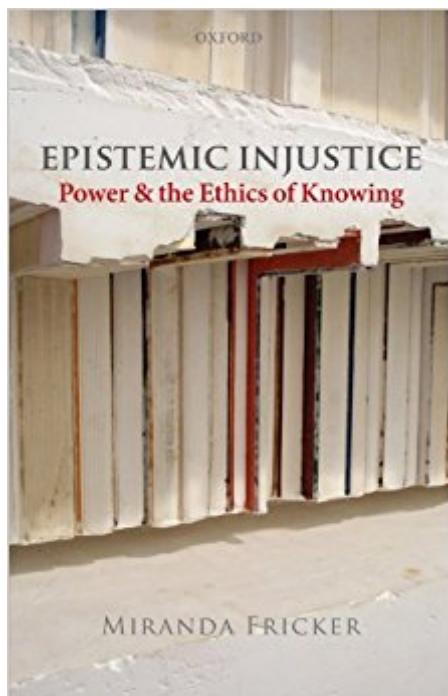


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# Epistemic Injustice: Power And The Ethics Of Knowing



## Synopsis

In this exploration of new territory between ethics and epistemology, Miranda Fricker argues that there is a distinctively epistemic type of injustice, in which someone is wronged specifically in their capacity as a knower. Justice is one of the oldest and most central themes in philosophy, but in order to reveal the ethical dimension of our epistemic practices the focus must shift to injustice. Fricker adjusts the philosophical lens so that we see through to the negative space that is epistemic injustice. The book explores two different types of epistemic injustice, each driven by a form of prejudice, and from this exploration comes a positive account of two corrective ethical-intellectual virtues. The characterization of these phenomena casts light on many issues, such as social power, prejudice, virtue, and the genealogy of knowledge, and it proposes a virtue epistemological account of testimony. In this ground-breaking book, the entanglements of reason and social power are traced in a new way, to reveal the different forms of epistemic injustice and their place in the broad pattern of social injustice.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Overall, Epistemic Injustice is an exciting examination of a widespread problem that is rarely discussed in such terms so that it can be understood and communicated, and perhaps, someday, solved."--Feminist Review"An original and stimulating contribution to contemporary epistemology.... There is much to admire in Fricker's book. It is clear, well-written and well-structured. The explanations and arguments are rigorous without being overly technical, and the illustrations are interesting and felicitous. In particular, the book constitutes a striking example of how contemporary

epistemology can be enriched by a close attention to our experiences, and of how our understanding of epistemic matters can be deepened through the deployment of ideas from ethics, political theory and feminist philosophy. As a result, *Epistemic Injustice* makes a significant contribution, not just to epistemology, but to all of the disciplines."--Michael Brady, *Analysis Reviews*"In this elegant and ground-breaking work, Fricker names the phenomenon of epistemic injustice, and distinguishes two central forms of it, with their two corresponding remedies. As the title conveys, Fricker is working in the newly fertile borderland between theories of value and of knowledge. We are social creatures-something that tends to be forgotten by traditional analytic epistemology. We are also knowers-something that tends to be forgotten by power-obsessed postmodern theorizing. Fricker steers a careful passage between the Scylla of the one and the Charybdis of the other. . . . The book is not only a wonderful, ambitious attempt to bring ethics and epistemology together in a way that has rarely been done before, it is also a beautiful, and powerful, attempt to name something that matters. What progress, to be able to name the enemy, be it sexual harassment or epistemic injustice!" --Rae Langton, *Hypatia*"bold and well-argued . . . rich and elegantly written . . . Anyone whose philosophical interest in the concept of knowledge extends beyond merely definitional issues, and addresses its ethical and political dimensions as well as its genealogy, can ill afford to ignore this book" -- Axel Gelfert, *Times Literary Supplement* "Miranda Fricker's excellent monograph occupies some relatively uncharted philosophical territory, being 'neither straightforwardly a work of ethics nor straightforwardly a work of epistemology', but instead seeking to '[renegotiate] a stretch of the border between these two regions'...her discussion is outstandingly lucid and persuasive...the book is an admirable reminder of what can be accomplished in under two hundred pages of crisp yet free-flowing philosophical prose. It deserves, and will surely command, widespread attention." --Sabina Lovibond, *Philosophy* "excellent and well argued . . . This is an important and timely book, argued with care and illustrated with detailed and compelling examples . . . an exemplary discussion of the intersection of knowledge and power." --Kathleen Lennon *Philosophical Quarterly* "This is a wonderful book not just for social or feminist epistemologists, but for the discipline as a whole. Fricker succeeds admirably in achieving her main goal of offering a detailed and wide-ranging ethical and epistemological analysis of testimonial injustice . . . Moreover, the book is beautifully written" --Martin Kusch, *Mind* "In this elegantly crafted book, Miranda Fricker's timely project of 'looking at the negative space that is epistemic injustice' comes to fruition...this is a path-breaking study." --Lorraine Code, *Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*"In an often gripping manner, Fricker cuts across philosophical subdisciplines in order to expose some of the more sinister aspects of our epistemic practices. For anyone interested in

