

HOW TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN EXPERTS AND FRAUDS: SOME PROBLEMS FOR SOCRATIC PEIRASTIC

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I. THE PROBLEMS

THROUGHOUT Plato's early dialogues, Socrates tests for moral knowledge while at the same time claiming that he has none of his own.¹ In the *Laches*, for example, Socrates is approached as a moral expert (*L.* 180b-c), but he denies that he is one (*L.* 186c). But Laches and Nicias, no doubt believing that they are moral experts, have spoken confidently about the moral value of military training (*L.* 186d). The problem is that they offer conflicting advice, and so, at least one of them must be wrong. To determine whether either is a genuine moral expert, Socrates recommends that he test their claims to expertise through cross-examination (*L.* 189d).

It has often been noted that Socratic cross-examination is problematic as a method of inquiry, i.e., as a method for *acquiring* knowledge: there is, as Gregory Vlastos puts it, a problem with the elenchus.² Rarely has it been noticed that there are problems with cross-examination when used for the purposes of *testing* for knowledge³--problems that we might call "problems for Socratic peirastic."⁴ They are created by certain remarks that Socrates makes in the *Charmides* during the course of examining Critias' hypothesis that self-control (*sôphrosunê*) implies "knowledge of knowledge" (*epistêmê epistêmês*) (*Ch.* 166c).⁵

The first problem is this. Critias suggests that the person with "knowledge of knowledge" knows what he knows and what he does not know, and will be able to identify knowledge and ignorance in others (*Ch.* 167a). Socrates raises some general doubts about the possibility of "knowledge of knowledge" (*Ch.* 167b-169b), but he concedes that these doubts are not decisive (*Ch.* 169a-b). He is more confident that Critias is wrong to suggest that "knowledge of knowledge" implies knowledge of the extent of one's knowledge (*Ch.* 170a). After some discussion, both Socrates and Critias agree that the person who has only "knowledge of knowledge" "will not be able to discriminate (*diakrinein*) between the man who pretends to be a doctor, but isn't, and the man who really and truly is one, or indeed any other of those who know from any other of those who don't" (*Ch.* 170e1-3).

If one is to be in a position to “discriminate between the doctor who knows what is covered by his discipline (*ta tês technês*) and one who does not, but pretends he does or thinks he does” (*Ch.* 171c5-7), then one must have mastered the medical discipline—one must be “*homotechnos*,” a fellow-expert (*Ch.* 171c8). In short, in the *Charmides*, Socrates seems to commit himself to the following principle about the conditions one must meet in order to have the ability to discriminate between those who know and those who do not know the subject matter covered by a discipline, a principle to be called here the “*technê* requirement on discrimination:”

TD: In order to discriminate (*diakrinein*) between the person who knows and the person who does not know the subject matter covered by a particular discipline (*technê*), one must have mastered that discipline.

On the face of it, *TD* seems incompatible with many of Socrates’ descriptions of the function and results of his peirastic cross-examinations. For if Socrates’ disavowals of moral expertise are sincere, it would seem to follow from *TD* that, contrary to what Socrates says in many early dialogues, he cannot successfully test claims to moral expertise through peirastic cross-examination.⁶

There are different ways that we might try to explain the seeming inconsistency of Socrates’ remarks in the *Charmides* and those in other early dialogues. For example, we could attribute it to a change in Plato’s view about the efficacy of Socratic peirastic. Richard McKim suggests that, in the *Charmides*, Plato is seeking to reveal the methodological limitations of Socratic peirastic and “to instill in us a share of his own felt need for a different method of dialectic with the power to succeed where Socrates had failed.”⁷ The problem with this suggestion is that, in dialogues later than the *Charmides*, Socrates continues to apply the method of peirastic that we find in the early dialogues. For example, in the *Meno*, Socrates, although lacking knowledge of virtue, indicates that his cross-examination of Meno has revealed that Meno also does not have knowledge of virtue (*M.* 80c-d; see also 84a-b).⁸ Socrates’ use of cross-examination in the first part of the *Theaetetus* serves as another example of Socrates’ use of peirastic cross-examination in later dialogues. Alternatively, we might follow Charles Kahn and explain the apparent discrepancy between *TD* and Socrates’ remarks about peirastic in other earlier dialogues, not by attributing to Plato any doubts about the efficacy of Socratic peirastic, but rather by denying the earnestness of Socrates’ claims that he is not a moral expert.⁹ If Socrates were a moral expert, then he would satisfy the condition he articulates in the *Charmides* for being able to discriminate between moral experts and moral non-experts (*TD*), and this particular problem of peirastic would dissolve. However, it is difficult to dismiss all of Socrates’ frequent disclaimers of moral expertise as insincere or ironic.¹⁰

If Plato never disputes the efficacy of Socratic peirastic and if Socrates’ disavowals of moral expertise are to be taken at face value throughout the

dialogues, then we might attempt to resolve the puzzle by denying that Socrates is in fact committed to *TD* in the *Charmides*. Perhaps he is simply testing Critias' expertise when he articulates *TD*, by seeing whether Critias will accept propositions that conflict with his own thesis, propositions that Socrates does not himself accept. When Socrates is engaged in peirastic, he often remains neutral on the truth-value of the theses to which his interlocutor commits himself,¹¹ and so, one might think, Socrates does not necessarily endorse *TD*. The obstacle to adopting this solution is the fact that Socrates seems not to be merely testing Critias' claim to wisdom at this point in the dialogue. Critias' first account of self-control, which he had claimed to know (*Ch.* 162d), was already tested and shown to be inconsistent with his own views (*Ch.* 164c). In response, Critias agrees to retract this account: "I'm not ashamed to say that I was wrong" (*Ch.* 164d1-2). Throughout the rest of the dialogue (and even before), Socrates represents their conversation as an investigation into the way things are.¹² If Socrates were to reject Critias' account of self-control simply because it is inconsistent with a principle that Socrates himself does not accept, then he would be blocking his own progress toward his stated goal of gaining insight into the way things are.

