.

Of course, elements of these rights can be waived with consent, and their correlative duties suspended. When I join a lab with a Nobel Laureate, I recognize that my say in deciding which experiments we pursue will be attenuated in comparison with the case where I inquire with peers. This is in part because the normative structure of our inquiry is laden with an authority relation I accept. Such authority may arise in virtue of broader institutional hierarchy, recognition of expertise in pursuit of our epistemic aims, and much else besides. What is crucial is that such an authority relation's validity depends, in part, on my consent. I can waive the force of what I would otherwise be entitled to

as a group inquirer. Maybe some rights (strictly moral ones perhaps) are not like this: but others, like a right to avoid self-incrimination, are. Various normative features will overlay the structure of inquiries in all sorts of interesting ways. Whether they come to override the rights we have as inquirers will be an all-things-considered matter.

### 2.2.1 Wither *Zetetic* Rights?

Are these distinctively zetetic rights? After all, wouldn't agents face pressures to support the Epistemic Contributions of those in other cooperative activities generally? So, to do all the work to which zetetic rights are put, might we just postulate a general right to contribute epistemically and practically when involved in any group activity?

I think we can preserve a meaningful sense in which these rights are distinctively *zetetic*. What renders these rights distinctively zetetic is the unique tie between the aim of group inquiry on the one hand, and Epistemic Contribution on the other. Because group inquiry qua activity-type is uniquely interested in securing epistemic goods, the very activity itself plays a distinctive role in the exercise of Epistemic Contribution. The products of group inquiry stand to be added to our store of epistemic materials in a way built houses and danced tangos do not. Thus, those contributions that are characteristic of group inquiry and which lead to its success garner additional importance. Those contributions help produce the very material which may be offered up as part of the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, where here the locus of agential contribution is the group (or at least the product arrived at by the group). Since, of course, in group inquiry the characteristic contributions bearing on success are *themselves* epistemic contributions, promoting the opportunity for their addition to the shared pool *itself* acquires additional import. Thus the promotion of Epistemic Contribution within group inquiry is uniquely important, because of the standing it bears on the production of epistemic material which itself can serve as the object of further exercises of Epistemic Contribution.

Of course, in other shared activities we offer up beliefs which help guide our tango dancing or house-building. What is distinctive here, however, is the way these beliefs and other zetetic inputs bear on the success of our securing a meaningful *epistemic* good in group inquiry. In tango-dancing, our evidence, judgments of its force, and proposals for how inquiry may proceed would play, at most, as important a role in our successful dance as do many other types of consideration. In group inquiry, these considerations are of unique import. They bear on our successfully answering our question in a way as does no other kind of agential contribution. They are inquiry's *characteristic currency* (D. C. Friedman, n.d.). They give content to what we must take seriously and in which regards we must support our co-inquirers (as discussed in note 10). Respecting the opportunity for the contribution of zetetic considerations, and thereby respecting the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, thus bears uniquely on our success as inquirers, and our ability to secure epistemic goods ripe for contribution at the group level.

Moreover, on the interest-based account of rights employed, the strength of the interest is crucial in assessing whether it is sufficient to generate a right. My claim is that given the unique relationship between epistemic contributions in group inquiry, the aim of group inquiry itself, and its production of the epistemic material which features in exercises of Epistemic Contribution, it is plausible the interests group inquirers enjoy with respect to exercises of Epistemic Contribution are strengthened compared to such exercises in other species of joint activity. This is of course not a necessary claim. It may well be that there exist peculiar instances of other activity-types in which similar rights are generated. What renders the rights under discussion meaningfully *zetetic*, however, is that they are almost certainly generated *across* instances of group inquiries, in a way that isn't plausibly so for other activity-types in virtue of their distinguishing aims.

The most plausible candidate which might heighten such interests specifically is another socio-epistemic activity like testimony. If this is so, this occurs insofar as the activity-type in question is cooperative, aims at securing an epistemic good, and engages a practice like Epistemic Contribution. At that point, we might wonder whether we have started to understand the alternative activity-type simply as a species of group inquiry. Analysis of testimony and other socio-epistemic practices as forms of inquiring-together, however, are at best, speculative. Thus, I see no reason at present to doubt that the rights I discuss merit distinctive focus as *zetetic*.<sup>11</sup> With these *zetetic* rights on the table, we can now inquire further into the conditions of their violation.

