

## Requested changes for Hinchman, “Assertion and Testimony”

On page xi, in the line for ‘Edward S. Hinchman,’ change ‘University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee’ to ‘Florida State University’

On page 556, line 8, change ‘provides as assertion-based’ to ‘provides an assertion-based’

On page 560, line 28, change ‘How might proceeding’ to ‘How might S’s proceeding’

On page 560, line 33, again change ‘How might proceeding’ to ‘How might S’s proceeding’

On page 561, line 4, change ‘she does aim to get him to rely’ to ‘she does intend that he may rely’

On page 561, line 7, change ‘agency: he’ to ‘agency: that he’

On page 561, line 17, change ‘by virtue of possessing that intention’ to ‘by virtue of acting on that intention’

On page 562, line 38, change ‘when you promise’ to ‘when you appear to promise’

On page 562, bottom line, change ‘that he should not trust you in the present instance’ to ‘that in the present instance he should *not* trust you’

On page 563, line 13, change ‘simple; if’ to ‘simple. If’

On page 566, line 2, change ‘way.’ to ‘way. In Section 6, I’ll develop a version of the second alternative.’

On page 566, lines 26-7, change ‘skepticism – doubt conjoined with the proclamation, “I’m no scientist!” – about global warming’ to ‘skepticism about global warming: doubt conjoined with the proclamation, “I’m no scientist!”’

On page 566, line 28, change ‘but you have to take an interest in such a scientific issue and do your best’ to ‘but your commentary on this scientific issue commits you to doing your best’

On page 566, lines 29-30, change ‘to pursuing graduate studies, and so on, you’re’ to ‘to graduate studies, or the like, you’re’

On page 569, line 18, change ‘rest on acknowledging that’ to ‘rest on an acknowledgment that’

On page 573, line 3, change ‘whether p, and in a way that is likewise mediated’ to ‘whether p, in a way that is mediated’

On page 573, line 4, change ‘In learning how to trust,’ to ‘In learning both interpersonal and intrapersonal trust,’

On page 573, line 4, change ‘of the illocutionary relation’ to ‘of a trust relation’

On page 573, line 24, change ‘you’re inclined to believe’ to ‘you believe’

On page 573, line 26, change ‘problem’ to ‘problems’

On page 573, line 27, again change ‘problem’ to ‘problems’

On page 574, line 19, change ‘In self-mistrust,’ to ‘When you mistrust yourself in our case,’

On page 575, line 9, change ‘than it would in S’s.’ to ‘than it takes in S’s.’

On page 576, line 20, change ‘and perhaps even judgment itself’ to ‘(and perhaps even judgment itself)’

On page 576, line 21, change ‘viewing the speaker as’ to ‘viewing the speaker (or potential speaker) as’

On page 576, line 29, change ‘another. If’ to ‘another. As we saw, such an approach founders on the broadened developmental challenge. If’

On page 576, line 29, change ‘subtractively, we’ll’ to ‘subtractively, thereby meeting the challenge, we’ll’

PART VI

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ASSERTION IN  
EPISTEMOLOGY,  
PHILOSOPHY OF  
MIND, AND  
PHILOSOPHY OF  
ACTION

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## CHAPTER 26

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# ASSERTION AND TESTIMONY

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EDWARD HINCHMAN

EVEN if we all agree that one principal function of assertion is to provide testimony, we might debate how that interpersonal function informs the nature of assertion. Suppose we do agree that assertion has an interpersonal nature because it is a speech act apt for the provision of testimony. We might nonetheless interpret that proposition in two different ways. One approach conceives the relation between assertion and testimony as additive: testimony is what you get when you add this interpersonal element to an assertion. The other approach is subtractive: assertion is what you get when you subtract the interpersonal element from testimony. This divergence in approach emerges because we can ask which speech act is fundamental.

Should we understand assertion as basic and treat testimony as what you get when you add an interpersonal addressee? Or should we understand testimony as basic and treat mere assertion—assertion without testimony—as what you get when you subtract that interpersonal relation? In this chapter, I'll argue for the second approach and for the more general thesis that its treatment of the interpersonal element in assertion makes understanding the interpersonal element in assertion the key to understanding how assertion expresses belief. Rather than viewing testimony as interpersonalizing assertion, which expresses belief, we should view belief as internalizing assertion, which itself internalizes the interpersonal element in testimony. I won't have space for a full discussion of how assertion expresses belief. My aim is to show how we might theorize the expression of belief if we take the subtractive approach, treating the expression of belief in assertion as internalizing the transmission of belief in testimony.

I'll argue that what we say about how assertion internalizes the interpersonal element in testimony depends on how we conceptualize that interpersonal element. On what I'll call the Command Model, the interpersonal element in testimony does not give us the conceptual resources to make a theoretically informative subtractive move. But on an alternative, which I'll call the Custodial Model, it does. The difference between these models lies in whether they theorize testimony as inviting a trust relation over and above

mere reliance on the speaker: the Custodial Model does, I'll argue, whereas the Command Model does not. Thus equipped with the idea that assertion internalizes a robust trust relation, our approach to belief expression can emphasize how an asserter regards herself as entitled to provide testimony to potential addressees. We'll be ready to see how mere assertion—assertion without testimony—nonetheless responds to an epistemic norm that is robustly interpersonal: assert only when you could provide testimonial warrant to a potential addressee. Though I won't have space to discuss this fully, I'll suggest that this norm provides as assertion-based constraint on belief.

## 1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE APPROACH

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Let me say more up front about this distinction between an additive and a subtractive approach to assertion. We might begin from the lexical distinction between two verbs, “to assert” and “to tell.” In terms of their grammatical objects, what you assert is a proposition (“that *p*”), whereas what you tell is a person. Though what you tell the person is a proposition (“that *p*”), the grammatical fact that in English you can “tell” but cannot “assert” a person suggests a simple formula for distinguishing the speech acts. If we treat this difference between the verb forms as a guide to the difference between assertion and testimony, as I plan to do, taking for granted that in testifying you do not merely assert that *p* but tell someone that *p*, then we get this difference between assertion and testimony: assertion puts you into relation to a proposition, testimony into relation with an addressee. Since you cannot testify that *p* without asserting that *p*, we might frame this model as additive: assertion puts you in relation to a proposition—the “presenting-as-true” relation—and testifying then adds a relation to an addressee. Plausible as that sounds, in this essay I'll present grounds for rejecting it. As I've said, I'll argue for a subtractive alternative, on which *mere* assertion subtracts the key interpersonal element from testimony.

Why does the additive model sound so plausible? We might trace its plausibility to a simple—I'm going to argue, an oversimple—view of the “presenting-as-true” relation: you present *p* as true by presenting yourself as judging that *p*. Because it is possible to present yourself as judging that *p* without asserting that *p*, this is not a sufficient condition for assertion. But is it even a necessary condition? Complementing this simple view of assertion is an equally simple view of sincerity in assertion: you assert that *p* sincerely only if you judge that *p*. To test the simple views together, we ask: can you assert that *p* sincerely while failing to judge that *p*? I'm going to argue that you can and therefore that each of these simple views is too simple.

What explains how you can assert that *p* sincerely without judging that *p*, I'll argue, lies in a correct understanding of the distinction between assertion and testimony. When we understand how the distinction permits this possibility, we'll see why the additive view of the distinction should give way to a subtractive view. We better explain the core difference between assertion and testimony by saying that testimony puts

you into relation with an actual addressee, and mere assertion—assertion without testimony—subtracts this actual relation, treating the addressee as merely possible. I'll explain why sincerity does not require believing what you assert in Section 8. I'll begin in Section 2 with an account of testimony, developing the approach to the subtractive view that will inform my explanation.