There is an alternative solution to this problem with Socratic peirastic. It is clear that Socrates is represented in the early dialogues as having the ability through peirastic cross-examination to identify¹³ at least some people who lack moral knowledge. But this representation of Socrates' peirastic abilities, by itself, is not in conflict with *TD*. For *TD* does not state that one must be an expert in a given discipline in order to have the ability to *identify* a person who lacks knowledge of a fact covered by that discipline; rather it states that one must be an expert in a given discipline in order to have the ability to *discriminate* between the person who knows and the person who does not know the subject matter covered by that discipline. To have the ability to discriminate between these sorts of people, one must be able to identify all instances of both sorts.¹⁴ Socrates never claims to be able to identify every one of his interlocutors who lacks moral knowledge; nor does he claim to be able to identify any person who possesses moral knowledge.¹⁵

The distinction drawn here between the ability to discriminate between Xs and Ys and the ability to identify some Xs as Xs does not eliminate all difficulties for Socrates' claims in the early dialogues about the results of peirastic. The discussion in the *Charmides* presents a second problem for Socratic peirastic. Some scholars have assumed that, if one has the ability to identify any X as an X, then one knows that this X is an X when one considers it.¹⁶ But again in the *Charmides*, Socrates enunciates a principle which, in combination with this common assumption, implies that, as long as Socrates is not a moral expert, he cannot identify *any* person who lacks moral knowledge. Call this principle the "*technê* requirement on knowing what someone knows or does not know:"

TKW: In order to know what a person either knows or does not know, one must have mastered the discipline (*techné*) that covers the subject matter that the person claims either to know or not to know. (See *Ch.* 170b-d.)

Since Socrates denies that he is a moral expert, it follows from *TKW* that he cannot legitimately claim to *know* that anyone either possesses or lacks moral knowledge.¹⁷ We can, however, reconcile *TKW* with Socrates' ability to identify certain people who lack moral knowledge if we deny that the ability to identify an X as an X implies that one *knows* that the X is an X upon consideration of it. Since Socrates does not claim to *know* that any of his interlocutors lacks knowledge,¹⁸ his claims about the results of peirastic cross-examination do not conflict with any of the principles he articulates in the *Charmides*.

This distinction between the conditions on the ability to identify certain Xs as Xs and the conditions on gaining knowledge that the Xs one considers are Xs helps us to explain a passage that, at first sight, might seem to pose a third problem for Socratic peirastic. At *Ch.* 170d5-7, Socrates says that the person with only "knowledge of knowledge" will not be able "to examine (*exetazei*) someone who claims he knows something, whether or not he knows what he says he knows." Since Socrates does not even have "knowledge of knowledge," one might think that this statement implies that he cannot even examine an interlocutor who claims to possess knowledge of something and *identify* him as someone who lacks this knowledge. If this were right, then this statement would imply a clear rejection of the views Socrates expresses in earlier dialogues about the function and results of his peirastic cross-examinations. However, we should understand Socrates' claim only in light of the sentence that follows it: "Rather (*alla*) it seems that [the person with "knowledge of knowledge"] will *know* only so much—that [the examinee] knows something, but ["knowledge of knowledge"] will not make him know what it is knowledge of" (*Ch.* 170d7-9; emphasis added). In order for Socrates to be drawing a genuine opposition in this second sentence (as he certainly intends to do with a sentence beginning "*alla*"), we must understand his claim in the preceding sentence to be about the limited scope of the *knowledge* of the person with only "knowledge of knowledge." That is, we should understand him as claiming that the person with only "knowledge of knowledge" cannot examine someone who claims to know something and, as a result, gain *knowledge* whether or not the examinee knows what he says he knows. Since Socrates does not suggest that he *knows* whether his interlocutor possesses or lacks knowledge,¹⁹ his claim at *Ch.* 170d7-9 is not inconsistent with anything that he says about the function and results of his peirastic cross-examinations, and thus poses no additional problem for Socratic peirastic.

The solutions to the two problems for Socratic peirastic identified here depend on two distinctions--(a) between the conditions on the ability to *discriminate* between Xs and Ys and the conditions on the ability to *identify* certain Xs, and (b) between the conditions on the ability to *identify* certain

Xs as Xs and the conditions on gaining *knowledge* that the Xs that one identifies as Xs are indeed Xs. Of course, the plausibility of these solutions depends on our having some independent reason to attribute these distinctions to Socrates. For at least initially, it is unclear why Socrates would believe that the ability to *discriminate* between those who possess moral knowledge and those who lack it requires moral expertise, even though the ability to *identify* certain people who lack moral knowledge does not. Further, it is surprising that Socrates feels confident that he has *identified* certain people who lack moral knowledge (see *Ap.* 23b, 33b-c), while at the same time believing that he does not *know* who lacks moral knowledge.²⁰

A close examination of Socrates' practice of peirastic cross-examination and of the conditions that he places on knowledge will show that he does indeed make these distinctions, and that he does so for good reason.

II. THE NATURE OF SOCRATIC PEIRASTIC

There are three sorts of peirastic cross-examinations found in the early dialogues.

(1) The simplest is found in the *Hippias Minor*. After Hippias has completed a lecture on poetry (*HMi.* 363c), Socrates is invited to ask him some questions. Hippias' boast that he can answer any question (*HMi.* 363d) amazes Socrates: "What blessedness, Hippias, to enter the temple at every Olympic festival with such confidence about the wisdom (*sophian*) in your soul!" (*HMi.* 364a1-3). Hippias replies that it is true that he is wise, and to support his claim, he notes that he has never been beaten in any competition he has entered (*HMi.* 364a). Here, as elsewhere, Socrates responds to such epistemic braggadocio with a peirastic cross-examination.²¹

Socrates begins by asking Hippias how he distinguishes Achilles and Odysseus (*HMi.* 364c). Hippias replies that Achilles is better than Odysseus because the former is true and the latter is false (*HMi.* 364e-365b).²² However, a few questions later, Hippias contradicts his assumption that being true and being false are attributes of different sorts of people (*HMi.* 367c-d, 369b). When Socrates argues that even Homer represented Achilles as false (*HMi.* 369e-370e), Hippias attempts once again to prove that Achilles is superior to Odysseus, this time by claiming that Achilles' false statements, as opposed to Odysseus', are not voluntary (*HMi.* 370e). But after further questioning from Socrates, they are both drawn to the conclusion that those who do wrong voluntarily are better than those who do wrong involuntarily (*HMi.* 372d-e, 376b). If speaking falsely counts as wrong-doing, then Hippias has again found himself contradicting his thesis that Achilles is better than Hippias. Socrates remarks that, while such inconsistency of beliefs is to be expected from those like himself who are ignorant (*HMi.* 372d-e, 376c), it is a terrible condition for those like Hippias who claim wisdom (*HMi.* 376c).

(2) In most early dialogues in which he is testing for moral knowledge, Socrates seeks to determine not only, as in the *Hippias Minor*, whether his interlocutors have reason to doubt the propositions that they claim to know, but also whether they have adequate positive reason for believing them. In the *Laches*, Laches agrees with Socrates that the person with knowledge of the best way of acquiring hearing or sight must know "what sight is, or what hearing is" (*L.* 190a6-7). Correspondingly, Socrates suggests that, in order to know how to acquire virtue, one must have knowledge (*to eidenai*) of what virtue is (*L.* 190b-c); and if one knows what virtue is, one can say what it is (*L.* 190c). So in order to test whether Laches or Nicias has knowledge of the moral value of military training, each of them will attempt to give an account of the nature of bravery—that "part of virtue" which military training concerns (*L.* 190c-e).

