



HPSC0033/0086

Special Topics in the History and Philosophy of Science: Social Epistemology of Science

Syllabus

Course Description

The idea of approaching epistemological questions in a way that is simultaneously philosophical and respectful of the social dimensions of knowledge is relatively new. Epistemology through the 20th century was mostly focused on individual believers/knowers. Social Epistemology shifts the focus towards groups of believers/knowers and how social arrangements impact on the production, possession, and transmission of knowledge.

This course will examine issues in social epistemology that have a bearing on the history and philosophy of science. We will consider social epistemology as the challenge to more traditional individualistic approaches to knowledge- with the sciences and their practice functioning as the major focus area and primary source of case studies.

Major topics areas will include testimony and its problematisation in traditional epistemology, the veristic approach to social epistemology, the development of a genuine communitarian epistemology of science, constructivism and the sociology of scientific knowledge, the possibility of group knowers, disagreement, epistemic injustice and the nature of scientific expertise and its relation to democracy.

Moodle Page	Search HPSC0033/0086
Assessment	Formative Essay Plan (1500 words) Summative Essay 100% (Level 6 3000 words - Level 7 4000 words)
Credits	15 (representing 150 hours of study)
Timetable	See UCL Timetable
Lecturer	Dr Rory Jubber
Lecturer Contact	rory.jubber@ucl.ac.uk
Office Location	Room 1.1, 22 Gordon Square
Office Hours	Please email the lecturer in advance to secure a meeting during office hours. Tuesdays 15:00-16:00 and Wednesdays 15:00-16:00

Schedule

UCL Week	Topic	Date and time	Activity
20	(1) Traditional Epistemology and Social Knowledge	09/01/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
21	(2) Testimonial Knowledge and the Sciences	16/01/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
22	(3) Individualism: Testimony, Reductionism and Veritism	23/01/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
23	(4) Scientific Communities and the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge	30/01/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
24	(5) Communitarian Social Epistemology	06/02/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
25	(6) Reading Week	13/02/24	
26	(7) Can Groups Know?	20/02/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
27	(8) Disagreement, Relativism and the Sciences	27/02/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
28	(9) Epistemic Justice and Injustice	05/03/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
29	(10) Theories of Scientific Expertise	12/03/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.
30	(11) Expertise and its politics?	19/03/24	1. Complete all required reading. 2. Attend onsite lecture and seminar.

Assessment

	Description	Deadline	Word limit	Deadline for Tutors to provide Feedback
Assignment 1	Formative Essay Plan	Thursday, 29 February 2024 (by 17:00)	1,500	Monday 18 March
Assignment 2	Summative full essay.100% of final grade.	Monday 15 April 2024 (by 17:00)	3,000 (Level6) 4,000 (Level7)	Wednesday 15 May

Assignments

- Assignments will take the form of an initial formative essay plan (Assignment 1), which will function as chance for students to receive feedback prior to the summative essay (Assignment 2).
- Essay 2 will constitute 100% of the final grade for the module.
- Essay instructions will be distributed within the first three weeks of teaching.
- Students at undergraduate level 6 (HPSC0033) and postgraduate level 7 (HPSC0086) will need to submit their summative essays via different links on Moodle.

Teaching Format

- This module will be run at both undergraduate level 6 (HPSC0033) and postgraduate level 7(HPSC0086).
- Lecture and seminars for HPSC0033 and HPSC0086 will run together.
- Lectures and seminars will be delivered onsite at UCL.
- Lectures will occur each week prior to seminars. Seminars will involve more student led and discursive activities including student presentations on required weekly readings.
- Each week students must attend lectures and seminars onsite, completing asynchronous activity (readings and others tasks) on moodle before.
- Seminars will be students led, usually with students presenting each of the week's required readings.
- Please see the UCL timetable for the time and room allocation.

The departmental marking guidelines for individual items of assessment can be found in the STS Student Handbook. Details of college and departmental policies relating to modules and assessments can be found in the STS Student Handbook www.ucl.ac.uk/sts/handbook All students taking modules in the STS department are expected to read these policies. Course-specific guidance to be presented and discussed in class.

Engaging with AI

UCL provides guidance for “[Engaging with AI in Your Education and Assessment](#)” and [Using AI tools in assessment | Teaching & Learning - UCL – University College London](#).

