



# Contemporary Trends *in* Epistemology

**Hajj Muhammad Legenhausen**

June 2025



**Epistemology:** commonly defined as the study of knowledge, but today it includes much more:

- Belief, contrasted with *doubt*
- Certainty
- Justification, warrant
- Rationality, reasonableness
- Understanding, explanation
- Knowledge, contrasted with *ignorance*
- Cognition, awareness
- Evidence
- Perception

**Epistemology:** inquiry about the conditions and standards for knowledge and its types, including 3 major areas of discussion:

1. Semantics: the nature of truth and reference;
2. Philosophical psychology: the nature of belief, knowledge, and related propositional attitudes;
3. Normativity: the standards by which a belief (or some other propositional attitude or assertion) is known, justified, reasonable, rational, warranted, or in some other manner possesses epistemic worth.

# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

1. Alvin Goldman, 1938-2024, Rutgers University

Major themes:

- Reliabilism, externalism
- Naturalistic epistemology
- Social epistemology

*Epistemology and Cognition* (1986)

*Liaisons: Philosophy Meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences* (1991)

*Philosophical Applications of Cognitive Science* (1993)

*Readings in Philosophy and Cognitive Science* (editor), (1993)

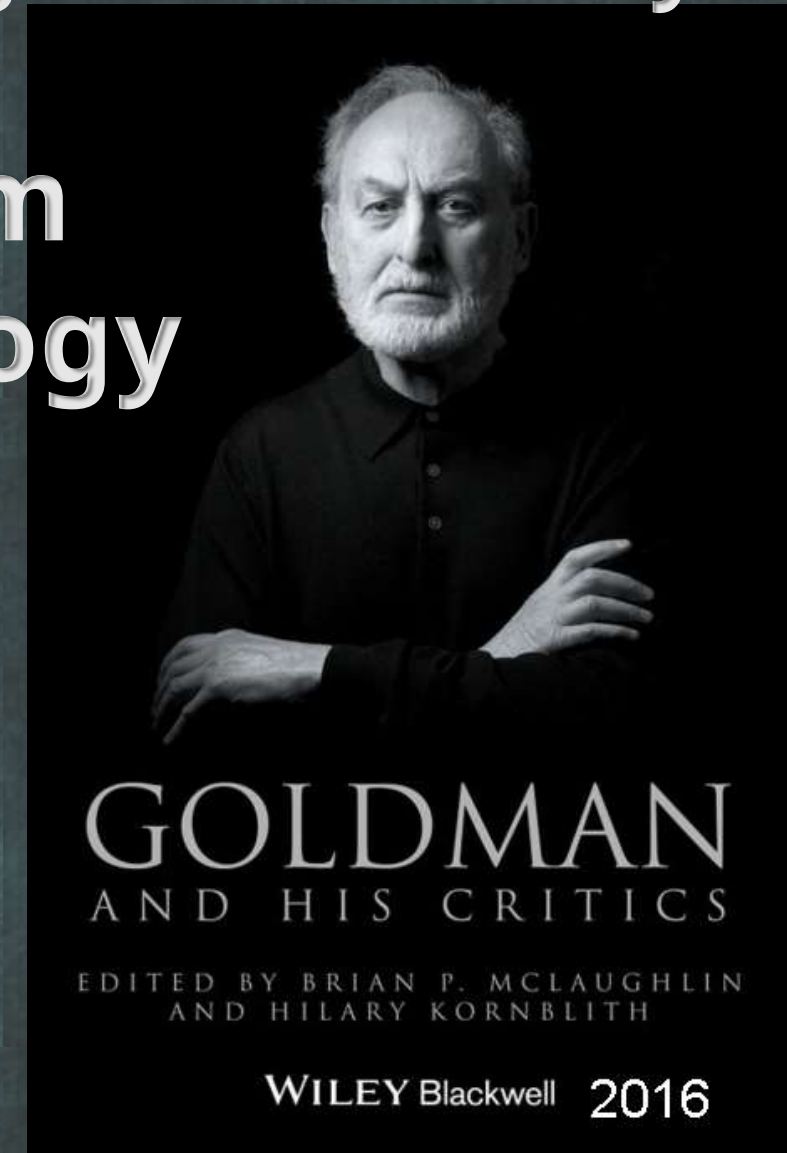
*Knowledge in a Social World* (1999)