Socrates' "What is F-ness?" question plays an important role in other peirastic cross-examinations (*Eu.* 4a-5d; and *HMa.* 286a-e).²³ After his interlocutor offers an account of F-ness, Socrates asks questions of different sorts. He seeks to determine whether his interlocutor's account of the nature of F-ness is one that covers all and only the things that his interlocutor believes to be F,²⁴ covers all and only those low-level types that the interlocutor believes to be low-level types of F-ness,²⁵ does not cover any property that the interlocutor believes not to be identical to F-ness,²⁶ and implies that F-ness has all and only the features that the interlocutor believes that it has.²⁷ While Socrates places strict constraints on the internal coherence of a knower's beliefs, the conformity of a knower's beliefs with the beliefs of others seems not to matter at all.²⁸

(3) In the *Ion*, we find a very different sort of peirastic cross-examination. Socrates' interlocutor, Ion, has just taken first prize in a competition of rhapsodes in Epidaurus (*Io.* 530a-b). To be a good rhapsode, Socrates suggests, one must be able to interpret the thought of a poet, and one could not do this well if one did not know (*gignôskonta*) what the poet is talking about (*Io.* 530c). Ion agrees with Socrates' assessment of the epistemic basis of his interpretive skill: "You are right, Socrates . . . and I believe that I talk about Homer better than any other person" (*Io.* 530c). Although Ion is easily persuaded that his skills in recitation are the result of a mad possession received through divine dispensation (*Io.* 535a-536d), he insists that his ability to praise Homer is the result of knowledge of what Homer talks about (*Io.* 536e). Since Homer talks about so many things, it would be an overwhelming task for Socrates to test individually Ion's knowledge of each of the propositions that he claims to know. Instead Socrates asks Ion whether, in the case of some of the types of things that Homer talks about, he meets certain constraints on knowledge.

For example, Socrates asks Ion whether a charioteer or a doctor will know whether Homer's descriptions of how to race a chariot are true. Ion concedes that the charioteer alone will know this, and he will have this knowledge in virtue of having mastered the discipline of chariot-driving

(*Io.* 537c). After further questions, Ion also concedes that the mastery of different disciplines confers knowledge of different sorts of things and that, without having mastered a given discipline, one cannot possess knowledge of the propositions and deeds (*ta legomena ê ta prattomena*) that lie within its province (*Io.* 538a). With these concessions made, it is easy for Socrates to convince Ion that he does not possess knowledge of much of what Homer is talking about; for Homer describes propositions and deeds covered by disciplines that Ion admits that he has not mastered (*Io.* 538b). Ion makes a last ditch effort to preserve at least part of his knowledge claim, and declares that he has mastered the discipline of being a general (*Io.* 540e). Indeed, at Socrates' prodding, he goes so far as to claim that he is the best general among the Greeks (*Io.* 541b). Since it is clear that even Ion does not believe his own boast, Socrates does not bother to test his claim to military expertise; instead, he attempts to expose Ion's insincerity. He asks Ion why, if this is true, he does not offer his services as a general. When Ion offers lame excuses, Socrates reveals them as such (*Io.* 541c-d).

Our examination of the three types of Socratic peirastic will provide us with some clues about the conception of knowledge that is implicit in the early dialogues. Armed with this information, we will be in a better position to see why Socrates believes that, through peirastic cross-examination, he can neither discriminate between moral experts and moral frauds nor can he gain knowledge that anyone possesses, or that anyone lacks, moral knowledge. Familiarity with Socrates' conception of knowledge will also help us to understand how Socrates can hold these views about the limitations of his ability to test for knowledge even though, as we saw above, he clearly believes that he can identify certain interlocutors who lack moral knowledge.

III. A FEW CLUES ABOUT SOCRATIC KNOWLEDGE

This is not the place to embark on an exhaustive investigation into the conception of knowledge implicit in Plato's early dialogues. It is nonetheless possible to notice various pieces of evidence.

When Socrates questions others in order to determine whether they have moral knowledge, he insists that they answer according to their beliefs.²⁹ It would seem, then, that Socrates believes that a necessary condition on knowing that *P* is that one believe that *P*. He also assumes that a proposition that is known is true (*Eu.* 5b; *G.* 454d-e). Having a true belief is not, however, sufficient for possessing knowledge (*G.* 454d-e, 509a). A person who has "mere" true belief that *P* may not survive a peirastic cross-examination. So there must be another factor, besides its being believed and true, which is necessary for a proposition to count as known, and whose absence, at least, can be detected by peirastic cross-examination.

When Socrates is testing for moral knowledge, he appears primarily concerned to establish that his interlocutor's belief is adequately supported

by a sufficiently comprehensive and coherent body of beliefs. In the *Hippias Minor*, Socrates puts into question Hippias' claim to know that *P* by showing him that *P* conflicts with other beliefs that he holds. Therefore, Socrates seems to put some sort of consistency requirement on knowledge of a least a certain class of propositions:³⁰

A Consistency Requirement: In order to have knowledge that *P* (for some class of *Ps*), one's belief that *P* must be consistent with at least a certain class of one's other beliefs.³¹

At this point, it is not clear whether Socrates would deny his interlocutor knowledge of *P* if *P* is inconsistent with *any* of his interlocutor's beliefs. Socrates' practice of peirastic cross-examination does not rule out the possibility that some sorts of inconsistencies of beliefs do not matter, and, as we will see below, a solution to our problems with Socratic peirastic will require us to discover some principled ground for restricting the range of inconsistencies of beliefs that can threaten a claim to knowledge.

When Socrates is testing his interlocutor's claim to moral knowledge, he is particularly interested in the content of his interlocutor's beliefs about certain universals. He often appeals to instances of the following principle--sometimes called the "Principle of the Priority of Definition:"

PPD: In order to know certain propositions concerning F-ness, one must *know* the nature of F-ness.³²

The suggestion that Socrates is, in fact, committed to this principle in the early dialogues has been disputed.³³ But if Socrates does accept *PPD*, then we have a basis for an explanation of Socrates' strategy of questioning in several dialogues: if one cannot know certain propositions concerning F-ness unless one knows what F-ness itself is, then it makes sense that Socrates would attempt to discover through his questioning whether his interlocutor knows the nature of F-ness.