### 3 From Zetetic Rights to Zetetic Wrongs

Zetetic rights help support the exercise of Epistemic Contribution, an interest especially germane to group inquiry and possessed by group inquirers. Under which conditions are these rights violated?

Violations of **Right to Zetetic Aid** and **Right to Avoid Impediment** seem straightforward. They will involve cases where help is not offered, or experiments thwarted for clearly irrelevant reasons: a perceived shrillness in voice or a dislike of an alma mater.

Genuine violations of **Right to Zetetic Influence**, however, may be less clear. Fricker notes that one's ability to contribute epistemically will be infringed upon unjustly if frustrated for 'epistemically irrelevant factors'. Just which factors are epistemically irrelevant is difficult to determine (Cohen, 2016), especially given recent debate over how to taxonomize 'zetetic norms' (D. C. Friedman, 2024; J. Friedman, 2020; Thorstad, 2021). Fortunately, some cases, like **CRISPR** are straightforward. Or, for example, a case in which all students

---

<sup>11</sup>Of course, the objector may retort that I should feel free to label them *zetetic*, but what I describe is at bottom more general. At that point, I think debate will have become merely terminological. So long as attention is directed to cases of group inquiry, the rights which inhere within them, and not generally in other shared activities, important theoretical progress is made. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for helpful discussion on this point.

of a well-regarded mentor are not taken seriously because of personal animus.

But, **Right to Zetetic Influence** involves influence over inquiry, and such influence (and inquiry) can involve what are not clearly epistemic considerations. For example, it seems like something goes wrong when I'm, other things equal, not given a say in assessing the costs/benefits of two different machines we may use for a certain experimental method. Considerations of cost and resource allocation are not clearly epistemic, but it does seem like when inquiring-together, I expect and in some sense should have an opportunity to influence how things go in this important practical part of *our* inquiry. Which practical factors are legitimate in discounting exertion of influence within our group inquiry? None, I claim. Or at least none if not antecedently specified.

When we work together, we do so in part because we expect a say in how we proceed. How and when this is so is often mediated by a division of labor, or an institutional hierarchy. Nevertheless, in virtue of sharing our agency (as opposed to being coerced) we are entitled to a say in how things proceed—a say we may not always exercise. When we inquire-together, we engender a distinctive, uniquely cooperative, epistemic and practical context. Why we choose to pursue questions together, in this intimate way, is an important question in its own right. Plausibly, it is because we expect both that we can benefit from the wisdom of others, and because we recognize we can garner this benefit without abdication of our agency. Of course, exercising influence does not require winning the day, but merely having a say. Preventions of exerting influence here would involve the silencing of inquirers, ignoring their contributions, or eliding their meaningful opportunity to contribute.

Violations of **Right to Zetetic Influence** can be understood accordingly. Even if we can make progress in parsing out which factors are epistemically irrelevant or not, it is unclear that they would legitimate infringement upon **Right to Zetetic Influence**. It would be antithetical to this unique cooperative context of inquiring-together to silence, ignore, or elide a co-inquirer's meaningful contributions about how inquiry should go.<sup>12</sup>

It is important to note that this differs from the exercise of Epistemic Contribution generally. As Fricker argues, allowing for the exercise of Epistemic Contribution can't require I always take up what others offer:

‘The question of social uptake must be both context-sensitive and subject to a general standard of reasonable expectations. If someone randomly comes up to you and offers a view on some matter of no particular concern, other things equal, you are surely under no capability-preserving obligation to enable their epistemic functioning by engaging with their views. (In some contexts, it is surely all right not to engage with another's views for thoroughly non-epistemic reasons, such as that you find him extremely annoying, or you can't be bothered)’ (Fricker, 2015, p. 77).

---

<sup>12</sup>What if one's co-inquirers are saboteurs? In such a case, the sense in which we share our agency at all as inquirers is likely to disappear.