Let me set a framework for my approach to testimony. What is it for a speaker, S, to present as true some proposition, *p*, in the way that puts her into testimonial relation with her addressee, A? As I've already suggested, we have a simple verb: S tells A that *p*. We may thus distinguish two speech acts, (i) telling A that *p* and (ii) asserting that *p* without thereby telling anyone that *p*. (We might need to admit the possibility that S tells some hearers but not others; let's set that aside for now.) How does S address A in telling A that *p*? The form of address appears to rest on S's intentions toward A. As is arguably the case with any communicative speech act, S will communicate in part by aiming that her act be recognized as such by A. She will intend that her assertion be recognized as an assertion and that her telling be recognized as a telling. But how, beyond merely intending that A recognize the act, does S intend to *do* anything for A?

The question addresses the nature of the authority that S claims in addressing her telling to A—not merely the authority of truth but an authority specifically for A. I'll develop a contrast between two broadly different ways of viewing that authority. Each of these models of authority rests on an analogy between epistemic authority and practical authority, though neither conflates epistemic reasons with practical reasons. The task for each is to supplement the authority of truth—which includes the authority of epistemic reasons, however exactly one understands the nature of epistemic reasons—with a dimension of authority that brings the authority of truth to bear on the addressee's particular circumstances. The question is how S is doing that *for* A.

On the Command Model, the speaker intends her addressee to recognize her authority in the way that one issuing a command intends the command to be received: by producing the relevant change in attitude. As a sincere commander intends her addressee to obey the command, so a sincere testifier intends her addressee to believe her testimony. (As we'll see, the analogy goes only so far. There is, of course, the disanalogy that one cannot comply with a testimonial command simply at will.) On the Custodial Model, by contrast, the pertinent analogy is not with commanding but with advising and promising: advising insofar as it offers an authoritative reason to do what the advisor advises the advisee to do, promising insofar as it offers an authoritative reason to perform acts that depend on the promisor's keeping the promise. (Again, the limits of the analogy are marked by a key disanalogy: testimony that *p*, unlike advice or a promise, aims to give not merely a reason but sufficient reason to believe that *p*.) S's aim, on the Custodial Model, is not to convince her addressee but to reason with him—to give him reasons to believe what she tells him, reasons grounded in her trustworthiness in thus attempting to influence him. Seeing why we should prefer the Custodial Model over the Command Model provides the key to understanding the distinction between testimony and assertion. The difference rests on a distinction between the aims of reasoning and persuasion.

I'll argue by developing a challenge to the thesis that unites the two models of testimony. Each account has a broadly Gricean structure: S intends to do something for A through A's recognition of this very intention. The challenge is that these reflexive intentions are too complicated to serve as the currency of ordinary communicative transactions. I'll argue that the Custodial Model offers a compelling response to the challenge and that this response is not available to a proponent of the Command Model.

## 2. THE DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGE

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In pursuing the idea that the distinction between assertion and testimony has something to do with the interpersonal nature of the latter, I'm going to take for granted what is sometimes called the Interpersonal View of testimony, of which the Command Model and the Custodial Model are divergent interpretations. On any interpretation of the Interpersonal View, the form of address distinctive of testimony rests on a claim of authority: in telling A that p, S represents herself as intending that A be authorized—that is, warranted (or justified)—in believing that p through A's recognition of this very intention.<sup>1</sup>

Let me clarify a few things in that formula. First, though I'll say "warranted," for present purposes I make no distinction between warrant and justification. Second, I don't mean to take for granted that the content of S's intention directly targets A's status as warranted. Readers skeptical of the idea that the content of S's intention can directly target anything but S's own actions may substitute this more complex formula: "S represents herself as intending that her testimony should form part of the explanation of how A comes to be warranted in believing that p." Another way to specify the content is to say that S intends to provide part of A's warrant for this belief—that is: S intends to serve as an authority for A on this epistemic matter. On the Interpersonal View, what mediates this exercise of authority is A's recognition of S's intention to exercise it. But—a third clarification—from the proposition that A becomes warranted through his recognition of S's intention, it does not follow that the intention on its own provides the warrant. S may intend that A's recognition of her intention serve as the medium through which A is warranted in his belief while regarding her own status as truth-conducively reliable as a necessary condition on A's possession of the warrant. Indeed, it is plausible and perfectly compatible with the Interpersonal View to hold that S cannot provide epistemic warrant through testimony without actually being truth-conducively reliable in her testimony. We may, for our purposes, set aside a much-debated question in the epistemology of testimony: can the speaker's "word" serve as an epistemic basis for the addressee's belief, independently of her truth-conducive reliability (which may be evident to non-addressees)?<sup>2</sup> Our issue lies in the illocutionary nature of the speech act, and specifically in the claim that telling differs from merely asserting by virtue of the speaker's intentions in performing the speech acts. Again, it may be that all speech acts rest on illocutionary intentions directed toward hearers' recognition of the speech act. The claim at issue here

is stronger: that in sincerely telling A that p, S intends that A be authorized to believe that p in part through A's recognition of this very intention.<sup>3</sup>

On the Interpersonal View, there is a reflexivity in the testimonial speech act that mimics the reflexivity that H. P. Grice viewed as the basis of speaker's meaning.<sup>4</sup> Consider this update:

(Quasi-Grice) S tells A that p (sincerely) only if S intends that A recognize that S, in putting it forth that p, intends A to gain access, through this very recognition, to a species of reason to believe that p.

On the Command Model, as we'll see in Section 4, the reason in question is "preemptive." On the Custodial Model, as we'll see in Section 6, the reason is not "preemptive." What matters for now is that both models entail (Quasi-Grice). Any view that entails (Quasi-Grice) has the following feature: in order for the telling to come off—for it not to "misfire" in Austin's sense (1975, 13–17)—A must recognize that S intends him to gain access to this reason through this very recognition.

Both models of testimony confront a singular challenge. By (Quasi-Grice), S counts as telling only by projecting this image of A: A comes to have a reason to believe whose epistemic-normative basis partly lies in his recognition of S's intention. (Again: *partly* lies. Another part of the basis may lie in the more straightforwardly epistemic consideration that S is truth-conducively reliable in her testimony.) Moreover, A undergoes that normative change only by projecting this image of S: S intends him to undergo the change by recognizing her intention that he undergo it. Each party to the testimonial relation must therefore be capable of attributing to the other a higher-order mental state, either the state of believing that one's own mental state has a certain normative quality or the state of intending that one's own intention has a certain normative quality. The problem is simply that this feature of the Interpersonal View appears to exclude people whom we should not exclude: small children, autistic people, and anyone else suffering from a cognitive deficit when it comes to ascribing higher-order mental states.

Here's how Nick Leonard puts the challenge, in a paper devoted to developing it:

In order for S to satisfy the conditions in T [our (Quasi-Grice)], she must have the cognitive capacity to attribute second order mental states to others. Similarly, in order for A to satisfy the conditions in T, he too must have the cognitive capacity to attribute second order mental states to others. But young children and people with autism cannot attribute second order mental states to others. (2016, 2342)

I'm not going to put much weight on how the challenge might draw on empirical research in developmental psychology or the psychology of autism. If the challenge were merely that small children or autistic people constitute counterexamples to the Interpersonal View, we could treat the Interpersonal View as offering a revision of our practices. Is it so implausible to regard small children or autistic people as manifesting a diminished capacity to pull their weight in realizing the second-personal relations at the



core of testimonial telling? Such a deficit would not compromise their capacity to give and receive information through mere assertion, treating assertion as capable of providing evidence. I'm going to focus on the Developmental Challenge, but with an emphasis on explaining why the developmental task in bringing children into our practices of testimony should take this deeply interpersonal form. The intuitive challenge is simply that it shouldn't be this "hard"—this much of a cognitive achievement—to tell someone that p. Small children do it, but so do inattentive, fatigued, and otherwise cognitively impaired people, and an account of telling should do justice to these everyday possibilities. What we need is an account of why the norm should require so much of us, interpersonally speaking, even if we often fall short of living up to these interpersonal demands.