In the *Charmides*, Socrates and Critias agree that, if one has knowledge of knowledge, then one also has knowledge of the different sorts of knowledge, and knowledge of ignorance (*Ch.* 166c-e). The person with knowledge of the nature of a universal, they seem to assume, has knowledge of the low-level types of this universal and knowledge of suitably related universals. In the *Laches*, Socrates suggests that the person with knowledge of the universal also has knowledge of a wide range of instantiations of that universal. In particular, he suggests that knowledge of past occurrences of health is not distinct from knowledge of present occurrences of health, nor from knowledge of future occurrences of health. They are all parts of the same knowledge (*epistêmê*), medicine, whose concern is health in general (*L.* 198d-e). This suggests that at least in certain cases, for Socrates, the primary object of knowledge is a body of suitably related propositions, and that one is said to know a single proposition only by extension and in virtue of one's knowledge of the body of propositions which

includes it. Socrates' commitment to *PPD* and to the view that knowledge of at least some propositions comes in rather large packages of suitably related beliefs follows from, and is rendered more determinate by, his commitment to what we might call the "*technê* requirement on knowing the propositions and deeds covered by a *technê*:"

TKPD: One knows the propositions and deeds covered by a given discipline (*technê*) if and only if one has mastered that discipline. (See *Io.* 537-538a.)

The person who has mastered a discipline, in contrast to someone who has merely picked up a few true beliefs and skills covered by the discipline, has grasped all of the universals that are the subject matter of this discipline and can apply this information to gain knowledge of propositions and deeds of the relevant sorts.

Notice that *TKPD* does *not* say that, in order to know anything about, or know how to do anything with, the *objects* covered by a discipline, one has to have mastered the discipline. This would have the implausible implications that, in order to know that my shoes are in the closet, I would have to have mastered both cobblery and carpentry, and that, in order to know how to tie my shoes, I would have to have mastered cobblery. Disciplines are individuated by propositions and deeds rather than objects. Butchery, shearing, and biology can all concern sheep, but they concern themselves with different propositions and deeds involving sheep.³⁴ If *PPD* is based on *TKPD*, as it seems to be, then we should attribute to Socrates only the following restricted version of *PPD*:

A Restricted Version of "PPD": In order to know any proposition concerning F-ness that is covered by the discipline that covers the nature of F-ness, one must know the nature of F-ness.

IV. THE EPISTEMIC BASIS FOR "TKW"

Given the heavy demands that Socrates places on knowers of propositions and deeds covered by disciplines, it seems clear that, at least in many cases, Socrates could grant someone the ability to *identify* certain instances of a particular kind without insisting that this ability implies *knowledge* that the things that one identifies are of that kind. Socrates clearly believes that ethics is a discipline,³⁵ and so, he could count as having the ability to *identify* his interlocutor as someone who lacks moral knowledge, even if he did not *know* that his interlocutor lacks moral knowledge. Presumably, if he is to count as having identified his interlocutor as someone who lacks moral knowledge, Socrates' belief that his interlocutor lacks moral knowledge must be more than a lucky guess: Socrates must have *some* reason to hold this belief. But even without a mastery of the entire discipline of ethics, Socrates could have true beliefs about some of the constraints that exist on moral knowledge; and if he also had some justification for these beliefs, then he could reasonably claim to have the ability to identify, through peirastic cross-examination, certain interlocu-

tors who fail to meet these constraints. If the justification that he had for these beliefs was sufficient to support his confidence in their truth, but insufficient to render them instances of knowledge, then he could claim to have this ability without violating *TKW*, the principle that, in order to *know* what someone knows (or does not know), one must have mastered the discipline that covers the subject matter at issue.³⁶

Not only does the conception of knowledge implicit in the early dialogues provide the basis for a distinction between the conditions on the ability to identify certain Xs as Xs and the conditions on knowing that certain Xs that one identifies as Xs are indeed Xs, and thus for an explanation of how Socrates can consistently assert *TKW* and claim that, even though he lacks moral expertise, he has identified people who lack moral knowledge; in addition, this conception of knowledge provides the basis for an explanation of why Socrates is committed to *TKW* in the first place. If Socrates is to *know* what someone knows or does not know, when the subject matter at issue is covered by a discipline, then presumably he must know whether the subject matter at issue is or is not a possible object of knowledge. But the proposition that a particular subject matter is (or is not) a possible object of knowledge covered by a discipline seems to be a proposition covered by that discipline. But, according to *TKPD*, in order to have knowledge the propositions and deeds covered by a particular discipline, one must be a master of that discipline.

V. THE EPISTEMIC BASIS FOR "TD"

So far, we have seen how Socrates can deny that he has moral knowledge, claim to have identified certain people who lack moral knowledge, and not violate *TKW*. But it is not yet clear why Socrates is committed to *TD*, the principle that one cannot *discriminate* between those who know and those who do not know the subject matter covered by a particular discipline without having mastered this discipline. After all, the ability to discriminate between Xs and Ys seems to be simply a matter of the ability to identify all Xs as Xs and all Ys as Ys, and as we have seen, on Socrates' view, the ability to identify certain Xs as Xs does not necessarily imply any sort of knowledge.

The explanation of Socrates' commitment to *TD* rests on the following two observations. First, although it is true that, in some cases, the ability to identify an X as an X does not require much cognitive sophistication, in the case of some Ys, the criteria for identifying them as Ys may be so complex that, in order to count as having the ability to identify even a single Y, one must have the sort of cognitive sophistication that qualifies one as a master of some discipline. For example, one need not be a physician to have the ability to identify one's own heart palpitations; but medical expertise might be required to identify a single instance of myocardial infarction. Second, although it may be true, in a given case of Xs and Ys,

that for some particular X and for some particular Y, the ability to identify that X as an X and that Y as a Y requires minimal cognitive sophistication, if one had the ability to do this in the case of every X and every Y (as one must if one has the ability to discriminate between Xs and Ys), one would have accumulated the sort of cognitive sophistication that qualifies one as a master of some discipline. It is surely possible, for example, for a non-expert to distinguish some animals (horses) from some plants (trees). But it would take the expertise of a biologist to have the ability to distinguish every animal from every plant.

It will be argued that Socrates believes *TD* because, in order to discriminate between those who know, and those who do not know, the subject matter covered by a particular discipline, one must be able to determine in each instance whether a person has met all of the constraints on knowledge of that subject matter. But in the case of the consistency constraint that Socrates places on knowledge of this sort, it is impossible to determine whether *anyone* has met this constraint unless one has mastered the relevant discipline, and that, in the case of the truth constraint, if one had the ability to identify all people who have met, and all who have not met, this constraint, one would count as having mastered the relevant discipline.