While this may be true generally, the context of inquiring-together is different. In our cooperative zetetic endeavor, we face special pressures to allow co-inquirers to contribute epistemically and practically, special pressures to enable their epistemic functioning (and avoid violating their inquiring rights) by engaging. There may be more to say about some factors which allow for the tentative suspension of **Right to Zetetic Influence** (impairment, for example). My claim is that there are no factors which legitimate more than its temporary infringement within group inquiry (though there may be all things considered reasons to violate a right, of course). This is because the uniquely cooperative context of inquiring together makes giving one another a say absolutely central to the activity.

This is a strong claim, and one not necessary for my argument to succeed. Accordingly, let me offer an off-ramp for the skeptical reader. All the argument I've offered needs is to think that no factors which are epistemically relevant or practically relevant justify the infringement of zetetic rights in cases like **CRISPR**. Readers should slot in their preferred account of which factors these might be, if any, in what follows. I take it that even without a precise accounting of which factors these might be, the intuition that none exist in cases like **CRISPR** is strong.

The conditions for violations of our zetetic rights are now somewhat clearer. These are also cases which I claim constitute zetetic wrongdoing. We can now better explain our initial example. In **CRISPR**, Emmanuelle is completely elided an opportunity to contribute at a crucial juncture of inquiry. Jennifer takes it that she and the post-doc have gotten the answer, and this is sufficient to settle their question and move on. Without taking a stand on what it takes to close a group inquiry, it is clear that Emmanuelle had her capability for Epistemic Contribution completely thwarted. She had no opportunity to offer up further epistemic contributions before Jennifer arrived at a resolute answer. Emmanuelle's opportunity for Epistemic Contribution is straightforwardly sidelined at a crucial juncture. Her opportunity to have a say is nonexistent. So, Jennifer has important zetetic rights, violated. She is zetetically wronged.

This verdict about **CRISPR** raises some questions.

### 3.1 Harmless Zetetic Wronging

Say Jennifer had, as it turns out, gotten things right. Alongside all the other interests inquirers like Emmanuelle possess, certainly, they possess an interest in getting the correct answer to their question. Does the satisfaction of this interest ameliorate the harm posed by the violation of their zetetic rights?

One way of reading the question concerns the possibility of 'harmless zetetic wrongdoing,' rights-violations which occur despite not generating the harms against which rights typically protect. The possibility of such harmless wrongdoing is a salient challenge for accounts of rights like the Interest Theory employed above, given the tight connection such a theory proposes between rights, correlative duties, and harms. Our initial intuition about **CRISPR** suggests that there is something improper in such cases, even if an interest-based theory of rights

has trouble explaining how this goes. So, at least for our initial verdict that something goes awry, this bodes well.

Still, if inquirers have an interest, as they certainly do, in knowing the answer to their question—why care if their zetetic rights are violated in the process? In general, of course, we don't think that rights-violations are justified (or even excused) because they satisfy another interest of ours. Violating my right to privacy isn't justified just because it means I can now take advantage of a great buy-one-get-one-deal. But, if our interest in getting knowledge, say, is so central to inquiring, even constitutive (Kelp, 2021), could its success legitimate violations of other zetetic rights?

To answer this question, consider a response to the challenge of harmless wrongdoing generally. In a modification to the Interest Theory of Rights, Joseph Bowen (2022) proposes the addition of a safety condition as follows:

**Interest Theory (Safety):** 'X has a right against Y that Y  $\phi$ , only if (and because) Y's not  $\phi$ -ing causes X to be worse off than she would have been in at least one close world, and the difference in X's wellbeing is of sufficient weight to place Y under a duty to  $\phi$ ' (Bowen, 2022, p. 37).

By bringing in close worlds, Bowen refocuses the Interest Theory to explain why cases of harmless wrongdoing still draw our intuitive ire. Our rights are such as 'to normatively ensure that people's wellbeing is robustly protected across circumstances that could easily come about' (Bowen, 2022, p. 33).