*Pathways to Knowledge: Private and Public* (2004)

*Simulating Minds* (2006)

*Joint Ventures: Mindreading, Mirroring, and Embodied Cognition* (2013)

*Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction* (2015) with Matthew McGrath



# Goldman in Persian

دانشنامه فلسفه استنفورد (۱۰)



## معرفت‌شناسی

سرپرست و ویراستار مجموعه: مسعود علیا



نویسنده: آکوپین گلدمن، مایکل گلنزبرگ، جوئل پاست، فردریک دو وینیمون، اریک شوئیتسگیل، تامس

کلی، گرت ویلیامز

مترجم: مهدی محمدی، یاسر پوراسماعیل، مریم خدادادی، امیرحسین خداپرست، مهدی رعنائی، داود

میرزایی

ناشر: انتشارات ققنوس



نگاهی به آرای

## الوپین گلدمن

با حضور:

- محسن زمانی
- امیر صانمی
- امید کریمزاده

پنج‌شنبه ۱۲ مهر ۱۴۰۳  
ساعت ۱۷ الی ۱۹

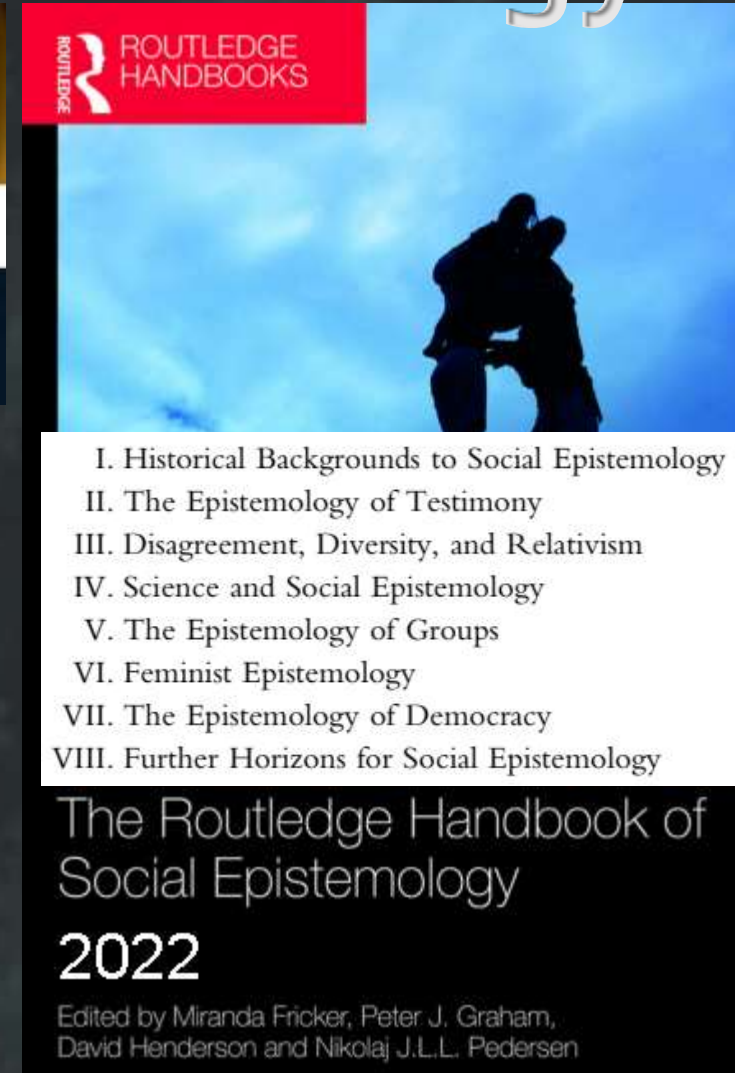
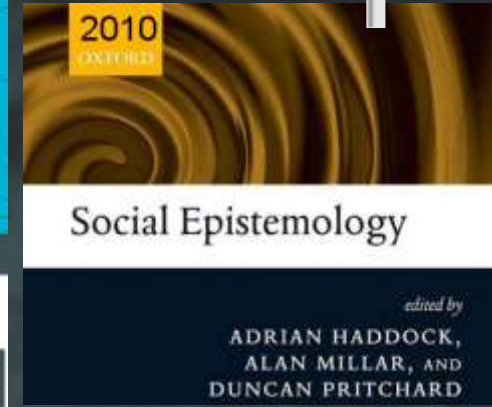
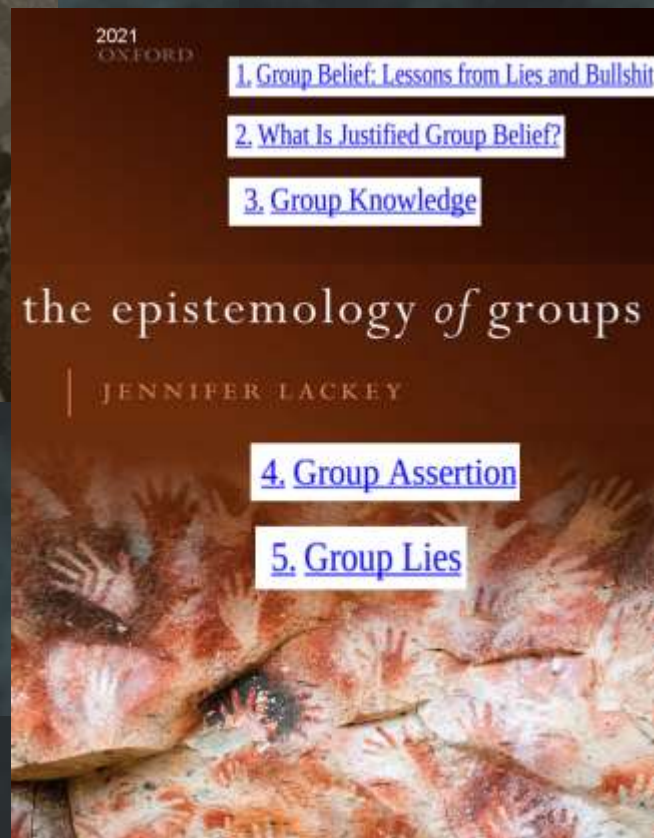
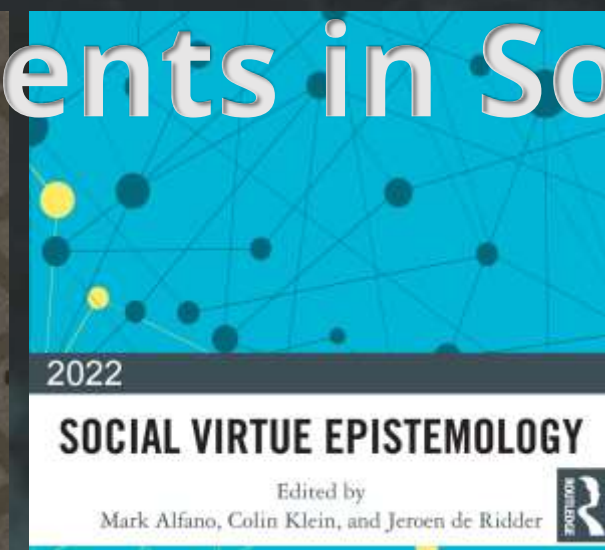
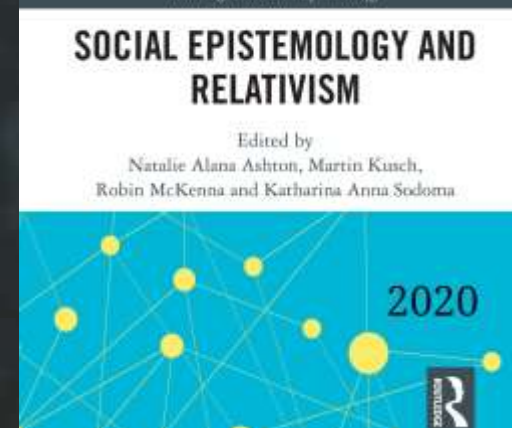
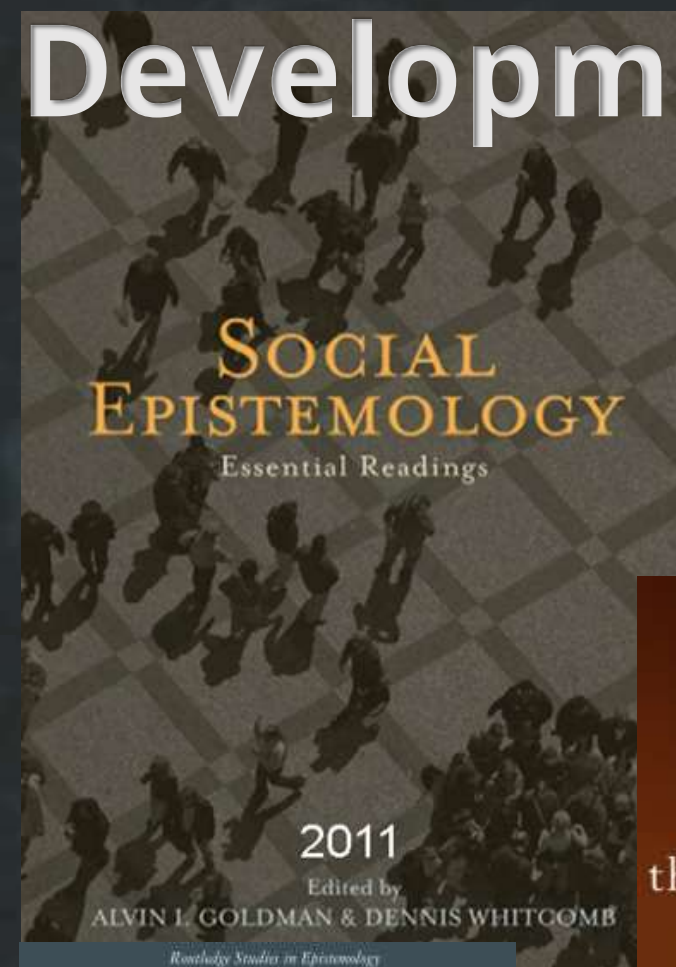