In most of the peirastic cross-examinations that we find in the early dialogues, Socrates tests, among other things, the consistency of his interlocutor's moral beliefs. Although Socrates always discovers an inconsistency in his interlocutor's belief-set, it is not always obvious where an inconsistency in a belief-set lies. If Socrates would deny his interlocutor knowledge of some moral proposition *P*, if *P* is inconsistent with *any* of his interlocutor's beliefs—that is, if he endorses an unrestricted version of the consistency requirement—then it is conceivable that even a life-time of testing would fail to reveal the belief whose inconsistency with *P* threatens his interlocutor's claim to know that *P*. Socrates could not, in this case, reasonably believe that, through peirastic cross-examination, he can discriminate between those who possess and those who lack moral knowledge. But neither, it seems, could anyone else—moral experts included. Since Socrates wants to claim that experts *can* discriminate between fellow experts and non-experts, we have reason to attribute to him a restricted version of the consistency requirement.

The *technê* requirement on knowing propositions and deeds covered by a *technê* (*TKPD*) provides Socrates with some principle for restricting the consistency requirement. It is compatible with everything that Socrates says in the early dialogues that one could have mastered, for example, the discipline of agriculture, and so have agricultural knowledge, even though some of one's beliefs about the causes of wheat blight are inconsistent with some of one's half-baked ideas about the origins of the universe. It is possible, then, that Socrates' consistency requirement extends only to the body of beliefs that constitute a mastery of a discipline:

A Restricted Version of the Consistency Requirement: In order to have knowledge of a proposition *P* covered by a particular discipline, one's belief that *P* must be consistent with one's other beliefs which have as their content propositions covered by that same discipline.

If a discipline involves only a finite number of general truths and their implications, and if a master of a discipline has learned all of these general truths and many, though certainly not all, of their implications, then it should be possible, in principle, for the master of a discipline to determine whether her interlocutor has satisfied this restricted version of the consistency requirement. The moral expert, for example, will focus immediately on her interlocutor's most general moral beliefs when testing her interlocutor's moral beliefs for their consistency. Like Socrates, she will ask many questions of the form "What is F-ness?." She will then seek to determine whether her interlocutor has adequate awareness of the implications of his general moral beliefs. And like Socrates, she would do this by seeing how her interlocutor would respond to questions about particular cases. If her interlocutor seems shocked by the implications of his general moral beliefs, and, as a result, is tempted to reject these general beliefs, then surely he would not count as a moral expert. But if a moral expert has the ability to identify a fellow-expert, then it must not be necessary for her to determine whether her interlocutor accepts *all* of the infinitely many implications of his general moral beliefs, and so, it must be possible for someone to count as a moral expert, even though he or she does in fact maintain an anomalous false moral belief about a particular case. To allow the moral expert this sort of error does not seem overly permissive. Being anomalous, this belief would be rejected as soon as it was considered; or if it was so remote from conscious beliefs and experience that it was never again considered, then it could have no genuine cognitive impact, and thus should in no way threaten a claim to moral expertise. Since Socrates maintains that experts in a given area *can* discriminate between fellow-experts and frauds, he must put some sort of constraint on the consistency requirement. The particular restriction that have been suggested is consistent with the evidence that we have in the dialogues, and moreover, is independently plausible.

If all of this is right, then, even without a mastery of ethics, Socrates may have some true beliefs, for which he has limited justification,³⁷ about some sorts of inconsistencies of beliefs that threaten a claim to moral expertise. And even without a mastery of ethics, Socrates may have reason to believe that a good strategy for discovering these inconsistencies is to focus on his interlocutor's most general moral beliefs. Socrates would then be able to *identify* an interlocutor as morally ignorant, because, through peirastic cross-examination, he could identify inconsistencies of beliefs that threaten his interlocutor's claim to moral knowledge. But in order to have the ability to *discriminate* between moral experts and moral frauds, Socrates must also be able to identify an interlocutor who *has* met the restricted version of the consistency requirement. Given what is said

above, it would seem that, in order to have this ability, Socrates must have true beliefs about all of the sorts of inconsistencies of belief that would threaten a claim to moral expertise. This, in turn, would require true beliefs about the exact scope of ethics: at the very least, he must have true beliefs about the nature of each of the universals that the discipline of ethics covers. And furthermore, since the ability to identify an X as an X requires at least limited justification for using certain criteria to pick out Xs,³⁸ in order to have the ability to identify an interlocutor who *has* met the restricted version of the consistency requirement, he must have at least limited justification for each of his true beliefs about the nature of these universals. But Socrates might reasonably believe that, if he had such beliefs about the nature of *each* of the universals that the discipline of ethics covers, then he would have not merely limited justification for each of his true moral beliefs. Rather he would have accumulated as much justification for his moral beliefs as even he would require of a moral expert. With such completely justified true moral beliefs, he would surely have all of the cognitive attributes that he believes a moral expert should have. We can now see why Socrates might accept *TD*, the view that one cannot discriminate between those who know and those who do not know the subject matter covered by a particular discipline, without having mastered that discipline.

Because the particular restriction that has been put on Socrates' consistency requirement here is a bit speculative, it is fortunate that we have another reason to believe that *TD* follows from Socrates' basic conception of the conditions that exist on knowledge of the subject matter covered by a discipline. The limitations of the discriminating abilities of non-experts are particularly evident when one considers the truth condition that Socrates places on knowledge.

According to Vlastos, all "standard" rounds of Socratic cross-examination end with Socrates claiming that his interlocutor's thesis has been proved false and its negation true.³⁹ If this is right, then Socrates must believe that he can use peirastic cross-examination to determine whether his interlocutor meets the truth condition on knowledge. It would be surprising if Socrates believed that he can do this in every possible case, since a single round of peirastic cross-examination can reveal only the coherence of a small number of his interlocutor's beliefs. This, it would seem, shows nothing about the truth-value of these beliefs: it is conceivable that an interlocutor's belief is false even though it is supported by all of the interlocutor's other beliefs that Socrates has examined, and that an interlocutor's belief is true even though it is not supported by other examined beliefs. And, as a matter of fact, when Socrates is engaged in peirastic, he usually remains neutral concerning the truth-value of his interlocutor's answers, and does not claim that any particular proposition has been refuted during the course of the cross-examination. There are, however,

rare occasions on which Socrates does claim that his interlocutor's view has been shown to be false.⁴⁰ If, on these occasions, Socrates has some justification for believing that his interlocutor's claim is false, then he might reasonably believe that he is able to *identify* his interlocutor as someone who lacks knowledge of the account that he claims to know.