It will help us see why the challenge does not pose mere counterexamples to consider a parallel challenge. Proponents of the Interpersonal View often emphasize parallels between testimony and action-oriented speech acts such as commanding and advising. Proponents of both the Command Model and the Custodial Model have developed an analogy between testifying and promising (Hinchman 2005; Moran 2005; Watson 2004; cf. Austin [1946] 1979, 100). It seems plausible that S promises A that she will  $\phi$  only if A recognizes S's intention that he should rely on her to  $\phi$ . But parental S can promise childish A that she will let A watch a video as soon as A finishes picking up his Legos—counterexample! Childish A cannot recognize S's intention that he should rely on her to let him watch a video, since he cannot recognize any of S's intentions directed at his mental states. So parental S cannot make the promise—an absurdity.

Where has this reasoning gone wrong? Parents can, of course, enter into promissory relations with their children, but part of the point of doing so is to teach children from the inside how promising works. Part of how promising works involves the promisee's recognition of the promisor's intention that that promisee should rely on the promise—a promissory intention that, if relevantly trustworthy, assists the promisee in planning. In his childish way, A thus plans on his getting some video time just as soon as he finishes picking up his Legos. How might proceeding as if the child can recognize her intention, even when he cannot, help teach the child how promising works by teaching him how to recognize such promissory intentions?

We can ask the same of testimony. Testimony aims to give assistance in forming beliefs, not (directly) in planning for the future. But on the Interpersonal View the normative structures otherwise run in parallel. How might proceeding as if the child can recognize her intention help teach him how testimony works by teaching him how to recognize quasi-Gricean intentions?

### 3. RECOGNIZING INTENTIONS AND RECOGNIZING AUTHORITY

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My answer addresses the role of such intentions, whether promissory or testimonial. What does the promisor or testifier hope to provide through the recognition of her

intention? One apt word for the provision is “authority.” The promisor aims to assist the promisee in planning by exercising a species of rational authority over the promisee’s diachronic practical agency. She does not aim at influencing him to do any particular thing, but if sincere she does ~~aim to get him to rely~~ <sup>intend that he may</sup>, as he sees fit, on her promissory assurance that she will  $\phi$ . The sincere testifier aims to provide a parallel species of epistemic assistance grounded in the trustworthiness—the rational authority—of her claim on an aspect of her addressee’s epistemic agency: <sup>that</sup> he may judge in a way informed by her assurance that  $p$ . How does she make either claim—a claim that primarily lies in how she represents herself as making available a reason—on the pertinent aspect of her addressee’s agency? By getting him to recognize her intention. But what if he has not yet developed the capacity to recognize such quasi-Gricean intentions? In that case, she’ll have to get him to feel the force of her authority more directly.

There is a pun on “recognize” here, but it is easy to clarify the two senses of the term. In one kind of case, A recognizes S’s intention to provide him such assistance by correctly attributing that intention to S. In a second kind of case, A recognizes S’s intention to provide the assistance by correctly attributing to S the authority over his agency that S claims by virtue of <sup>acting on</sup> ~~possessing~~ that intention to provide him the assistance. In the second kind of case, A need not be able to attribute quasi-Gricean intentions to S; A need merely be able to attribute a certain species of authority to S. What authority? In promising, the authority to provide a special kind of assistance in planning. In testimony, the authority to provide a special kind of assistance in forming beliefs. It is important to note that each speech act provides the assistance only if it, or its maker, is relevantly trustworthy, which in each case requires relevant species of reliability. Assuming it is present, this trustworthiness is manifest in S’s intention, and it is in that respect that his recognition of the intention mediates the provision of the assistance to A. If a childish A cannot attribute a quasi-Gricean intention to S, we may preserve the normative structure by shifting from the first sense of “recognize” to the second. Childish A recognizes S’s quasi-Gricean intention by correctly attributing not the intention itself but the authority it manifests.

We can thus say that childish A can acquire a testimonial reason through his recognition of S’s intention to provide that reason, without committing ourselves to the thesis that anyone capable of acquiring a testimonial reason must be capable of attributing reflexive or quasi-Gricean intentions. My apparent equivocation on “recognize” in stating the uptake condition on telling turns out to reveal our core theoretical need. Small children can provide the uptake required to consummate acts of testimonial telling, but they do so by recognizing—at most—the authority of the intention. By “the authority of the intention,” I mean the authority of the speech act that expresses or manifests the intention, and I will not for present purposes distinguish this from the authority of the speaker insofar as she performs that act.<sup>5</sup> An adult addressee does not consummate an act of telling by “recognizing” the intention in that sense. An adult addressee typically recognizes the intention informing the speaker’s act, not merely that intention’s authority. Does this proliferate senses of “tells” as we shift from immature to mature reception of a “telling”? I think not. Look at it from the speaker’s side. A sincere testifier aims to provide a reason to her addressee partly through the addressee’s recognition of her sincerity. What if a childish addressee cannot recognize her sincerity because he is only beginning

to develop his capacity to attribute intentions? That seems a degenerate case, until we realize that he cannot develop a capacity to attribute testimonial intentions without being addressed in this way—in a way that presumes his possession of a capacity that he does not yet fully possess. The observation reveals not equivocation but a developmental prolepsis: the speaker addresses the child as if he already had the capacity that he will develop partly through being thus addressed.

The phenomenon is not unusual. Are you playing *chess* with a child who, in his imperfect grasp of strategy, manifests an imperfect grasp on what it is to win? Are you playing *tennis* with a child who, in his physical stature, manifests a hopeless inability to win? Well, yes and no. You're bringing the child into the full game by treating his capacities as if they were more developed than they actually are. And so it is with testimony: as a testifier, you invite the child to trust you—that is, to treat you as an epistemic authority—despite his imperfect grasp on how treating someone as an epistemic authority makes a demand on his capacity for reasonable trust. To develop this capacity, the child will have to improve at attributing reflexive intentions.

The question, then, is what form the improvement should take. We have envisioned a developmental process that would take the small child from the immature incapacity to recognize anything more than a speaker's authority to the mature capacity to recognize such authority by recognizing the reflexive, quasi-Gricean intentions that inform it. To believe a speaker through an exercise of reasonable trust as her addressee, you must be able to recognize more than her bare authority; you must be able to recognize how she manifests that authority in her form of address. Must the immature addressee begin by believing through responsiveness to evidence that the speaker is positively worthy of his trust? Or should we instead say that maturation begins from responsiveness to evidence that the speaker is unworthy of his trust—evidence that overturns a default presumption of trustworthiness?

We can answer by reminding ourselves how we actually oversee such maturation. Adults teach small children how to stand in promissory relations; that's part of the point of making promises to a child. Adults similarly teach small children how to stand in testimonial relations. Let me offer some reminders of how these lessons work, beginning with the latter case. Part of the point of telling a child about the world is to help the child sort out how you intend him to react. You tell him something surprising. Really? he wonders. No, you're being sarcastic. Later you surprise him with another assertion. More sarcasm? No, this time you're serious. For very small children, think of their developing grasp on the difference between fanciful bedtime stories and factual narratives about your day. If you talk to small children regularly, observe what a substantial part of your conversations thus addresses <sup>a near-to</sup> how to read your intentions. The same holds of promising. Do you really mean it when you promise him candy tomorrow, or are you saying that merely to make him stop pestering you now? In each case, your task addresses how the child must navigate an interpersonal reality in which intentions manifest unworthiness of his trust. The default stance is trust, since healthy children are naturally trusting. Your task is to supplement that stance with a capacity to respond to evidence manifested by your intentions that indicates that he should not trust you in the present instance

This developmental observation reveals a crucial complexity in how trust responds to evidence. One might assume that trust responds to evidence of trustworthiness, but trust can be reasonable without such evidence, as long as it is informed by a counterfactual sensitivity to evidence of untrustworthiness in the trusted: if she manifests evidence of untrustworthiness, you will cease to trust; and if she had manifested evidence of untrustworthiness, you would not have trusted. Further reflection reveals a deeper point: not only does reasonable trust not require responsiveness to evidence of trustworthiness, but too much monitoring for evidence of trustworthiness tends to undermine trust. We're thus pulled in two directions. On the one hand, we assume that trust is made more reasonable through its responsiveness to evidence of trustworthiness. On the other hand, we see that dwelling on evidence of trustworthiness is inimical to trust. One might think this is a problem of actively seeking evidence of trustworthiness, not of appreciating the force of evidence already possessed. But matters are not so simple. If my reliance on my spouse to remember to fetch our children after school *depends* on my appreciating positive evidence of her reliability—no need to seek such evidence, since I already have plenty!—then I am not simply trusting her to fetch the children. (Why do I need the evidence? Don't I trust her?). The problem here is not that I am aware of this evidence. The problem is that my would-be trust depends on it. Still, doesn't such evidence make my trust in my spouse more reasonable than it would otherwise be? The solution lies in seeing that this evidence of her trustworthiness is also evidence that there is not likely to be evidence that she is untrustworthy. This evidence that there is not likely to be evidence of her untrustworthiness can make it reasonable for me to be less vigilant than I might otherwise have been in exercising the responsiveness to evidence of her untrustworthiness that informs my trust.