AI classification

This module has a **Category 2** rating regarding use of AI tools.

*Category 2: AI tools can be used in an assistive role**

Students are permitted to use AI tools for specific defined processes within the assessment.

AI tools can be utilised to support the development of specific skills as required by the assessment. Students can leverage AI for tasks such as data analysis, pattern recognition, or generating insights. There will be some aspects of the assessment where the use of AI is inappropriate.

Examples of where AI might be used in an assistive category include:

- drafting and structure content
- supporting the writing process in a limited manner
- as a support tutor
- supporting a particular process such as testing code or translating content
- giving feedback on content, or proofreading content.

Aims and Objectives

Aims

- To provide knowledge and understanding of issues in contemporary social epistemology, particularly as they apply to science and society.
- To provide material in a more advanced module in the philosophy of science that gives focus to social epistemology.
- To promote thinking through theory using concrete, real world examples. Theoretical concepts will be grounded in case studies from scientific practice and the interplay between science and wider society.
- To integrate topics covered in the module with related theoretical concepts from other courses available within the Department of Science and Technology Studies.

Objectives

By the end of this module students should be able to:

- Have a grounding in key topics and areas related to social epistemology of science.
- A grounding in the core theories in contemporary social epistemology.
- Ground theoretical views in real world cases drawn from the sciences and its role in wider society.
- Students will be encouraged to think about other case studies and how the theoretical accounts would apply to them.
- Present philosophical and sociological ideas, theory and cases in a verbal format through presentations.
- Think philosophically about the core topics, analysing arguments critically, consider opposing views fairly and philosophically justify their own.
- Students will be able to integrate the philosophical concepts learnt on this course with other HPS, STS and Philosophy courses.

Reading List:

Anthologies and Collections

- [Brady, M., & Fricker, M. \(Eds.\). \(2016\). *The epistemic life of groups : essays in the epistemology of collectives* / Michael S. Brady and Miranda Fricker. \(First edition.\). Oxford University Press](#)
- Crease, Robert and Selinger, Evan, 2006, *The Philosophy of Expertise*, New York: Columbia University Press
- [Fricker, Miranda, Graham, Peter, Henderson, David and Pedersen, Nikolaj, 2020, *The Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology*, London: Routledge](#)
- [Fridland, Ellen, and Carlotta Pavese. 2021 *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Skill and Expertise*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.](#)
- Goldman, Alvin and Whitcomb, Dennis, 2011, *Social Epistemology: Essential Readings*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- [Hannon, Michael., & de Ridder, Jeroen. \(2021\). *The Routledge Handbook of Political Epistemology* Routledge.](#)
- [Kusch, M. \(2019\). *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Relativism* . Routledge.](#)
- [Lackey, Jennifer., & Sosa, Ernest. \(2006\). *The epistemology of testimony* Oxford: Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Lackey, Jennifer, 2014, *Essays in Collective Epistemology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.](#)
- Sosa, Ernest., Kim, Jaegwon., & McGrath, Matthew. (2000). *Epistemology : an anthology / edited by Ernest Sosa and Jaegwon Kim ; with the assistance of Matthew McGrath*. Blackwell.

Weekly Topics and Readings

(Week 20) 1. Traditional Epistemology and Social Knowledge

The first week of the module will cover housekeeping around assessment, expectations for the lectures and seminars and will introduce you to the place of social epistemology in the context of mainstream epistemology, philosophy of science and the sociology of scientific knowledge.

Required Reading

- [Collin, Finn \(2019\) "The Twin Roots and Branches of Social Epistemology", in the Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology \(ed\) Miranda Fricker , Peter J. Graham, David Henderson and Nikolaj J. L. L. Pedersen, Abingdon: Routledge](#)
- [Goldman, Alvin. \(2019\) "The What, Why and How of Social Epistemology" in the Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology \(ed\) Miranda Fricker , Peter J. Graham, David Henderson and Nikolaj J. L. L. Pedersen, Abingdon: Routledge](#)

Further Reading

- [Goldman, Alvin and Cailin O'Connor, "Social Epistemology", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy \(Winter 2021 Edition\), Edward N. Zalta \(ed.\)](#)
- [Longino, Helen, "The Social Dimensions of Scientific Knowledge", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy \(Summer 2019 Edition\), Edward N. Zalta \(ed.\)](#)
- Goldman, Alvin, "A Guide to Social Epistemology" in *Social Epistemology: Essential Readings* (ed) Goldman, Alvin and Whitcomb, Dennis, 2011 Oxford: Oxford University Press
- [Riesch, Hauke. \(2014\) Philosophy, history and sociology of science: Interdisciplinary relations and complex social identities. *Studies in history and philosophy of science. Part A.* 4830–37.](#)

(Week 21) 2. Testimonial Knowledge and the Sciences

The focus of the second week will be the role of testimony in the formation and possession of scientific knowledge. We will examine how most of what passes for scientific knowledge is reliant on what we ascertain from others through various means of communication.