Without moral expertise, however, Socrates could not reasonably claim to have the ability to *discriminate* between those who have met, and those who have not met, the truth condition on moral knowledge. For as I suggested above, the ability to discriminate between Xs and Ys is equivalent to the ability to identify all Xs and all Ys. If Socrates were to count as having the ability to discriminate between those who have met the truth condition on moral knowledge and those who have not, then he would have to have true beliefs that entailed every proposition a moral expert must believe. Further, since the ability to identify an X as an X requires at least limited justification for using certain criteria for picking out Xs, in order to have the ability to identify all interlocutors who meet, and all interlocutors who fail to meet, the truth condition on knowledge, Socrates must have at least limited justification for believing each of the propositions that entail every proposition a moral expert must believe. But Socrates might reasonably think that, if he had all of these beliefs, then he would have accumulated as much justification for his moral beliefs as he could require of a moral expert. With completely justified true moral beliefs, he would qualify as a moral expert. Accordingly, only experts can discriminate between fellow experts and frauds.

VI. CONCLUSION

Given the constraints that Socrates places on knowledge, it is clear why he is committed to *TD*, the view that only a master of a discipline can discriminate between fellow experts and frauds. Only a master of a discipline can determine whether his interlocutor meets, or fails to meet, all of the conditions that Socrates puts on knowledge of the subject matter covered by that discipline. *TD* does not threaten Socrates' practice of peirastic because it does not conflict with the claim that, even without moral expertise, Socrates can *identify* some of those who lack moral knowledge. To the contrary, Socrates' practice of peirastic supports a particular conception of knowledge which, in turn, implies that *TD* is true. Socrates' practice of peirastic cross-examination is also not threatened by *TKW*, the *technê* requirement for knowing what someone knows or does not know; for, given the strict constraints that he places on knowers, it is reasonable for him to believe that, by means of peirastic, he can identify an interlocutor who lacks moral knowledge, without at the same time believing that he knows the epistemic status of his interlocutor's beliefs.

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Appendix: The Problem of the "Apology"

Although Socrates' explicit commitment to *TD* in the *Charmides* is supported by his practice of peirastic and by the conception of knowledge to which he is committed throughout the early dialogues, several remarks that he makes in the *Apology* appear not to cohere with this whole package of views.

First, Socrates says that he knows (*sunoida*) of himself that he is neither very wise nor a little wise (*Ap.* 21b4-5), and that he knew (*sunêidê*) of himself that he had no knowledge to speak of (*ouden epistamenô(i) hôs epos epein*) (*Ap.* 22d). According to *TKPD*, in order to have the sort of knowledge that he claims here, Socrates would have to have mastered epistemology. But, if Socrates has mastered epistemology, then surely he would count as at least a little wise.

Second, Socrates says that he expected that the artisans (*cheirotechnai*) would know many fine things (*polla kai kala epistamenous*), and he was not disappointed (*Ap.* 22d1-2): "they knew (*êpistanto*) things which I did not know (*ouk êpistamên*) and in this way were wiser (*sophôteroi*) than I" (*Ap.* 22d3-4). We saw above that, given Socrates' conception of knowledge, he could not establish that someone has met all of the conditions that he puts on knowledge of the subject matter covered by a discipline, unless he himself has mastered this discipline. It is for this reason that Socrates endorses *TD*. Yet here in the *Apology*, Socrates is declaring that he did establish, at least to his own satisfaction, that certain artisans knew what he did not know.

Third, on at least one occasion, Socrates asserts that he does have moral knowledge. He says: "To do injustice and disobey a superior, this I know (*oida*) to be evil and base" (*Ap.* 29b). Given *TKPD*, it is difficult to see how Socrates could have the knowledge that he claims here, without having the moral expertise that he disavows.

There are many ways that one might attempt to reconcile each of these passages with Socrates' commitment to *TD* and *TKPD*. The most tempting, it seems, is to attribute to Socrates a distinction between expert and non-expert knowledge.⁴¹ *TKPD*, one might argue, is a constraint on expert knowledge, but not on the sort of non-expert knowledge that Socrates claims when he speaks of the limits of his own knowledge and when he talks about what is base and evil. Correspondingly, one might say that Socrates is not attributing to the artisans expert knowledge, but only a weaker non-expert knowledge that laymen like himself can identify. For this reason, one might suggest, *TD*, which concerns only expert knowledge, does not apply to this case.

There are difficulties attributing to Socrates two different conceptions of knowledge. It would be tolerable, if we could say, for example, that the words "*sophia*" and "*epistêmê*" always refer to one sort of knowledge, and

words like “*sunoida*” and “*gnōsis*” always imply another sort.⁴² If we are attracted to the “two types of knowledge” hypothesis, we could presumably say that, in the passages in which Socrates claims knowledge of the limits of his knowledge and knowledge of the evil and baseness of certain actions, “*sunoida*” and “*sunēidē*” imply only non-expert knowledge, but that the “*sophia*” and “*epistēmē*” which he disavows imply expert knowledge. However, this suggestion is jeopardized by Socrates’ discussion of the knowledge of the artisans, in which Socrates uses “*epistēmē*” and its cognates to refer to what, on this hypothesis, must count as non-expert knowledge. Further, when Socrates commits himself to *PPD* and *TKPD*, requirements on what anyone should view as expert knowledge, he often uses the verbs “*gignōskein*” and “*eidenai*.”⁴³ If we were to endorse the “two types of knowledge” hypothesis, we would be forced to say that Socrates moves back and forth, without warning, between different senses of the same epistemic verbs, in places where precision would be, to say the least, helpful.

A much simpler explanation of the fact that Socrates makes claims in the *Apology* that seem to violate *TD* and *TKP* is that Plato does not represent Socrates as committed to these doctrines in the *Apology*. Because of the passage at *Ap.* 29b1, which is cited above, Richard Kraut concludes that, at the time that Plato wrote the *Apology*, he was not yet committed to any version of *PPD*. Since it is reasonable on other grounds to believe that the *Apology* is one of the earliest of Plato’s dialogues, Kraut argues, it is possible that there is a break in doctrine between this earliest dialogue and those that follow it.⁴⁴ If Socrates is not committed to any version of *PPD* in the *Apology*, then he is certainly not committed to *TKPD*. And since *TKPD* is the epistemological doctrine that underlies Socrates’ commitment to *TD*, if he is not committed to *TKPD* in the *Apology*, he would have no reason to be committed to *TD*.⁴⁵

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NOTES

1. *Ap.* 21c-23b, 33b-c; *Eu.* 5a-c, 15c-16a; *Pr.* 314a-c; *La.* 186b-e, 200e; *HMa.* 286c-e, 304d-e.