Two issues arise here that I lack space to pursue as fully as I'd like. The first I'll discuss briefly and then set aside. I just observed that to trust a testifier is to believe her through the exercise of your counterfactual sensitivity to evidence of her untrustworthiness, not (directly) through your appreciation of evidence of her trustworthiness. But how can you exercise your will toward this end? Kieran Setiya (2013) does not believe you can, and he treats this incapacity as a deep problem for the possibility of epistemic agency. Though you are in some sense active in forming the belief that *p* for epistemic reasons *R*, Setiya argues, the idea that you are an epistemic *agent* in believing for *R* presupposes that you can mark a distinction within your total epistemic reasons for *p* between those that figure in *R*—by serving as the ground of your belief—and those that do not, just as when you perform an action,  $\phi$ , for reasons, you can distinguish those reasons from other reasons, on which you are not acting, that you nonetheless believe you have to  $\phi$ . Can you distinguish your reasons for believing that *p* from the totality of reasons that you believe you have to believe that *p*? Setiya argues that you cannot, but if what I said earlier is right, we have identified a way to make the distinction effective. Say you believe that *p* by believing the speaker but nonetheless believe that you could have reasonably believed that *p* by stepping back and assessing evidence of the speaker's trustworthiness—without believing the speaker. Here your belief that *p* for reasons *R* does not reduce to your belief that *p* plus your belief that you have *R*. Just as in a parallel practical case, we

must say more, and more specifically about how you have *chosen* to believe, in order to explain how your epistemic activity responds to reasons.<sup>6</sup>

I'll have to leave that issue dangling, but a second issue presages an aspect of my argument for the Custodial Model—though I'll lack space for a full treatment. When you teach a child reasonable trust, you thereby help him learn a form of evidential responsiveness that will play a key role in his developing intrapersonal relations. The Interpersonal View suggests a parallel not only between the normative structures of promising and testifying but between the two processes through which a developing agent can internalize those structures. Consider first a normative parallel between promising and intending. When parental S promises childish A to  $\phi$  at t, she presents herself as providing him with planning assistance that parallels the planning assistance that he could provide himself if he intended to  $\phi$  at t. Now consider a parallel between testimony and doxastic judgment. As in promising, the core of the parallel lies in how the reliability of an intention can provide a trusting agent with assistance—though here the assistance is epistemic, not practical. When S tells A that p, S intends that A acquire a rational basis for p simply through his recognition of that intention.<sup>7</sup> And when A judges that p, A intends that he acquire a rational basis for p simply through his recognition of that—that is, his own—intention. In the case of doxastic judgment, there is of course this rub: because you can judge that p without understanding how judgment normatively rests on such an intrapersonal trust relation, by “recognizing” the intention we cannot mean attributing it. Here we have to mean that A recognizes the authority of his own intention to provide this rational basis. In that respect, the case resembles testimony addressed to a small child. Just as you need not self-attribute an intention when you recognize the authority of the intention informing your judgment that p, so A need not attribute any intention to S when A recognizes the authority of the intention informing S's testimony that p. In teaching childish A how to reasonably trust a testifier, S helps teach A how to reasonably trust his own judgment.

#### 4. THE COMMAND MODEL

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The goal of the developmental process lies in the maturation of the child's capacity for reasonable trust. But our last observation clarifies that what most fundamentally matures is the child's intellectual conscience. As Linda Zagzebski (2012) emphasizes, part of the job of your intellectual conscience is to regulate your self-trust relations, adjudicating a question that articulates the status of self-trust as a rational relation: on which occasions should you trust yourself, and on which should you instead trust someone else? The species of self-trust at issue here is trust in your own judgment, in the deliverances of your own doxastic-deliberative faculty when you deliberate *what is so* (by contrast with practical deliberation, which addresses the question *what to do*). Self-trust would not be an exercise of rationality if you necessarily trusted your own judgment, if nothing could dislodge a childish presumption that your doxastic-deliberative faculty could never, from your own point of view, be unworthy of your trust. Your own point of

view on the question of what is so is not simply identical with the perspective that you adopt when you deliberate what is so. You are capable of stepping back and suspending your judgment in response to evidence that this deliberative faculty is not, in its current incarnation, worthy of your trust. One key role for your intellectual conscience is to determine when you should thus suspend your own judgment and seek deliberative assistance from others—not mere evidence that you would in turn weigh in your own deliberation, but a kind of reason to which you could gain access through an exercise of reasonable trust.

Zagzebski theorizes this dimension of intellectual conscience in terms of what she calls, following Joseph Raz, “preemptive reasons” (Raz 1986; Zagzebski 2012), thereby filling the blank in the generic formulation of the Interpersonal View (Quasi-Grice) with a specific kind of reason. The analogy with Raz’s issue suggests that we call this the Command Model:

(Command) S tells A that p (sincerely) only if S intends that A recognize that S, in putting it forth that p, intends A to gain access, through this very recognition, to a preemptive reason to believe that p.

One might think that the Command Model, thus formulated, plays right into the hands of the Developmental Challenge insofar as it would require that the child recognize an intention with esoteric content marked here by the word “preemptive.” But that is not the worry articulated by the Developmental Challenge, as I’m deploying it. As long as preemptive reasons function in a way that is intelligible to an immature addressee—and I’ll assume they do, in the way that I’ll describe presently—then no new issue arises here, no issue, that is, beyond the Developmental Challenge itself, as described in Section 2.

The key feature of preemption, as Zagzebski understands it, is that when you accept someone as an epistemic authority, you cease to base your belief on what I’ll call “your own” reasons—that is, the reasons that you have, or would have, independently of this authority—and base your belief solely on the preemptive reasons that the authority gives you. Believing on the basis of a preemptive reason contrasts with two sorts of alternative case. In one alternative case, you treat the new reason as a higher-order reason targeting your assessment of your first-order reasons—that is, your assessment of the evidence. In such a case, you treat the new reason as either confirming your assessment of available evidence or as showing that you’ve misassessed available evidence. The latter possibility could induce self-doubt but would not point a way forward in resolving the doubt. When you thus mistrust your own judgment, how might you resolve it? You can, of course, turn your mind to other matters, and your trust in your judgment will typically revive. But how can you revive trust on the present matter? In the other alternative case, you add the new reason to your own reasons by treating it as the deliverance of your capacity for reasonable trust, basing it not on positive evidence but on your counterfactual responsiveness to evidence of untrustworthiness—that is, of relevant unreliability—in the speaker. If we embrace either of these alternatives, we deny that the reasons are “preemptive,” in Zagzebski’s sense, since a preemptive reason would simply “replace” the



reasons that you have independently of this authority, and these alternative reasons do not function in that way. *(In Section 6, I'll develop a version of The Second Alternative.)*

In resisting these alternative conceptions of authority, Zagzebski follows Raz by emphasizing what Raz calls the Normal Justification thesis: in the case at issue, you are more likely to act on your total reasons if you follow the authority—treating its directives as giving you preemptive reasons (in the present sense)—instead of trying to determine how its directives add to “your own” reasons (in the present sense), whether as higher-order reasons or as reasons whose basis lies in your capacity for reasonable trust. No doubt there are plenty of cases that fit that model where the reasons in question are practical reasons. When the soldier treats his commander’s directives, or a citizen treats the law, as giving him none but reasons that add to his own reasons or affirm his assessment of his own reasons, there is an obvious respect in which he isn’t treating the commander or the law as an authority. But there appears to be an important contrast between practical and epistemic reasons on this point. If you treat certain scientists as giving you reasons that add to or affirm your view of your own reasons, is there any interesting or important respect in which you thereby fail to treat the scientists in question as authorities?