Required Reading

- [Lipton, P. \(1998\) 'The Epistemology of Testimony' Stud. His. Phil. Sci., Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 1-31.](#)

Further Reading

- [Faulkner, Paul, \(2000\) "The Social Character of Testimonial Knowledge", *Journal of Philosophy*, 97\(11\): 581–601](#)
- [Kusch, Martin.\(2002\) *Knowledge by Agreement : the Programme of Communitarian Epistemology*. Oxford: Clarendon, CH 1-4 pp 9-44](#)
- Fricker, Elizabeth (1987) "The Epistemology of Testimony." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume 61*, pp. 59-83.
- [Graham, P.J. \(2000\) 'The Reliability of Testimony' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 61, No. 3. \(Nov., 2000\), pp. 695-709.](#)
- Coady, C. A. J.(1992) *Testimony: A Philosophical Study*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- [Faulkner, Paul, \(2000\) "The Social Character of Testimonial Knowledge", *Journal of Philosophy*, 97\(11\): 581–601](#)
- [Fumerton, Richard \(2006\) "The Epistemic Role of Testimony: Internalist and Externalist Perspectives", in Lackey and Sosa \(2006\)](#)
- [Graham, Peter J. \(1997\) "What is Testimony?," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 47, pp. 227-32.](#)
- [Kusch, Martin.\(2002\) *Knowledge by Agreement : the Programme of Communitarian Epistemology*. Oxford: Clarendon, CH 1-4 pp 9-44](#)
- Shapin, Steven (1994), "A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth Century England", Chicago: The University of Chicago Press Ch 5 pp 193-242

(Week 22) 3. Individualism: Testimony, Reductionism and Veritism

Leading on from the prior week, we will examine the individualistic approach to testimony and social epistemology as a whole. We will explore whether testimonial knowledge should ultimately be reduced to various forms of first-person knowledge of the individual, understanding groups of knowers as aggregation of individual knowers and start to introduce the veristic vs social constructivist debate.

Required Reading

- [Quinton, Anthony \(1975\). "The Presidential Address: Social Objects." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 76: 1–viii](#)
- [Wilson, Robert \(1995\) *Cartesian Psychology and Physical Minds : Individualism and the Science of the Mind / Robert Andrew Wilson*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press CH 1 Introduction: What is individualism in psychology pp 1-28](#)

Further Reading

- [Goldman, Alvin \(1999\) *Knowledge in a social world*. Oxford: Clarendon CH 1+ 2 pp 3 -68](#)
- [Hume, Hume, D., Nidditch, P. H., & Hume, D. \(2014\). *David Hume : Enquiries concerning human understanding and concerning the principles of morals / P.H. Nidditch \(ed.\)*. \(Nidditch, Ed.; Third edition.\). Oxford University Press. Section X: Of Miracles pp 109-131](#)
- [Kallestrup, Jesper. \(2022\). Nonreductive Group Knowledge Revisited. *Episteme*, 1-24](#)
- [Kincaid, Harold. \(1986\) Reduction, Explanation, and Individualism. *Philosophy of science*. 53 \(4\), 492–513.](#)
- [Lukes, Steven \(1968\) Methodological Individualism Reconsidered. *The British journal of sociology*. 19 \(2\), 119–129.](#)
- [Miller, Richard \(1978\) Methodological Individualism and Social Explanation. *Philosophy of science*. 45 \(3\), 387–414](#)
- [Nelson, Alan \(1990\) Social Science and the Mental. *Midwest studies in philosophy*.15 \(1\), 194–209](#)
- [Shieber, Joseph. \(2012\) Against Credibility. *Australasian journal of philosophy*. 90\(1\), 1–18](#)

(Week 23) 4. Scientific Communities and the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge

Week four will be dedicated to the turn to the sociology of scientific knowledge, with a focus on critically examining its philosophical foundations and assumptions. Social epistemology will be explored as a possible interdisciplinary bridge between analytic epistemology, philosophy of science and the sociology of knowledge.