2. Currently, the term “elenchus” (or “*elenchos*”) is used almost universally to refer to the Socratic method of cross-examination. Plato does not use it in this way; in fact, as Gregory Vlastos notes, “only in modern times has ‘elenchus’ become a proper name” (“The Socratic Elenchus,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* [OSAP], vol. 1 [1983], p. 28). The phrase “the problem of the Socratic elenchus” was coined by Vlastos to pick out a problem that he saw with Socratic cross-examination as a method of inquiry (*ibid.*, pp. 30, 49). I discuss this problem in “Recollection and ‘the Problem of the Socratic Elenchus’” *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquium in Ancient Philosophy* [BACAP], vol. 10 (1995), forthcoming.

3. The problem has been noticed and discussed by Richard McKim, “Socratic Self-Knowledge and ‘Knowledge of Knowledge’ in Plato’s *Charmides*,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 115 (1985), pp. 59-77, and by Charles Kahn, “Plato’s *Charmides* and the Proleptic Reading of Socratic Dialogues,” *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 85 (1988), pp. 541-49.

4. This follows Aristotle, who refers to cross-examinations used for the purposes of testing a claim to knowledge as "peirastic" (*SE* 169b23-25, 171b3-11, 172a21-26). There are other sorts of cross-examinations in the early dialogues, including cross-examinations used for the purposes of persuasion (mentioned at *Ap.* 30b, e, 31b5, 36c; *Cr.* 48e; *L.* 181d; *Pr.* 352e; *G.* 493c-d, 494a; *Eud.* 278d) and cross-examinations used for the purposes of inquiry (*Eu.* 6d, 7a, 9a; *Ch.* 161c, 162e, 166d, 175d; *L.* 194a-b; *Lys.* 212a-b; *HMi.* 369d; *Pr.* 384a, 360e-361a). Since Socrates' procedure is a bit different, depending on which immediate goal is within aim, it is important not to assume that claims that are true of one sort of cross-examination are also true of another. Since his immediate goals are different in different contexts, the problems that arise for one sort of cross-examination may not arise for others.

5. Critias' definition of self-control is knowledge of oneself (*Ch.* 164d). I do not think that Socrates and Critias illegitimately infer that knowledge of oneself is knowledge of itself, i.e., "knowledge of knowledge." Rather, it is possible that they both believe that, since knowledge is part of oneself, knowledge of oneself will require "knowledge of knowledge." The conversation then shifts to a consideration of the possibility of "knowledge of knowledge." I take it that "knowledge of knowledge" is knowledge of the nature of knowledge.

6. See McKim, pp. 70-71; and Kahn, p. 548.

7. McKim, p. 76.

8. For a discussion of the dating of the *Meno* relative to other dialogues, see R.S. Bluck, *Plato's Meno* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), pp. 108-20. Some have doubted that the method of cross-examination that we find in the early dialogues is applied *throughout* the *Meno*, but to my knowledge, no one has doubted that this method is applied in the first part of the *Meno* where Socrates examines Meno's claim to knowledge. See, e.g., Vlastos, "Socrates," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. 24 (1988), p. 101. Although Vlastos believes that the Socratic method is rejected in the middle dialogues and in the *Meno*, in particular, as a method of inquiry, he maintains that it is nonetheless preserved in these dialogues as a method for testing ("Socratic Elenchus," p. 32).

9. There are two versions of this solution which Kahn does not clearly distinguish: (1) Socrates is never earnest in his disavowals of knowledge (Kahn, p. 548), and (2) by the time that he wrote the *Charmides*, Plato discovers that, in order for Socrates to succeed in his peirastic mission, he must have the knowledge that he disavows in earlier dialogues (*ibid.*, n. 7).

10. T.H. Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 39-40. I agree with Richard Kraut that one should take Socrates' remarks at face value as long as it is possible to do so without attributing gross irrationality to him (see Kraut's "Reply to Clifford Orwin," in *Platonic Readings, Platonic Writings* [New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1988], pp. 178-79).

11. See the many examples cited by Michael C. Stokes in *Plato's Socratic Conversations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 1-36. I cannot, however, agree with Stokes' further claim that peirastic is the only sort of cross-examination that Socrates applies in the early dialogues (*ibid.*, pp. 28-29).

12. *Ch.* 162e, 165b, e, 166d, 169d, 175b. I do not mean to suggest that peirastic is incompatible with inquiry. If one discovers through inquiry that a proposition is false, then one *ipso facto* discovers that anyone claiming to know this proposition is mistaken. Further, through peirastic, one can explore other people's reasons for accepting their views and, depending on the cogency of these reasons, can gain insight into reality. My claim is that, if one is attempting to discover the truth, one does not dismiss a proposition as false, unless it conflicts with a proposition that one accepts as true.

13. When I speak of identification, I always have in mind accurate identification.

14. At least in ordinary contexts. I am ignoring the extraordinary and misleading contexts discussed in recent epistemological literature.

15. Cf. Paul Woodruff, who assumes that peirastic cross-examination can be used to identify and gain knowledge of the expert and the non-expert: "Socrates has a way of knowing whether or not one is an expert . . . Socrates' test for expertise is evidently cross-examination" ("Plato's Early Theory of Knowledge," in S. Everson, ed., *Companions to Ancient Thought 1: Epistemology* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990], p. 68).

16. This assumption is often made in the context of a discussion of Socrates' apparent commitment to a principle that I discuss in Section III below, the Principle of the Priority of Definition. See, e.g., P.T. Geach, "Plato's *Euthyphro*: An Analysis and Commentary," *Monist*, vol. 50 (1966), p. 372, and John Beversluis, "Does Socrates Commit the Socratic Fallacy?" *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 24 (1987), pp. 219-20. For an appeal to a "Geach-type criticism" to justify the assumption that Socratic peirastic must be based on some sort of knowledge, see Woodruff, "Expert Knowledge in the *Apology* and *Laches*," *Proceedings of BACAP*, vol. 2 (1987), pp. 91-92.

17. In the *Apology*, Socrates does violate TKW. I discuss this exception in the Appendix, below.

18. With the exception that I mentioned in the preceding note.

19. With the exception that I noted in n. **AUTHOR PLEASE PROVIDE**, above.

20. In the *Euthyphro* (4a-b), *Laches* (186d), *Hippias Major* (286c-e), and *Hippias Minor* (364a), Socrates seems to suggest to his interlocutors that epistemic confidence should be backed up by knowledge.