Scientific and more broadly epistemic authority appears to differ here from military or legal authority. One plausible explanation of the difference would appeal to the different roles played by conscience in these distinct domains. A soldier’s job is to implement his or her commanders’ directives, not to form a view of why those directives are or are not correct. A law-abiding citizen follows the law and may—within limits—have no particular interest in forming or assessing it. But an intellectually conscientious person cannot simply leave it up to scientists to tell him or her what to believe about the world—even, in a way paralleling legal obligation, “within limits” (e.g., up to the point where odd declarations reveal that a given scientist has gone off her meds). That’s one thing that’s so farcical about one species of ideological skepticism: *at* doubt conjoined with the proclamation, “I’m no scientist!” *(about global warming)* Sure, you’re not a scientist, we want to reply, *but you have to take an interest in such a scientific issue and do your best to sort it out. Unless your “sorting it out” leads you to pursuing graduate studies, and so on, you’re going to be forming many of your beliefs about the issue on authority. But “on authority” does not appear to mean the same here as it does in the military or legal cases, and what it does mean appears to be at odds with the idea that the authorities give us preemptive reasons. The difference, again, appears to derive from the different roles that we regard conscience as playing in the two sorts of case.*

## 5. CAN THE COMMAND MODEL MEET A BROADENED DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGE?

What we find here is an adult instance of the normative dynamic in play in the Developmental Challenge. The challenge lies not in the addressee’s inability to recognize

higher-order mental states but in the addressee's difficulty, given scientific ignorance, in exercising his capacity for reasonable trust. The parallel confirms our hypothesis that the childish addressee's inability to recognize higher-order mental states functions in the challenge as an instance of a broader inability to exercise a capacity for reasonable trust. All of us encounter such a challenge as adults insofar as our ignorance in a given domain may lead us to have no choice but to treat some speakers as authorities in a way that does not manifest our capacity for reasonable trust, since we must form beliefs while lacking a counterfactual sensitivity to evidence of untrustworthiness in the trusted.<sup>8</sup> Can the Command Model meet this broadened version of the Developmental Challenge? I'll argue that it cannot. My diagnosis of why it cannot will then lead us to see why we should prefer the Custodial Model to the Command Model if we adopt the Interpersonal View of testimony.

What is it for the addressee to take responsibility for his beliefs in such a case? What responsible resolution would he seek? I agree with Christoph Jäger (2016) that the goal posited by intellectually conscientious responsiveness to preemptive reasons is understanding. Jäger does not emphasize the developmental issue that I have pursued, but I have pursued that issue as a special case of a broader challenge, which we may now conceptualize as the challenge of explaining how a capacity for reasonable trust serves the broader epistemic value of understanding. As we've seen, the challenge has two aspects. On the one hand, it overlooks this value to treat believing on the basis of another's epistemic authority according to the model that Raz developed for legal and other forms of practical authority. But on the other hand, an emphasis on understanding leaves it open that believing on authority does sometimes take this form, perhaps for good and important reasons. The challenge is to bring these two aspects into simultaneous focus.

Consider again how you conscientiously come to your beliefs about global warming. You don't simply mimic the judgments of climate scientists—treating them as giving you preemptive reasons to replace your own. You want to understand why the scientists hold these views, at least to the extent that you can understand their reasons and reasoning. You want to understand because you need at least some substantial degree of understanding in order to be appropriately conscientious in forming these beliefs. In order to do this—in order to seek this form of understanding that is at odds with treating authoritative reasons as preemptive—you must treat some authoritative reasons as preemptive. You cannot form “your own” view of global warming without trusting the methods of evidence gathering, of instrument construction, of data interpretation, and so on that inform how climate scientists pursue their questions. You have to trust others' judgments in the course of developing your own. Perhaps you'll develop your own judgments—your own expertise—to the point where you can criticize how these climate scientists' instruments are constructed or maintained, for example, or how they have interpreted their data. But probably not; given your age and established dispositions, it might be too difficult. Even if you do go on to develop your own expertise, however, that wouldn't show that you do not now trust the judgment of climate scientists in these ways—where to trust their judgment, in your present state of ignorance, is to treat the reasons that you thereby receive as preemptive.



When you take a reason on trust, you receive it through the exercise of your capacity for reasonable trust. Insofar as you receive it through exercising this capacity, you treat a preemptive reason—a reason that merely replaces your own reasons—as a reason grounded in the *de facto* trustworthiness of the speaker—not (as we saw in Section 4) in your evidence of her trustworthiness but in the trustworthiness itself—and you treat your responsiveness to the speaker’s trustworthiness as mediated by your counterfactual sensitivity to evidence of her untrustworthiness. Your treating the reason as preemptive thus “looks ahead”—through the lens of your intellectual conscience—toward a possible future scenario in which your understanding has developed to enable you to manifest this sensitivity to evidence of untrustworthiness. You may know you’re not in position even to try to develop a view on your own—working from your own reasons—of ice-core instrument calibration. Whatever your assumptions about such instruments, when you learn how actual scientists use the instruments to gather evidence, you let what you learn replace those assumptions, since you know that such assumptions aren’t even a good start on actual climate science. What’s crucial, for our purposes, is that the story doesn’t end with the observation that you must treat these reasons as preemptive by simply accepting these scientists’ authority. You are intellectually conscientious, and as such you aim to achieve some degree of relevant understanding. You aim to treat the reasons that these authorities give you as adding to or correcting “your own” reasons—reasons that reflect how you’ve weighed or otherwise reasoned from evidence “on your own”—rather than as merely replacing them. And you aim to develop a mediating sensitivity to relevant forms of untrustworthiness in these speakers. Part of what it is to trust such a speaker is to believe that it would be reasonable to trust her under the possibly hypothetical condition that you have developed that capacity. It is in that belief that even immature or ignorant trust differs from other forms of reliance, since without the belief we couldn’t explain how your trust admits of betrayal.

We thus see how you can treat authoritative reasons as preemptive in a provisional spirit, placing trust in the authority’s judgment in the spirit of conceding that you have not yet developed—whether or not you will go on to develop—requisite trustworthiness (on this subject matter, with regard to such reasons) in your own developing faculty of judgment. Your trust in the judgment of the authority is revealed by how you let the reasons grounded in this authority’s trustworthiness replace whatever reasons you take yourself to have apart from this influence. Those authoritative reasons preempt the latter reasons, but in a way that serves the goal of understanding insofar as it underwrites your efforts—paltry and distractible and lifespan-limited though they may be—to develop a capacity for reasonable trust that would, perhaps retrospectively, make the reasons available as manifesting your intellectual conscience.