Bowen's solution to the challenge of harmless wrongdoing helps address our question. In normal cases for normal inquirers, it is likely at least one close world will involve the violation of zetetic rights and nevertheless a failure to secure knowledge. Indeed, it is rare that inquirers having their progress impeded, failing to receive adequate help, or having no opportunity to exert influence reliably leads to knowledge, across myriad ways the epistemic environment could be.<sup>13</sup> A more common scenario is that an individual is epistemically hubristic and unwilling (for all sorts of reasons) to give co-inquirers their due. Even if this gets things right in the one-off case, it will likely impede securing knowledge reliably, at least across circumstances with minimally competent co-inquirers.<sup>14</sup> In cases where this is so, i.e. an extremely epistemically vicious inquirer is ignored, it seems like alternative courses of action are available which need not constitute contravention of a right to **Right to Zetetic Influence** say.

Indeed, there is a familiar way to avoid violating any rights group inquirers possess while also keeping the epistemic aim in view. Namely, abandoning the joint venture of inquiring-together.<sup>15</sup> This is a common way in which we hold

---

<sup>13</sup>Indeed, across various possibilities, often our co-inquirers possess important evidence to which we are not privy. Such unpossessed evidence may constitute a normative defeater for our current epistemic status (Goldberg, 2018).

<sup>14</sup>Cases with experts are different—but we can accommodate how to proceed in a zetetic-rights respecting way with experts along the lines described in §2.2.

<sup>15</sup>Worry: does this thwart the right to contribute? Reply: No. In the same way any rights that are incurred within the context of a marriage are not violated simply by divorcing, here

inquirers to account (Kauppinen, 2018). When we come to learn a co-inquirer is irredeemably vicious, or inexperienced and unwilling to take a backseat, we often abandon our inquiring-together. By proceeding thus, we can avoid either sacrificing knowledge as our aim or failing to give our co-inquirers their due. So, for the objection here to succeed, we would need an argument to the effect that zetetic rights violations tightly correspond to securing epistemic goods across various possible scenarios. Without such an argument, we can provisionally conclude that securing epistemic goods doesn't get violators of zetetic rights off the hook. Zetetic rights violations can't be expected to be connected in modally robust fashion with achieving knowledge. In fact, plausibly, violating zetetic rights will likely come with significant epistemic costs. Moreover, an alternative path exists for keeping our epistemic aim in view while respecting zetetic rights.

### 3.2 Efficiency and Zetetic Wronging

Inquiries are often taken to be better to the extent they occur efficiently—no wasted zetetic efforts. Indeed, a central inquiring norm enjoins inquirers to take necessary means to their inquiries:

**Zetetic Instrumental Principle (ZIP)**

If one wants to figure out Q?, then one ought to take the necessary means to figuring out Q? (J. Friedman, 2020, p. 503).

Plausibly, ideal inquiries don't just fulfill **ZIP**, but they involve taking necessary means that get to the truth expeditiously. As noted above, inquiries are sensitive to both epistemic and practical concerns. It is then unsurprising that part of our praise for inquirers like Rosalind Franklin stems from the creative and efficient way in which they came to secure knowledge (Steglich-petersen, 2024). This suggests:

**(ZIP\*)**

If one wants to figure out Q?, then one ought to take the necessary and **suitably efficient** means to figuring out Q?.

Yet, on the picture I've sketched, doesn't respecting zetetic rights contravene **ZIP\***? Including co-inquirers and offering them an opportunity to contribute could mean slowing things down, delaying epistemic progress. For example, what if Jennifer had conclusive evidence? Would she have to wait around to offer Emmanuelle an opportunity to contribute? Does avoiding zetetic wrongdoing really entail inquiring at glacial pace?

Furthermore, cases of unstructured group inquiry seem to pose a challenge. Consider, a group inquiry on the subway, trying to find which direction our destination is in. You see a sign and tell me, 'this is the way.' Have you wronged me?

---

too the rights engendered by the context fail to gain application when the ties constituting the context are dissolved.