ethics, epistemology, or social and political philosophy, this is surely a must-read." --Francesco Pupa, Metaphilosophy

Miranda Fricker is Professor of Philosophy at Birkbeck College.

A Good One! I will recommend this book. It is thoughts-provoking! It should be read reflectively.Thanks Miranda Fricker.

Can't wait to use this in my thesis!

A very important, clear and path-breaking book.

Amazing breakthrough ideas. Although we have experienced epistemic injustice either in the role of acting it against others, or in the role of suffering because others act epistemic injustice against us, only Miranda Fricker could see this important issue so clearly and I am really grateful to her for bringing in the open her thoughts on actually everyday observation which just passes unnoticed by most of us. Every scientist, whether in social sciences or in any other discipline, should read this book if we want to make this world better.

A good approach to justice issues through epistemic reasoning.

Very deep and stimulating book. Very glad I read it.

This is not just a brilliant addition to feminist epistemology but to epistemology period. Fricker shows that grave wrongs can be committed in at least two significant ways to people in regards to their "capacity as knowers." The first is testimonial injustice. This is where someone is considered as less epistemically worthy or reliable because of some prejudice. Victims suffer a "credibility deficit." Examples of this is when certain minority or women's perspectives, views, ideas are disregarded simply because it is a minority or woman expressing the perspective. Fricker explores in quite some detail the different salient examples of when and how this kind of injustice occurs, why it is morally and epistemically important, the kind of harms perpetrated not only on the victims of this kind of injustice but on society as a whole, why we need to pay attention to it, and some of its social implications. For me, the most insightful part is the harms Fricker argues is perpetrated on those

suffering the credibility deficit. Secondly, there is what Fricker calls "hermeneutical injustice." This kind of injustice occurs when some oppressed group is unable to even "make sense" and to articulate their own experiences to others and even themselves. This often occurs when the group is marginalized and is subject to other related injustices such as restrictions on education and to their fair share in the public space of information. Some groups have no access to previous sources of articulated expressions of their group's experiences either because the larger society does not give those sources any focus to their plights (marginalizes those experiences) or because the group have few to none actual resources which does articulate their experiences. This may occur if the group is experiencing a new kind of marginalization and discrimination which does not have precedents in the publicized experiences of other groups. A group may not even know how to think about their experiences in a clear way because the conceptual language have not been invented or sufficiently developed. Women in many societies may not even know that they are experiencing sexual harassment and its harmful effects, for example, if no resources detailing and analyzing this kind of experience is available to them; that is, if the society at large pays such morally and epistemically important experiences "no mind" people will likely suffer from not even understanding the nature of the injustices perpetrated against them. Much of modern society revolves around information and its control. Since that space is both finite and in demand, it is a commodity subject to the confines of justice. The world is getting "smaller" because of the spread of information and much of our social, political, cultural and economic exchanges with others will speak to the importance of epistemic justice. Fricker's highly original contribution is very insightful, well-written and interesting. It does justice to this little previously focused area of epistemology and ethics and it is extremely timely for the kind of society we now live in.

A great book by Miranda Fricker that has been long awaited! Really a must-read. (And a truly wonderful gift!)

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