Required Reading

- [Lewens, Tim. \(2005\). Realism and the Strong Program. *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, 56\(3\), 559–577](#)
- [Shapin, Steven. \(1995\) Here and Everywhere: Sociology of Scientific Knowledge. *Annual review of sociology*.21 \(1\), 289–321](#)

Further Reading

- [Barnes, Barry \(1981\). On the Conventional Character of Knowledge and Cognition. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 11\(3\), 303–333.](#)
- Bloor, David 1976, Knowledge and Social Imagery, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press Ch 1-3, pp 3-54
- [Bloor, David. \(1982\) Durkheim and Mauss revisited: Classification and the sociology of knowledge. *Studies in history and philosophy of science. Part A*. 13 \(4\), 267–297](#)
- [Kochan, Jeff. \(2010\). Contrastive Explanation and the “Strong Programme” in the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge. *Social Studies of Science*, 40\(1\), 127–144.](#)
- [Roth, Paul. \(1994\) What does the sociology of scientific knowledge explain?: or, when epistemological chickens come home to roost. *History of the human sciences*. 7 \(1\), 95–108.](#)
- [Zibakalam Saeid. \(1993\). Emergence of a radical sociology of scientific knowledge, the strong programme in the early writings of Barry Barnes. *Dialectica*, 47\(1\), 3–25.](#)

(Week 24) 5. Groups and Communitarian Social Epistemology

Communitarian social epistemology will be introduced with a focus on work of Martin Kusch and the recourse to the group as a producer and possessor of knowledge.

Required Reading

- [Hardwig, John \(1985\). Epistemic Dependence. *The Journal of Philosophy*, 82\(7\), 335–349](#)
- [Kusch, Martin. *Knowledge by Agreement : the Programme of Communitarian Epistemology*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2002. Ch 5 Testimony in Communitarian Epistemology pp 45-75](#)

Further Reading

- [Fricker, Elizabeth.2002 “Trusting Others in the Sciences: a Priori or Empirical Warrant?” *Studies in history and philosophy of science. Part A* 33 \(2\): 373–383](#)
- [Knorr-Cetina, Kari \(1999\). *Epistemic cultures : how the sciences make knowledge* Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press.](#)
- [Kusch, Martin \(2001\). “A General Theory of Societal Knowledge”? Aspirations and Shortcomings of Alvin Goldman’s Social Epistemology. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science.*, 1, 183–192.](#)
- [Kusch, Martin. \(2002\). Testimony in communitarian epistemology. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science. Part A*, 33\(2\), 335–354.](#)
- [Welbourne, M. \(1981\). The Community of Knowledge. *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 31\(125\), 302–314.](#)

(Week 25) Reading Week

(Week 26) 6. Can groups know?

The content on this week will follow on from what was covered in the prior week on communitarian social epistemology. We will consider the ontology of groups, whether groups of persons are the kinds of things capable of knowing and we will examine critical responses.

Required Reading

- [Bird, Alexander. \(2010\) "Social Knowing: The Social Sense of Scientific Knowledge". *Philosophical perspectives* 24 \(1\): 23–56.](#)
- [Lackey, Jennifer. \(2014\). Socially Extended Knowledge. *Philosophical Issues*, 24\(1\), 282–298](#)