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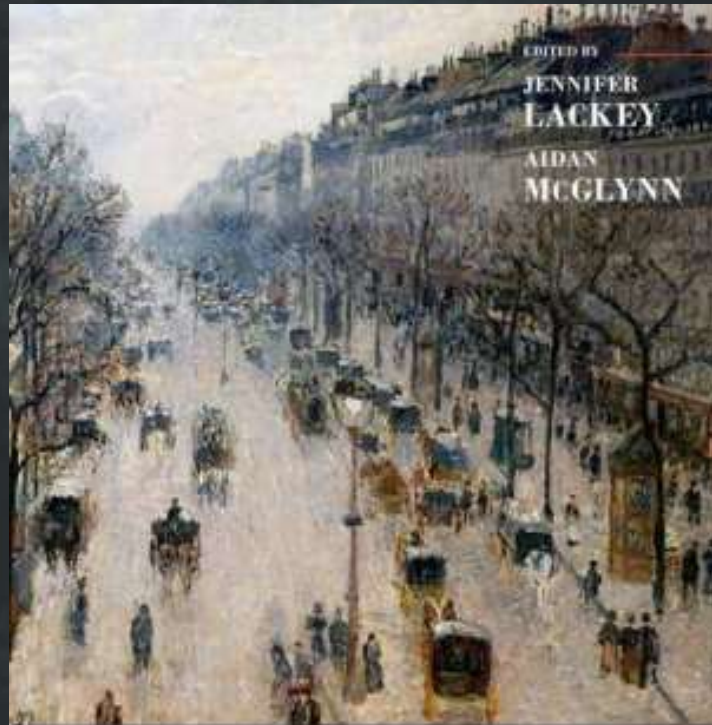
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@jomhourifalsafe1403