Certainly not. In many cases of group inquiry, we have epistemic norms which help balance the trade-off between swift inquiry, between conclusive evidence, and the demands of what we owe our co-inquirers. Such norms will help specify when to check in, what constitutes sufficient evidence, and which considerations are out-of-bounds for how to proceed. From these, inquirers can rule out certain options or form certain conclusions, without thereby violating any zetetic rights or hemming and hawing. For example, it may be that in our inquiring-together as friends, I can be expected to check in only right before I think I've come to an answer. By contrast, in the lab, our weekly lab meetings constitute an opportunity for the exercise of **Right to Zetetic Influence**. In the subway example, it may be a prevailing understanding around here that visual confirmation constitutes genuinely conclusive evidence, and such conclusive evidence, in normal circumstances, obviates the need for explicit checking in before closing. These norms then do not undermine, but rather overlay the structure of our zetetic rights in group inquiry. They serve to facilitate the smooth functioning of group inquiry in real world cases while leaving room for the demands zetetic rights make of inquirers.

Compare norms about permissible information-gathering concerning a prospective romantic partner, with a right to privacy. Norms which permit gathering information about one's mode of employment and level of religious observance from a mutual friend help specify what one's right to privacy amounts to in the important activity of dating. Here too, epistemic norms about what counts as sufficient evidence and when help specify what **Right to Zetetic Influence** and other zetetic rights demand in group inquiry. Just as the former case need not involve violation of one's rights to privacy, neither must the latter involve violation of zetetic rights.

It is important to recognize, however, that salient norms are not always fully transparent, and may be context-specific. Figuring out a prospective partner's level of religious observance by hacking their phone is a violation of a right to privacy generally, but perhaps not in the relationship between two spies falling in love. What counts as conclusive evidence when I try to figure out where the bathroom is differs from conclusive evidence concerning the spin of a subatomic particle. Out of bounds considerations for 'further experimentation' may differ between group inquiry amongst artists versus a government panel. Moreover, details of our epistemic norms are often negotiated and even engendered in virtue of our epistemic collaborations. All this to say, while respect for zetetic rights need not mean group inquirers must hem and haw, it does mean they must be careful and attentive to avoid zetetic wronging. Epistemic norms help, but don't alleviate all burdens on inquirers. This is as it should be, inquiring-together properly requires care.

So, our initial verdict about **CRISPR** stands vindicated, Emmanuelle suffers a zetetic wrong in having her **Right to Zetetic Influence** violated. **CRISPR** is just one case, however. There are many others.



## 4 Room for Zetetic Wrongs?

In this section, I explore the pervasiveness of zetetic wronging.

On the view just defended, zetetic rights like **Right to Zetetic Influence** mandate a broadly inclusive ethos: offering a say, taking each other seriously (Dover, 2022). Of course, these features are not present in every group inquiry in which we participate. But our zetetic rights outline general conditions which tend towards epistemic relational equality. Respecting zetetic rights requires careful attention and care.

Unfortunately, in many cases, group inquiry does not proceed with appropriate care. As I'll now argue, we have reason to think cases of zetetic wronging are pervasive. To see this, compare zetetic wronging with other ubiquitous and pernicious features of the socio-epistemic landscape: instances of epistemic injustice. In particular, consider testimonial injustice (Fricker, 2007) and epistemic oppression (Dotson, 2014).

Testimonial injustice occurs when an agent suffers a prejudice-based credibility deficit and is overlooked as a knower.<sup>16</sup> Epistemic oppression occurs when circumstances 'unwarrantedly [hinder] one's ability to utilize persuasively collective epistemic resources in order to participate in knowledge production and, if required, the revision of those same resources' (Dotson, 2014, p. 119).

I will assume, along with much of the literature, that both of these phenomena are pervasive. I'll argue that their instances often overlap with instances of zetetic wronging, and accordingly that zetetic wronging is pervasive as well. This overlap claim does not entail that any one way of detailing pernicious socio-epistemic phenomena is explanatorily fundamental. Just as instances of domestic violence can receive fruitful theoretical treatment through overlapping but non-identical lenses of toxic masculinity, misogynistic sexual appropriation, and himpathy (Manne, 2017) so too do our cases admit of complementary analyses.

Start then with a paradigmatic case of testimonial injustice, Herbert Greenleaf's dismissal of Marge Sherwood concerning the murder of Dickie Greenleaf. Herbert ignores the evidence Marge offers and attributes her judgments of guilt to mere female intuition (Fricker, 2007). Such a case easily fits our analysis. It is natural to attribute to Herbert and Marge (along with other characters) participation in a group inquiry concerning the question 'who murdered Dickie?' Accordingly, it is natural to see Marge's rights qua co-inquirer (in particular **Right to Zetetic Influence**) as violated.