Further Reading

- [Bird, Alexander. \(2014\). When is there a group that knows? Distributed cognition, scientific knowledge, and the Social Epistemic subject. In J. Lackey \(Ed.\), *Essays in collective epistemology*. Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Bird, Alexander \(2022\). Science as Social Knowing. In *Knowing Science*. Oxford University Press. Ch 4 pp 70-107](#)
- [Brown, Jessica. \(2022\). Group evidence. *Philosophical Issues*, 32\(1\), 164–179.](#)
- [Clark, Andy., & Chalmers, David. \(1998\). The Extended Mind. *Analysis*, 58\(1\), 7–19](#)
- [Giere, Ronald. N., & Moffatt, Barton. \(2003\). Distributed Cognition: Where the Cognitive and the Social Merge. *Social Studies of Science*, 33\(2\), 301–310.](#)
- [Palermos. \(2022\). Epistemic Collaborations: Distributed Cognition and Virtue Reliabilism. *Erkenntnis*, 87\(4\), 1481–1500.](#)
- [Tuomela, Raimo. \(1992\). Group Beliefs. *Synthese* 91\(3\), 285–318.](#)
- [Tuomela, Raimo. \(2000\). Belief versus acceptance. *Philosophical Explorations*, 3\(2\), 122–137.](#)
- [Tuomela, Raimo. \(2004\). Group Knowledge Analyzed. *Episteme*, 1\(2\), 109–127.](#)
- [Uygun Tunç, Duygu. 2023 The subject of knowledge in collaborative science. *Synthese* 201, 88](#)

(Week 27) 7. Disagreement, Relativism, and the Sciences

The focus on this week will be the overlap between the epistemology of disagreement and social epistemology. We will examine cases of deep disagreement in the sciences between epistemic peers and the implications this may have for adopting a position of epistemic relativism.

Required Reading

- [Kusch, M. \(2021\). Disagreement, Certainties, Relativism. *Topoi*, 40\(5\), 1097–1105.](#)
- [Lynch, Michael Patrick, 2019 Epistemic Relativism, in *The Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology* ed Fricker, Miranda, Graham, Peter, Henderson, David and Pedersen, Nikolaj London: Routledge](#)

Further Reading

- [Boghossian, Paul \(2010\). *Fear of knowledge : against relativism and constructivism* Oxford: Clarendon](#)
- [Frances, Bryan and Jonathan Matheson, "Disagreement", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* \(Winter 2019 Edition\), Edward N. Zalta \(ed.\)](#)
- Goldman, Alvin (2010) "Epistemic Relativism and Reasonable Disagreement," in Richard Feldman and Ted Warfield (eds.), *Disagreement*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- [Kusch, Martin. \(2017\). Epistemic relativism, scepticism, pluralism. *Synthese*, 194\(12\), 4687–4703](#)
- [Kusch, Martin. \(2020\). *Relativism in the philosophy of science / Martin Kusch*. Cambridge University Press](#)
- Lackey, Jennifer (2010), "What Should We Do When We Disagree?" in Tamar Szabo Gendler and John Hawthorne (eds.), *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [Roth, Paul. \(1994\) *What does the sociology of scientific knowledge explain?: or, when epistemological chickens come home to roost. History of the human sciences*. 7 \(1\), 95–108.](#)
- [Schafer, Karl \(2015\) "How Common is Peer Disagreement? On Self-Trust and Rational Symmetry," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 91 \(1\): 25–46](#)
- [Wilson, Alastair, 2010, "Disagreement, Equal Weight and Commutativity," *Philosophical Studies*, 149 \(3\): 321 – 326](#)
- [Wright, Crispin. \(2008\). Fear of relativism? *Philosophical Studies* 141\(3\), 379–390.](#)

(Week 28) 8. Epistemic Justice and Injustice

During this week we will explore whether all testifiers are treated equally. We will examine the work of Miranda Fricker on epistemic, testimonial, and hermeneutical injustice, consider case studies and implications for the sciences.

Required Reading

- [Coady, David. \(2010\). Two Concepts of Epistemic Injustice. *Episteme*, 7\(2\), 101–113.](#)
- [Fricker, Miranda \(2007\) 'Chapter 1: Testimonial Injustice' *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* \(Oxford, Oxford University press\)](#)

Further Reading

- [Beeby, Laura \(2011\). A Critique of Hermeneutical Injustice. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 111 :479-486.](#)
- [Fricker, Miranda \(2003\). Epistemic injustice and a role for virtue in the politics of knowing. *Metaphilosophy* 34 \(1/2\):154-173.](#)
- [Fricker, Miranda. \(2007\). *Epistemic injustice : power and the ethics of knowing* / Miranda Fricker. Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Goldberg, Sanford \(2010\). Comments on Miranda Fricker's Epistemic Injustice. *Episteme* 7 \(2\):138-150.](#)
- [Hookway, Christopher \(2010\). Some Varieties of Epistemic Injustice: Reflections on Fricker. *Episteme* 7 \(2\):151-163.](#)
- [McKinnon, Rachel \(2016\). Epistemic Injustice. *Philosophy Compass* 11 \(8\):437-446.](#)

(Week 29) 9. Theories of Scientific Expertise

The penultimate week will consider whether all testifiers should be treated equally? Are there some knowers, the experts, who we take to be better testifiers on particular subjects? How do we give a philosophically robust account of expert knowledge that may explain why we should trust the experts more.