Can the Command Model deploy these resources to meet the broadened Developmental Challenge? We’re now ready to see why it cannot. The Command Model does not construe the addressee’s recognition of the speaker’s authority—his recognition, that is, of her capacity to give him preemptive reasons—as in any way constrained by his capacity for reasonable trust, as we have been understanding it with our emphasis

on a sensitivity not to evidence of trustworthiness but to evidence of untrustworthiness in the speaker. The Command Model construes the speaker's exercise of epistemic authority on the model of Raz's treatment of legal authority—more broadly, of the authority of commands. On the Razian model, what gives a command rational authority for an addressee—thereby constituting it as a source of preemptive reasons—has nothing directly to do with the addressee's sensitivity to evidence of the speaker's untrustworthiness made manifest by her intentions. On the Command Model, the speaker's exercise of authority, in giving what will weigh with the addressee as a preemptive reason, rests on the latter's capacity to infer that he does better by treating the command as a preemptive reason than he could do by acting on his own independent reasons. This inferential capacity does not rest on a capacity for reasonable trust. It may well be grounded in a capacity to appreciate evidence of the speaker's trustworthiness. But that is part of the problem: this capacity to appreciate evidence of trustworthiness functions in a way that appears to preclude what's distinctive of reasonable trust. As we saw in Section 4, a capacity for reasonable trust is a capacity to let yourself be guided by an influence insofar as that influence does not generate evidence that it is unworthy of your trust. A speaker's intention to give you a preemptive reason does not, as such, engage that capacity; it does not rest on ~~acknowledging~~ *an acknowledgment* that evidence of her unworthiness of your trust would defeat her presumption to give you this reason. How might the speaker aim to engage that capacity? When I present the Custodial Model in the next section, it will become clear exactly what the Command Model's appeal to preemptive reasons leaves out.

Would it help to interpret the Command Model as placing equal or even greater emphasis on the speaker's illocutionary burden? A proponent of the Command Model might argue that the normative basis of a preemptive reason crucially lies in the speaker's intention to take responsibility for the addressee's belief.<sup>9</sup> When A lets S's judgment replace his own in believing S's testimony, A effectively holds S responsible for his belief, a form of responsibility that S may willingly take up, holding herself responsible for A's belief as part of how she exercises her authority over A. Such an emphasis on the speaker's responsibility does not appear to help a proponent of the Command Model meet the Developmental Challenge. If S takes full responsibility for A's belief that p formed on the basis of S's testimony that p, her status as thus responsible does not even address the Challenge, since it does not as such have anything to do with her quasi-Gricean intentions. As the parent of a small child, I take full responsibility for the child's beliefs formed through his reception of my testimony. The fact that I take this responsibility does not on its own entail or otherwise indicate that I aim to help the child develop a capacity for reasonable trust: a status as thus responsible seems perfectly compatible with a failure to have that aim. In an alternative formulation, we could say that my taking responsibility for my child's testimonial beliefs may capture the normative stance that I take in attempting to persuade him through this exercise of authority but does not show that I intend to reason with the child and is compatible with my not intending to reason with him.

## 6. THE CUSTODIAL MODEL

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What is it for the speaker to reason with her addressee in this way? Here's a view that would fit this dialectic: S reasons with A insofar as she intends to give him a reason in a way that satisfies two criteria: (i) A could not possess this reason apart from S's intervention, and (ii) the reason is not preemptive in the sense discussed in the previous section. It may sound like a contradiction to say both that the reason is not preemptive and that A could not possess the reason apart from S's intervention. On Zagzebski's view of preemption, if A could not possess the reason apart from S's intervention, then the reason must be preemptive. But, as we saw in the previous section, intending to give someone a preemptive reason seems incompatible with intending that he acquire that reason through exercising his capacity for reasonable trust. When A trusts S through an exercise of that capacity, he does not simply let S's judgment replace his own but judges in a way guided by his counterfactual sensitivity to evidence of S's untrustworthiness (should there be or have been any). This difference should figure in S's quasi-Gricean intention.

The Custodial Model thus emerges as an alternative to the Command Model:

(Custodial) S tells A that p (sincerely) only if S intends that A recognize that S, in putting it forth that p, intends A to gain access, through this very recognition, to a *prima facie* but sufficient reason to believe that p.

The key difference between (Custodial) and (Command) lies in the phrase “*prima facie* but sufficient.” Since this phrase may sound like a contradiction, let me begin by explaining why the phrase is not a contradiction. The reason in question is *prima facie* because it—that is, the presumption that it exists—is subject to defeating conditions. As we've already seen, if S is not trustworthy in relevant respects, then though she may intend to give a reason, there is no reason for her to give. But its defeasibility is not merely a fact about the reason itself; the illocutionary normativity of the speech act obligates S to acknowledge this fact. Since the reason that S intends A to have to believe that p is a reason that A could not have unless S were relevantly trustworthy, S must acknowledge that a status as untrustworthy—which, because it partly rests on her truth-conducive reliability, she cannot be perfectly certain she has avoided—would thwart her intention to give this reason. If S is untrustworthy, she can tell A that p (though if she believes she's untrustworthy, this would manifest one form of insincerity), and A can believe that p on her say-so, but A cannot thereby count—that is, simply on the basis of trust in S—as warranted in that belief. Despite this defeasibility, S intends to make available a reason that is normatively *sufficient* for A to believe that p. Though she may not intend that A actually believe that p on her say-so (or at all), to count as telling A that p in full sincerity S must intend that A would be fully warranted in believing that p on S's say-so. By normatively “sufficient” I mean *sufficient in the relevant doxastic context*. By “sufficient” in (Custodial), then, I mean that *if A believed S, he would not need any further deliberative basis to count, in his context, as warranted in that belief*. In this way, S presumes

a custodial authority over A's epistemic agency, rather than the purely preemptive authority posited by the Command Model. What makes the authority custodial rather than command-like is simply that the presumption of authority would be undermined if S's presumption to offer a reason were defeated.

If you're tempted to think that this distinction between (Command) and (Custodial) makes no difference, consider a scenario in which it really would fail to make a difference: it would fail to make a difference if the only element in a testifier's trustworthiness were truth-conducive reliability. If trustworthiness were purely truth-conducive, the Custodial Model would add little to the account of epistemic authority offered by the Command Model: the Custodial Model's emphasis on defeating conditions would merely amount to the idea that a speaker who presents herself as an epistemic authority may not actually count as one. Where the views differ lies in how the Custodial Model applies its definition of telling to the context-sensitive dimension of the addressee's epistemic needs—not merely to his context-insensitive need to believe the truth but to his need to close deliberation with a judgment when but only when his evidence is normatively sufficient. The point of grounding the reason in the speaker's trustworthiness is to minimize not merely the risk of false belief but the risk of epistemically unwarranted belief—that is, of belief that fails to meet the epistemic demands imposed by the addressee's doxastic context. The point of appealing to defeating conditions is that one's status as having normatively sufficient evidence does not require that one ratify that the defeating conditions are not satisfied. If they are not satisfied here, and there thus really is a reason in play, then the reason that S intends to make available to A in telling him that *p* is a reason that normatively suffices for him to believe that *p*. That is, it normatively suffices, in context, to close doxastic deliberation with a judgment.

One might now worry that the Custodial Model is committed to a controversial view of knowledge on which practical considerations illicitly "encroach" upon the properly epistemic. Though I have defended an account of such pragmatic encroachment (Hinchman 2013), one complication in my present use of the idea should remove some of this sting of controversy. Where the pragmatic encroaches on the epistemic, according to the Custodial Model, is specifically in the illocutionary normativity of asserting and telling. It might appear otherwise, since the quasi-Gricean accounts of telling under consideration appear to describe the epistemic quality of the addressee's belief. But that appearance is misleading: the normative force of that description governs not the addressee's belief but the speaker's telling. More plainly put, the account of telling describes how the speaker goes right or wrong in her speech act (an illocutionary matter), not how the addressee goes right or wrong in his belief (a properly epistemic matter). One might argue that this illocutionary norm just is an epistemic norm—and, indeed, if it is, then the pragmatic will encroach on the epistemic. If you do not like that result, however, you can accept a quasi-Gricean account of telling but deny that the illocutionary norm it describes is a properly epistemic norm. No such account need appeal directly to the concept of knowledge, and we can formulate the quasi-Gricean appeal to warrant or justification just as well, if more clumsily, in terms of the status that the addressee's belief must achieve—not necessarily a properly or narrowly epistemic

status—in order for the speech act not to violate the illocutionary norm. All that follows from the previous paragraph is that *if* the illocutionary norm is an epistemic norm *then* pragmatic considerations encroach on the epistemic. It is not obvious, however, that this illocutionary norm is an epistemic norm.