Cases of testimonial injustice more generally possess overlapping features with zetetic wrongs (especially as concern **Right to Zetetic Influence**). So long as such cases can be understood as group inquiries (and many can), they will involve the dismissal of uptake of epistemic inputs on the basis of prejudice, clearly not any kind of justifying factor, if any exist. Certainly, then, conditions for violation of **Right to Zetetic Influence** are present in many instances of testimonial injustice.

---

<sup>16</sup>In conversation, Fricker stresses this need not be identity-based prejudice, though such cases are the most widely discussed in the literature.

Similar considerations apply to epistemic oppression. Consider a variant of **CRISPR** in which Jennifer only involves male colleagues, or only colleagues from Berkeley in helping assess which experimental path to sequencing sgRNA should be pursued. In such a case, colleagues from Rutgers or Harvard, or female lab members are unable to help even attempt to give voice to the course knowledge-production should take. Their rights to zetetic influence are violated. They are victims of epistemic oppression, and zetetic wrongs.

If instances of zetetic wronging overlap frequently with other well-understood features of the socio-epistemic landscape, what does the present analysis add?

First, the present account further specifies the connection between epistemic injustice and inquiry. As Hookway (2010) argues, many varieties of epistemic injustice emerge within the bounds of inquiry. Hookway highlights the forms of epistemic injustice which cut against one's 'functioning as a participant in discussion, deliberation, and inquiry' (Hookway, 2010, p. 160). The present analysis details precisely just how one's functioning as a participant in inquiry can be impaired. Moreover, it details the contours of appropriate forms of attenuated contribution to inquiry and those which are inappropriate, those which constitute wronging. It does so by specifying, in a well-understood framework of rights, our central interests and normatively significant capabilities as inquirers.

Second, the frameworks of zetetic rights and wrongs differs from canonical formulations of key species of epistemic injustice, even the more capacious framework developed by Hookway (2010). On the accounts discussed thus far, epistemic injustice often (though not always) occurs because of evidence-resistant stereotyping affecting judgments (even if unintentional). Here, however, zetetic wronging can occur simply by failing to leave room for an inquirer to contribute. This can occur despite the lack of any prejudice or stereotyping. Merely failing to properly attend to the possibility of co-inquirers wanting to contribute can be enough to wrong them.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, zetetic rights have a positive dimension: the **Right to Zetetic Aid**. This goes beyond simply avoiding unwarranted hindering, beyond merely staying out of one's way. Rather, justice in inquiry here demands actively seeking out opportunities for and cultivating an environment which enables the exercise of Epistemic Contribution. Indeed, to whichever extent positive duties are demanded in response to forms of epistemic injustice discussed, their demands may cut across what zetetic rights call for. For example, combating irreducible epistemic oppression may require 'recognition of the limits of one's overall epistemological frameworks' (Dotson, 2014, p. 116). While laudable, this does not seem to require seeking out and supporting the direct zetetic contributions of one's fellows. Accordingly, getting zetetic rights in view may help identify a distinct and important positive dimension of epistemic justice's demands.

These differences give us some initial reason for concluding that that cases of zetetic wronging, despite overlapping, will differ in their extension from various forms of epistemic injustice and oppression considered. This is important,

---

<sup>17</sup>See Miller-Larsen (n.d.) concerning the import of inattention in inquiry.

not because there is necessarily any privileged way to make sense of cases like **CRISPR**. Rather, by offering another framework in which to precisify the normative pressures salient in group inquiry, we can better understand what we are owed as co-inquirers, and thus identify where our co-inquirers have fallen short.<sup>18</sup>

**Tentative Conjecture:** natural ameliorative strategies for rectifying testimonial injustice and epistemic oppression are no guarantee for alleviating the threat of zetetic wronging. Consider a strategy to better avoid certain forms of testimonial injustice: various forms of diversity sensitivity training. Insofar as these trainings are meant to combat implicit (and explicit) stereotyping, they can help combat a driving cause of testimonial injustice. However, zetetic wronging can occur in ways which do not turn on prejudice; as noted above, even mere inattention is enough to violate one's zetetic rights. Accordingly, distinctive treatment is necessary to combat zetetic wronging.