Required Reading

- [Goldman, Alvin. "Experts: Which ones should you trust?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 2001 63 \(1\), 85-110](#)
- [John, Stephen. "Expert Testimony and Epistemological Free-Riding: The MMR Controversy" *The Philosophical quarterly* 2011 61\(244\): 496–517](#)

Further Reading

- [Brewer, Scott, \(1998\) "Scientific Expert Testimony and Intellectual Due Process", *Yale Law Journal*, 107\(6\): 1535–1681](#)
- [Coady, D. \(2006\). *When Experts Disagree. Episteme*, 3\(1–2\), 68–79.](#)
- [Collins HM, Evans R. \(2002\) *The Third Wave of Science Studies: Studies of Expertise and Experience. Social Studies of Science*. 2002 32\(2\): 235-296](#)
- Collins, H.M & Evans, R (2007) *Rethinking Expertise* Chicago, University of Chicago Press
- [Collins, Harry., & Evans, Robert. \(2015\). *Expertise revisited, Part I—Interactional expertise. Studies in History and Philosophy of Science. Part A*, 54, 113–123.](#)
- [Croce, Michel, 2018, "Expert-Oriented Abilities vs. Novice-Oriented Abilities: An Alternative Account of Epistemic Authority", *Episteme*, 15\(4\): 476–498](#)
- [Gerken, Mikkel. \(2018\). *Expert Trespassing Testimony and the Ethics of Science Communication. Journal for General Philosophy of Science*, 49\(3\), 299–318.](#)
- [Goldberg, Sanford C \(2009\) "Experts, Semantic and Epistemic", *Noûs*, 43\(4\): 581–598.](#)
- [Lackey, Jennifer \(2018\), "Experts and Peer Disagreement", in *Knowledge, Belief, and God: New Insights in Religious Epistemology*, Matthew Benton, John Hawthorne & Dani Rabinowitz \(eds\), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 228–245](#)
- [Zagzebski, Linda \(2012\) *Epistemic Authority: A Theory of Trust, Authority, and Autonomy in Belief*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.](#)

(Week 30) 10. Expertise and its politics

The final week will consider the relationship between epistemic authority and political authority. We will examine if politically powerful laypersons are really ever in a position to rationally adjudicate between disagreeing experts, framing this within the context of so-called 'post-truth' politics. We will also conclude the module and run a closing essay workshop during the seminar.

Required Reading

- [Lane, Melissa, \(2014\), "When the Experts are Uncertain: Scientific Knowledge and the Ethics of Democratic Judgment," *Episteme*, 11 \(1\): 97–118](#)

Further Reading

- [Collins, Harry., Evans, Robert., & Weinel, Martin. \(2017\). STS as science or politics? *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(4\), 580–586.](#)
- [Collins, Harry. \(2023\). Science as a counter to the erosion of truth in society. *Synthese*, 202\(5\)](#)
- [De Cruz, Helen \(2020\) "Believing to Belong: Addressing the Novice-Expert Problem in Polarized Scientific Communication" *Social Epistemology* 34:5.](#)
- [Jasanoff, Sheila., & Simmet, Hilton. R. \(2017\). No funeral bells: Public reason in a 'post-truth' age. *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(5\), 751–770.](#)
- [Kitcher, Philip \(2001\). *Science, truth, and democracy* / Philip Kitcher. Oxford University Press.](#)
- [Lynch, Michael. \(2017\). STS, symmetry and post-truth. *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(4\), 593–599.](#)
- [Sismondo, Sergio. \(2017\). Editorial: Post-truth? *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(1\), 3–6](#)
- [Sismondo, Sergio \(2017\). Casting a wider net: A reply to Collins, Evans and Weinel. *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(4\), 587–592](#)
- [Turner, Stephen. \(2001\). What is the Problem with Experts? *Social Studies of Science*, 31\(1\), 123–149](#)
- [Weinel. \(2017\). STS as science or politics? *Social Studies of Science*, 47\(4\), 580–586](#)