21. See, for example, *Io*. 530c-d; *Eu*. 4a-e; *HMa*. 286a; and *Pr*. 318a, 328b-c.

22. For a defense of the translation of *alêthês* and *pseudês* in this context as "true" and "false" rather than the more standard "honest" and "deceitful," see Vlastos, *Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher* [*SIMP*] (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 276-77.

23. Vlastos would object to my use of the *Hippias Major* here because he believes that the method that is applied by Socrates in this dialogue is different from that applied in earlier dialogues (Vlastos, "The Demise of the Elenchus in the *Euthydemus*, *Lysis*, and *Hippias Major*," appendix to "The Socratic Elenchus," pp. 57-58, "Socrates," pp. 100-2, and "Elenchus and Mathematics," in *SIMP*, pp. 107-31). I argue against the criteria that Vlastos uses for identifying the Socratic method in "Recollection and 'the Problem of the Socratic Elenchus'."

24. *La*. 192e-193c, 196d-197b.

25. *Eu*. 5d-6d; *La*. 190e-192b; *HMa*. 288c-e, 291d-293c.

26. *La*. 198a-198e.

27. *Eu*. 10b-d; *L*. 192c-d; *HMa*. 289e-291a.

28. See, e.g., *L*. 193c together with 194d and *Pr*. 350c; *L*. 196d-197b; and *HMa*. 288a-289d. Of course, if one discovers that two apparent experts have contrary beliefs (as in the *Laches*), then one learns that they cannot both be genuine experts. But Socrates' test for determining whether either is a genuine expert makes no essential appeal to the beliefs of anyone other than the person being tested.

29. This is what Vlastos has coined the "say what you believe" constraint ("Socratic Elenchus," p. 35).

30. I do not mean to suggest that Socrates is working with more than one conception of knowledge. Socrates seems to put a general justification requirement on all knowledge, but, for all of the evidence that we have observed here, this general requirement might have different implications for different sorts of propositions.

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31. At this point, it is not clear whether Socrates would deny his interlocutor knowledge of *P* if *P* is inconsistent with *any* of his interlocutor's beliefs. Socrates' practice of peirastic cross-examination does not rule out the possibility that some sorts of inconsistencies of beliefs do not matter. In fact, as we will see below, Socrates' practice provides the basis for a principled ground for distinguishing between those inconsistencies that threaten a claim to knowledge and those that do not.

32. *Eu.* 5d; *L.* 191c-d, 192b4-6; *Pr.* 312c; *G.* 474d, 503c-504a; *HMa.* 304d-e; *Lys.* 223b; *M.* 71a-b, 100b. At *Meno* 71b, Socrates explicitly states *PPD* in its full generality. *PPD* is generally thought to cover any fact whatsoever about *F*-ness (see Irwin, p. 41; and Hugh H. Benson, "The Priority of Definition and the Socratic Elenchus," *OSAP*, vol. 8 [1990], pp. 19-44), but I will suggest below a way to restrict it.

33. See Vlastos, "Socrates' Disavowal of Knowledge," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 35 (1985), pp. 20-26; Beversluis, pp. 211-33; and J.H. Lesher, "Socrates' Disavowal of Knowledge," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 25 (1987), pp. 282-85. For an extended and persuasive defense of attributing a version of this view to the Socrates of the early dialogues, see Benson, pp. 19-44.

34. Of course, the boundaries between disciplines are difficult to draw. In the early dialogues, Socrates seems to assume that it is nevertheless possible to do so. Plato's suggestion in the *Republic*, that the person with *epistêmê* has a "synoptic vision" of facts that are traditionally viewed as covered by many distinct disciplines, might reflect a growing skepticism about the possibility of drawing clean boundaries between disciplines (*R.* 537c).

35. See Irwin, p. 71.

36. If Socrates is to be consistent, he cannot believe that the possession of knowledge is the *only* ground for confidence in the truth of one's beliefs: he must believe that he can correctly identify people who lack knowledge, without believing that he *knows* that they lack it (see n. **AUTHOR PLEASE PROVIDE**, above). This suggestion is supported by other statements that Socrates makes in the early dialogues (see, e.g., *G.* 509a). Of course, the best ground for confidence is knowledge; and it is for this reason, I suggest, that Socrates sometimes asks his interlocutors whether their confidence is backed up by knowledge. But it appears that Socrates believes that one can have justification for one's beliefs that is sufficient for some degree of confidence, but not sufficient for knowledge. We might call such justification "limited justification" to distinguish it from the "complete" justification that Socrates believes is necessary for knowledge.

37. See the preceding note for the distinction between limited and complete justification.

38. I make this point above, p. **AUTHOR, PLEASE FURNISH PAGE #**.

39. Vlastos, "Socratic Elenchus," p. 39. Non-standard cross-examination has the same result, according to Vlastos, but it proceeds indirectly (*ibid.*).

40. See *G.* 479e and *R.* I 335e, 336a. Vlastos also cites *Pr.* 353b5-6, 357e1 and *Eu.* 9c7-8, 11a3, 15c1-2 as places where Socrates declares that a proposition has been shown to be false as a result of his cross-examination of his interlocutor ("Afterthoughts on the Socratic Elenchus," *OSAP*, vol. I (1983), p. 72, n. 6). However, Socrates makes no such claim at *Pr.* 353b5-6. The proposition that Socrates says that Protagoras knows at 357e1 is not one that Protagoras ever disputed; so its truth is not established through Socratic cross-examination. Similarly, at *Eu.* 9c7-8, the proposition that Socrates says has been shown to be false is not one that Euthyphro had ever questioned (see *Eu.* 6b-c, 7b-e). At *Eu.* 15c1-2, Socrates refers back to an earlier point in their discussion (*Eu.* 11a3) and declares that it was shown that piety is not the same as "the god-beloved." But to establish the falsity

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of this thesis, Socrates does not follow his ordinary peirastic procedure of revealing contradictions in the belief-set of his interlocutor. In particular, Socrates does not simply show Euthyphro that his answers to Socrates' questions conflicted with his account of piety as "the god-beloved." Rather, Socrates himself offered a complex argument for his view that Euthyphro's definition is false (*Eu.* 10e-11b).

41. So suggests Woodruff, "Plato's Early Theory of Knowledge," pp. 65-67. Vlastos uses a different version of this distinction between expert and non-expert knowledge ("Socrates' Disavowal of Knowledge," pp. 11-20).

42. Woodruff comes close to making this suggestion in "Plato's Early Theory of Knowledge," p. 66.

43. See the discussion of these passages in Section II, above.

44. Kraut, *Socrates and the State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 275-76.

45. Many thanks to Wade Evey and Alexander George for refusing to accept the simpler solutions that I offered in earlier drafts of this paper.