Setting aside that complication, note that, on the Custodial Model, telling embodies an assurance that transpires at two levels. At one level, S presents herself as intending to give A a prima facie but sufficient reason to believe that p. At another level, S presents herself as intending to make this reason available to A simply through A's recognition that that is what she intends. The reason that S intends to give A derives from her assurance that it is indeed true that p. At this level, S assures A of p's truth, and her assurance generates a reason only if she is reliable as a gauge of the truth. This core dimension of the speech act is alethic: S assures A that she is a source of truth on the question whether p. And so this dimension of S's reliability is truth-conducive, and S's presumption that she makes the reason available is defeated by unreliability as to the truth. S's intentions have no *general* bearing on whether she is a good guide to the truth (unless, of course, the proposition specifically refers to S or to something over which S has control). But S's intentions do have a general bearing on whether she is appropriately responsive to another dimension of A's epistemic needs, a dimension that is sensitive to the context in which S addresses A. Here we can recognize the custodial dimension of S's speech act: S assures A that she is appropriately concerned with his relevant context-sensitive needs. On the Custodial Model, it is by presenting herself as trustworthy in this custodial dimension that S represents herself as giving A a reason to believe that p specifically through her speech act of telling him that p. As we'll see in the next section, it is in presenting herself as aiming to do justice to A's context-sensitive epistemic needs that S counts as reasoning with A on the question whether p, rather than merely trying to persuade him that p.

## 7. HOW THE CUSTODIAL MODEL MEETS THE BROADENED DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGE

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In the previous two sections, we have focused on conscientiousness both as the addressee manifests it in his responsiveness to the speaker's authority (Section 5) and as the speaker projects it in claiming an authority grounded in her trustworthiness (Section 6). We can meet the broadened Developmental Challenge by joining the two sides in an account of what it is to be conscientious in asserting when there is no addressee. When there is no addressee, the speaker's conscience requires that she imagine one. How does this act of imagination constrain the speaker? If it seems paradoxical to say that the speaker's imagination constrains her assertion, we can flip the question around: how must she be imagining her possible addressees when she regards herself as entitled to make an assertion? As we'll now see in the final two sections, these questions reveal the explanatory force of the subtractive approach to testimony and assertion.

They do so by returning us to the core instance of intellectual conscience in the exercise of judgment. In forming a judgment that *p*, you trust yourself on the question whether *p*, and in a way that is likewise mediated by your capacity for reasonable trust. In learning ~~how to trust~~, you learn how to occupy both sides of the illocutionary relation: how to trust and how to invite trust. In learning how to invite trust, you learn not merely how to influence another but how to influence him through his exercise of intellectual conscience, however fallibly (since you may, of course, be deceiving him). The trust dynamic structures the epistemic agency exercised on both sides of the exchange. You learn how to assert by learning how to invite trust.

Consider how this normative dynamic looks in realistic cases of intrapersonal conflict. Say you're experiencing conflict—or, more broadly, a conflictive dissonance—between two mental states subject to governance by your intellectual conscience. How do you resolve the conflict? An interesting exchange between Zagzebski (2016) and Elizabeth Fricker (2016) targets this case: you believe that there is torture, and you want to rid the world of torture. Fricker asks: why not eliminate the conflict by abandoning the belief? Zagzebski replies: because that would conflict with our desire to believe the truth. That sounds like the right thing to say about this case, but only because it's so obvious that you should not abandon the belief.

We can see that the case does not do justice to Fricker's worry about Zagzebski's treatment of intellectual conscience by working from a case in which things are less obvious. Say you believe, without anything like certainty, that a colleague is spreading malicious rumors about you, and you want to mitigate the problems that you fear this is causing you (behind your back, and again without certainty that the problems are as bad as you're ~~inclined to~~ believe). This looks like the same species of conflict as we found in the torture case, but it seems that your response could rationally go either way. Perhaps your desire for truth leads you to tackle the problem head on. Or perhaps your desire to mitigate the problem leads you to choose the way of tact: you pretend that you don't notice the evidence of rumor mongering, in an effort to stop thinking about that evidence. Whichever way you go, you're going to have to trust that "part" of you—as you mistrust the "part" of you that resists this resolution. If you tactfully ignore the evidence, you still have to cope with the part of you that—desiring truth, perhaps—has trouble letting the evidence go. If, on the other hand, you pursue the trail of evidence, you still have to cope with the part of you that dreads—and, on reflection, appropriately—the unpredictable and probably avoidable confrontation with your colleague to which you can see it may lead you.

How should we think of these self-relations? It seems that a positive account of rationality must say how self-trust rationally mediates this common form of conflict. It must confront the question even if we focus specifically on the role of self-trust in belief. Zagzebski persuasively argues that our beliefs have an emotional component insofar as they are grounded in self-trust. But reflection on such cases seems to reveal an interesting complexity in these emotions. When you resolve conflict in an evidence-avoidant direction, as you would in the tactful response to your problem with the gossiping colleague, how should you feel about the "part" of you that continues to feel justified in the



judgment that you're trying to discount? Your stance toward this part of you that continues to judge that your colleague is gossiping about you exactly resembles your stance toward a speaker who without lying tells you this; you acknowledge that the speaker judges what she asserts, but you nonetheless mistrust both her judgment (on this matter) and her testimony. In the case at hand, you take up such a relation with a part of yourself. If the issue were simply the truth-conducive reliability of this part of you that clings to the judgment, your self-mistrust would take the form of reopening deliberation on the question, which would in turn make it the case that this "clinging to a judgment" manifests dispositions that do not amount to a judgment—for the simple reason that you cannot count as both judging that  $p$  and deliberating whether  $p$ . (I set aside cases in which we may want to say that this is possible at different psychological "levels": for present purposes, we may assume that your intellectual conscience works on only one level.) We thus see vividly how your self-relations internalize a trust dynamic through a developmental process that begins from your trust relations with others. In the intrapersonal case, the truth-conducive dimension of trustworthiness drops out, simply because you cannot mistrust yourself truth-conducively without reopening deliberation on the question. In the intrapersonal case, the custodial relation involves a concern to do justice to your own context-sensitive needs, beyond your context-insensitive need to believe the truth. *When you mistrust yourself in our case,* ~~In self-mistrust,~~ you retain your judgment that your colleague is gossiping about you, but you suspend its force by opening deliberation on the higher-order question whether in so judging you do justice to the context-sensitive needs that set the epistemic standard for that judgment.

When you resolve such intrapersonal conflict in either direction—whether by overcoming your mistrust in your judgment or by reining in your mistrusted dispositions to judge—you can be said to reason through this transition. This usage follows the usage in theories of practical reasoning on which "structural rationality" or the "rationality of requirements" (rather than of reasons) mediates the transition from practical judgment to such commissive attitudes as intention or choice (see Broome 2013; Kolodny 2005; Scanlon 2007). Just as on the practical side you can be said to reason through the transition from judging, all things considered, that you ought to  $\phi$  to intending to  $\phi$ , so on the doxastic side you can be said to reason through the transition from judging that  $p$  to believing that  $p$ . If we put this usage together with our hypothesis, in Section 3, that the normative self-relations at the core of judgment internalize the interpersonal normativity at the core of testimony, we get the idea that reasoning simpliciter internalizes the normative relations that the Custodial Model frames as "reasoning with" an addressee, by contrast with simply trying to persuade him. How does your intellectual conscience enable you to reason in this way—that is, "with yourself"? I'll conclude with the proposal that your intellectual conscience more generally enables you to reason—whether with others or "with yourself"—by projecting addressees whose needs you may or may not feel yourself able to meet. Here is where judgment most fundamentally internalizes testimonial relations. Intellectual conscience is not merely truth-seeking, and reasoning is not merely truth-preserving: in each case, you aim to do justice to context-sensitive need.