The same goes for epistemic oppression. One natural ameliorative strategy is to lower the barriers for accessing epistemic resources which disproportionately affect already marginalized members of society: eliminating journal paywalls, or the residence requirements for library access, say. Such a strategy will help cases where zetetic wronging is coextensive with epistemic oppression, but many others will escape its grasp.<sup>19</sup> Eliminating journal paywalls does nothing to ensure an agent is given a voice as a member of inquiry. Library access does little to make sure resources *within* inquiry are distributed so that each can pursue promising experimental paths.

This seems the right result. Zetetic wronging captures agents at a different place in the social epistemic landscape. Inquirers who are wronged are not always those who possess epistemic goods they are unable to transmit, or those unwarrantedly hindered in accessing extant epistemic resources. Rather, they are inquirers who are wronged in the process of acquiring those goods, or helping construct those epistemic resources, in the first. Beyond theoretical adequacy, a picture of what epistemic justice demands must attend to zetetic wronging because efforts to ameliorate its harm may require distinctive treatment.

---

<sup>18</sup>Recently, epistemologists have suggested that agents can be wronged in virtue of what others believe about them. It is the very fact of an agent holding a belief with a certain content about one that wrongs them. This is due to belief's central role in 'in mediating, and thereby constituting, our relationships with one another' (Basu, 2021, p. 99). The presence of such 'doxastic wronging' is controversial (Enoch & Spectre, n.d.; Saint-Croix, 2022). What matters for us is simply the plausibility of the following conditional: if you include doxastic wrongs in your theorizing, you should leave additional room for zetetic harms. The reason why is because the harms which agents suffer in cases like **CRISPR** need not occur directly in virtue of any beliefs held about the agent (though they might). Jennifer might elide discussion with Emanuelle about the conclusion to their question and nevertheless wrong Emanuelle in her capacity as inquirer without this going directly by way of any belief. Of course, some zetetic wronging may end up being co-extensive with doxastic wronging but, they need not be and therein lies the difference.

<sup>19</sup>This is not to suggest that this is the only barrier epistemic oppression imposes, just a central one.

## 5 Conclusion

Group inquirers possess distinctive rights, qua group inquirer. These encompass at least part of what we are owed when we inquire together. These rights help enable and even constitute the exercise of a central human capability. Of course, how we structure and set out our inquiring-together can involve waiving elements of these rights or shifting to what their demands amount. Still, they are central in a ubiquitous form of epistemic cooperation: group inquiry. Furthermore, I've shown that these rights, when violated, lead to cases of genuine zetetic wronging. Turning our attention to the wronging possible in one of our central epistemic practices required understanding those practices as suffused with cooperation. On the picture of the epistemic critiqued in §1, it's hard to see how we could properly get zetetic wronging in view. This inadequacy suggests dispensing with an overly individualistic social epistemology, an overly transactional conception of epistemic injustices. Instead, I take the arguments above to favor an approach which puts cooperation in its rightful place: at the center of our lives as inquirers, ineliminable in our theorizing about the demands of epistemic justice.

**Stanford University, USA**

## References

- Anscombe, G. (1990). 'On the Source of the Authority of the State'. In J. Raz (Ed.), *Authority*. New York University Press.
- Archer, A. (2019). 'Agnosticism, Inquiry, and Unanswerable Questions'. *Disputatio*, 11(53): 63–88.
- Atkins, J. S. (2023). 'Do Your Homework! A Rights-Based Zetetic Account of Alleged Cases of Doxastic Wronging'. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*.
- Basu, R. (2021). 'A Tale of Two Doctrines'. In J. Lackey (Ed.), *Applied Epistemology* (pp. 99–118). Oxford University Press.
- Bowen, J. (2022). 'Robust Rights and Harmless Wronging'. In M. Timmons (Ed.), *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics Volume 12* (pp. 31–53). Oxford University Press.
- Bratman, M. E. (2014). *Shared Agency: A Planning Theory of Acting Together*. Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, S. (2016). 'Theorizing about the epistemic'. *Inquiry (United Kingdom)*, 59(7): 839–857.
- Croce, M. (2023). 'Epistemic Rights, Moral Rights, and The Abuse of Perceived Epistemic Authority'. *notizie di POLITEIA*, 39(149): 122–126.
- Dotson, K. (2014). 'Conceptualizing Epistemic Oppression'. *Social Epistemology*, 28(2): 115–138.
- Dover, D. (2022). 'The Conversational Self'. *Mind*, 131(521): 193–230.
- Enoch, D., & Spectre, L. (n.d.). 'There Is No Such Thing as Doxastic Wrongdoing'. *Philosophical Perspectives*.