## 8. MERE ASSERTION

The proposal returns us, at long last, to the claim that I made in the outset: it is possible for S to be sincere in her assertion that *p* while failing to believe that *p*. We are now ready to appreciate the attractions of a subtractive approach to the distinction between testimony and assertion.

It is easy to come up with cases in which S has sufficient reason to judge that *p* in her context and does so judge, but without being entitled to tell A that *p*: imagine that it would take more evidence for the belief to be sufficiently warranted in A's doxastic context than it ~~would~~ <sup>takes</sup> in S's. Allergy cases show this vividly: my pretty good evidence may suffice for me to believe that this bowl of snacks is nut-free but not for you to believe it, given your nut allergy.<sup>10</sup> I look to see if the snacks contain nuts before I begin to eat because I dislike the taste of nuts. "No nuts," I conclude, so I scoop up a handful. Now you arrive and ask me, "Does the bowl contain nuts?" I'm about to tell you that it does not contain nuts, since that's what I believe, but then I remember your allergy. "I can't say," I reply. Of course, I *could* say—and with no impropriety, if I thought you merely shared my distaste for nuts. But your allergy imposes a higher standard on my assertion. Now flip the case around and imagine that you're the speaker, with a severe nut allergy, and I'm your addressee, known merely to dislike nuts. You've examined the snack bowl and are confident enough for my needs but not for your own that it does not contain any nuts. I ask you if the bowl contains nuts, and you tell me that it does not—despite not yourself believing what you assert. Are you insincere? Are you in any respect attempting to deceive me? Perhaps your refusal to explain why you are not yourself eating from the bowl manifests an attempt to deceive me about your allergy. But that's a different matter, and its relevance to the present issue is merely that it helps distinguish your obligations *qua* asserter from other obligations. (Why, anyway, should I have a right to know about your medical status?) The topic of our actual conversation is this bowl of snack food, and you aren't attempting to deceive me about *that*.

The norm governing assertion and the norm governing judgment may thus give a speaker divergent directives: either "assert that *p* but don't believe that *p*" or "believe that *p* but don't assert that *p*."<sup>11</sup> The norms can come apart in these ways because an assertion that *p* is not a mere relation to *p* but an implicit assurance that relevant others may believe that *p* by recognizing your custodial authority over their epistemic needs, an authority grounded in your trustworthiness in doing justice to their needs, both their context-sensitive needs and their context-insensitive need to believe the truth.<sup>12</sup> If there is no addressee—because you're talking "to yourself" or rehearsing a speech in the shower or reciting your personal Credo—then you don't give an actual assurance but you do perform an act that typically gives an assurance and as such is governed by norms that reflect its interpersonal nature—even when performed alone in the shower.

Is it judgment, then, that simply relates you to a proposition? As an addendum, consider again the final scene we sketched at the snack bowl, but now imagine that you go



on to assert as an aside to your mother, who happens to be standing next to you and is well aware of your nut allergy: "...still, *I don't believe that the snacks are nut-free.*" If your mother has also overheard the first conjunct of your assertion—"The snacks are nut-free..."—as addressed not to her but to me, then she is in position to make normatively cogent sense of your total assertion. You tell me that the snacks are nut-free because you regard yourself as able to inform me that they are nut-free, even though you do not yourself, in your higher-stakes context, judge that they are nut-free. And your mother, we assume, understands what's going on. Drawing on her understanding of how you cope with your allergy, she fully expects that you don't believe what you tell me and therefore isn't surprised by your aside confessing disbelief. From your mother's perspective, you are meeting your illocutionary obligations at every turn: helping me believe what I'm warranted believing in my context, but also helping your mother believe what she's warranted believing in the context that we assume she shares with you. We thus get a Moorean assertion that is permissible by the norm of assertion. If we imagine your mother residing not by your side but only in your intellectual conscience, we see how self-conscious judgment—"...still, *I don't believe that the snacks are nut-free*"—may be normatively constrained by your projection of possible addressees without being constrained by how you actually address your assertion.

Within the dialectic that I've pursued, what enables us to understand mere assertion (and perhaps even judgment itself) by subtracting—or, more specifically, by internalizing—the interpersonal element from testimony is that we are no longer viewing the speaker as intending to give potential addressees a preemptive reason to believe what she asserts. (or potential speaker)

As we saw in Section 5, the Command Model leaves out the element that permits this subtracting or internalizing maneuver. Crudely put, there can be no normative point in issuing a command to a nonactual addressee or in letting your own authority preempt itself—assuming those formulations even make sense. The Command Model would therefore yield an additive approach to assertion and testimony: the claim of authority in judgment or assertion is one normative phenomenon, bringing that authority into a testimonial relation quite another. If we aim to explain assertion subtractively, we'll have to view its interpersonal nature as custodial.

## NOTES

- As we saw, such an approach founders on the broader developmental challenge.
1. Though I will assume this (quasi-) Gricean formulation, I don't mean to rule out the possibility of communication not mediated by recognition of intentions. For present purposes I will assume that any view of testimony that emphasizes the interpersonal element will use Gricean formulations. But in a fuller discussion I would reformulate to engage the weaker thesis that these intentions must merely be suitably public. (For two defenses of such a weaker thesis, see Bar-On [2016, 2018]; and Green [1999; 2007, ch. 3; 2018].)
2. For negative answers to this question that we're setting aside, see Darwall (2006, 57, 123–124); Owens (2006); Lackey (2008, ch. 8); and Schmitt (2010). For affirmative answers, see Moran (2005, 2013); Hinchman (2005, 2014); Faulkner (2011); and McMyler (2011). Affirmative views differ greatly over how to understand the term "independently" in the question.

3. Let me again emphasize (see note 1) that my deployment of the Gricean framework is dialectical. It may well be possible to formulate the Interpersonal View without assuming that communication works through the recognition of intentions. But that is far too large a task for the present discussion.
4. Grice (1989, ch. 14). I'll call this "Quasi-Grice" because Grice did not himself offer an account of testimony. (He offers a proto-theory of assertion in Grice [1989, 105 and 130–131].)
5. The empirical literature appears to show that small children typically assess the credibility of a speaker in terms of the likelihood that her testimony is true, not in terms of anything specifically to do with her intention—which makes sense if small children cannot attribute intentions. This point informs an earlier debate on the capacity of small children to receive knowledge through testimony: see Goldberg's (2008) reply to Lackey (2005). What I'm saying here about the "authority of the intention" is in the spirit of how Goldberg (2008) conceives a child's capacity for testimonial knowledge, but the present dialectic is different. With our Interpersonalist orientation, the empirical question is not how children are guided by their responsiveness to the speaker's reliability but how they mature from recognizing intentions in the first sense—which I'm conceding may involve nothing more than being guided by the speaker's reliability—to recognizing them in the second.
6. For an argument that parallels mine on this point (though without reference to Setiya's worry), see Faulkner (2016).
7. If you worry about the intelligibility of intending for another's agency, see my recipe for alternative formulations at the beginning of section 2. And again, this isn't a claim about the nature of the reason but about how A acquires it.
8. We might try to argue that these are not actually beliefs but hypotheses or some other species of subdoxastic state. I will not pursue that issue here, since it doesn't engage the challenge that we're considering.
9. Benjamin McMyler (2011, ch. 5) develops a version of the Command Model with this alternative emphasis.
10. I discuss cases with this structure at length in Hinchman (2013).
11. My argument is not the only way to reach this result. See Goldberg (2015, ch. 6) for a very different route to it. My interest lies not merely in this result but in reaching it via my subtractive approach to assertion, on which the expression of belief in assertion internalizes the transmission of belief in testimony. For one distinctive implication of this approach, see the next note (and the works it cites).
12. The core thought here is that there is an epistemic norm of assertion set by *the addressee's* circumstances: the normative aim of assertion is not simply to express knowledge but to give your addressee knowledge. For elaborated versions of this idea, see García-Carpintero (2004); Hinchman (2013); and Pelling (2013).

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