- Falbo, A. (2022). ‘Inquiring Minds Want to Improve’. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 101(2): 298–312.
- Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic Injustice: Power & the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford University Press.
- Fricker, M. (2015). ‘Epistemic Contribution as a Central Human Capability’. In G. Hull (Ed.), *The Equal Society: Essays on Equality In Theory And Practice* (pp. 73–90). Lexington Books.
- Friedman, D. C. (2024). ‘Intentions and Inquiry’. *Mind*.
- Friedman, D. C. (n.d.). ‘Cooperation and Shared Inquiry’.
- Friedman, J. (2020). ‘The Epistemic and the Zetetic’. *The Philosophical Review*, 129(4): 501–536.
- Gilbert, M. P. (2015). ‘Joint Commitment: What it Is And Why It Matters’. *Phenomenology and Mind*, 9: 18–26.
- Goldberg, S. C. (2018). *To the Best of Our Knowledge: Social Expectations and Epistemic Normativity*. Oxford University Press.
- Habgood-Coote, J. (2022). ‘Group Inquiry’. *Erkenntnis*, 87: 1099–1123.
- Harman, G. (1986). *Change in View: Principles of Reasoning*. MIT Press.
- Hookway, C. (2010). ‘Some Varieties of Epistemic Injustice: Reflections on Fricker’. *Episteme*, 7(2): 151–163.
- Isaacson, W. (2021). *The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race*. Simon & Schuster.
- Kauppinen, A. (2018). ‘Epistemic norms and epistemic accountability’. *Philosophers Imprint*, 18(8).
- Kelp, C. (2021). ‘Theory of inquiry’. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 103(2): 359–384.
- Longino, H. E. (2022). ‘What’s Social about Social Epistemology?’ *Journal of Philosophy*, 119(4): 169–195.
- Manne, K. (2017). *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*. Oxford University Press.
- McGlynn, A. (2023). ‘Epistemic rights violations and epistemic injustice’. *Asian Journal of Philosophy*, 2(1): 29.
- McWilliams, E. C. (n.d.). ‘Hijacking Joint Inquiry’.
- Miller-Larsen, E. (n.d.). ‘Anti-Salience Structures: Perceptual, Moral, and Social’.
- Millson, J. A. (2020). ‘Seeking confirmation: A puzzle for norms of inquiry’. *Analysis*, 80(4): 683–693.
- Owens, D. (2012). *Shaping the Normative Landscape*. Oxford University Press.
- Palmira, M. (2020). ‘Inquiry and the doxastic attitudes’. *Synthese*, 97(11): 4947–4973.
- Pettigrew, R. (n.d.). ‘The value of information and the epistemology of inquiry’.
- Raz, J. (1984). ‘On the Nature of Rights’. *Mind*, 93(370): 194–214.
- Saint-Croix, C. (2022). ‘Rumination and Wronging: The Role of Attention in Epistemic Morality’. *Episteme*, 19(4): 491–514.
- Salomone-Sehr, J. (2022). ‘Cooperation: With or without Shared Intentions’. *Ethics*, 132(2): 414–444.
- Steglich-petersen, A. (2024). ‘An Instrumentalist Unification of Zetetic and Epistemic Reasons’. *Inquiry*, 67: 1–26.

- Thompson, J. J. (1992). *The Realm of Rights*. Harvard University Press.
- Thorstad, D. (2021). 'Inquiry and the epistemic'. *Philosophical Studies*, 178(9): 2913–2928.
- Watson, L. (2021). *The Right to Know: Epistemic Rights and Why We Need Them*. Routledge.