# Developments in Social Epistemology



# Developments in Social Epistemology



≡ The Oxford Handbook of  
**SOCIAL  
EPISTEMOLOGY**

2025

PART I. COMMUNICATION AND EPISTEMIC  
DEPENDENCE

PART II. GROUPS AND INTERPERSONAL  
RELATIONSHIPS

PART III. EPISTEMIC WRONGS AND EPISTEMIC  
REPARATIONS

PART IV. APPLIED SOCIAL EPISTEMOLOGY

PART V. SOCIAL EPISTEMIC GOODS

PART VII. SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES ON  
INDIVIDUALIST APPROACHES

INTEREST in social epistemology and work in this area have exploded in recent years with the publication of a vast quantity of exciting and wholly new research on a broad range of topics. This handbook provides new work on some of the most cutting-edge and important issues in this fertile and rapidly growing area of philosophy. While some of the chapters contribute to, and further develop, lines of inquiry in social epistemology that are already deep and active, others open up entirely new avenues of research. All of the contributions aim to highlight the relevance and importance of the social to some of the most pressing epistemological questions facing us as agents in the world.

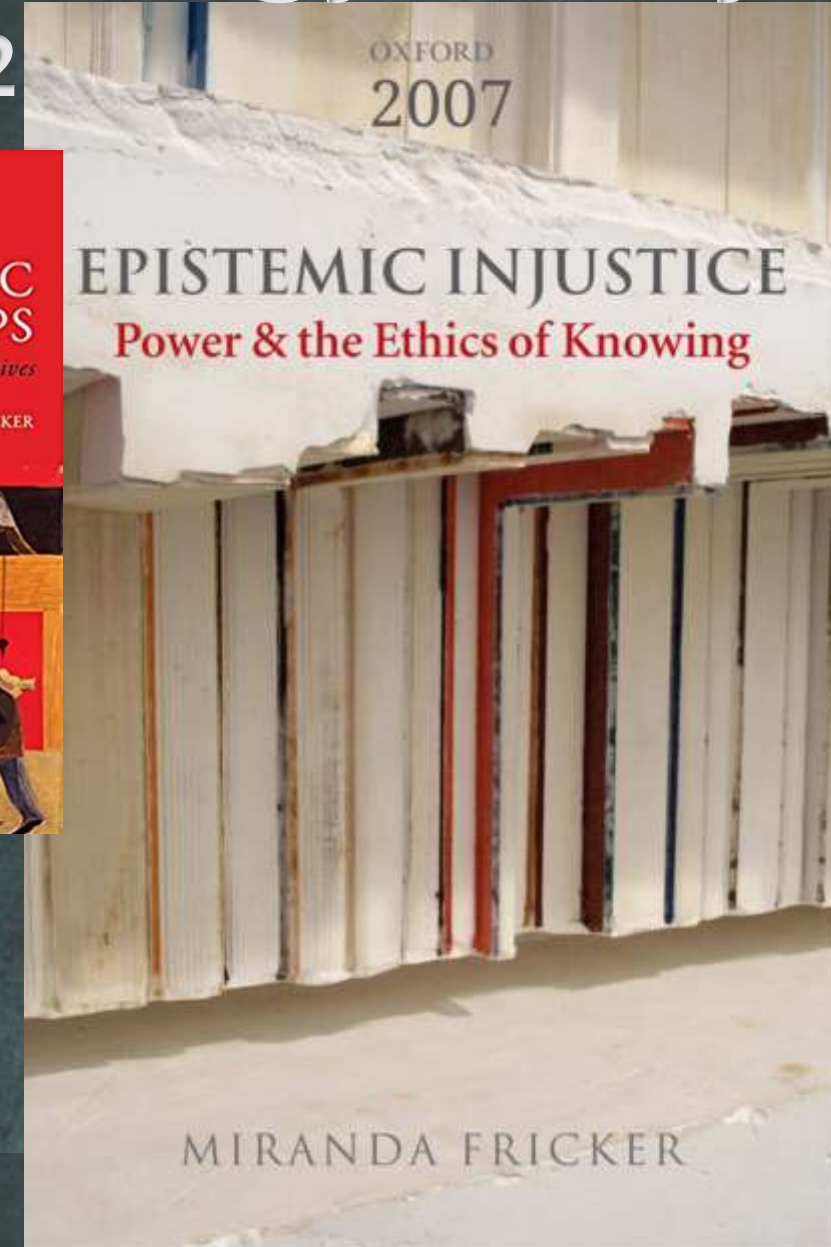
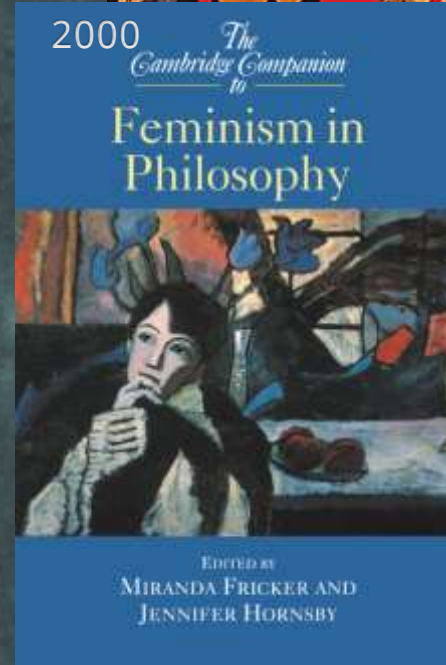
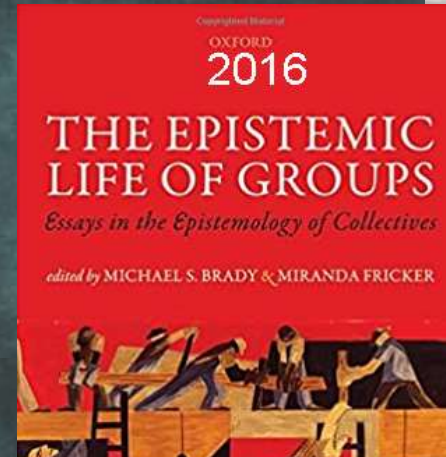
# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

## 2. Miranda Fricker, NYU since 2022

### Major themes:

- Epistemic Injustice
- Feminist Epistemology
- Social epistemology

- **'How Is Forgiveness Always A Gift?'** Presidential Address, *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* (forthcoming, 2022)
- **'Institutional Vices: The Case of Inferential Inertia'**, In Ian J. Kidd, Heather Battaly, Quassim Cassam (eds.), *Epistemic Vice* (2021, Routledge)
- **'Forgiveness: An Ordered Pluralism'**, *Australasian Philosophical Review* 3/3 (2019) ('target article' with commentaries by Lucy Allais, Glen Pettigrove, Luke Russell)
- **'Ambivalence About Forgiveness'**, *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* Vol. 84 (Nov. 2018)
- **'Evolving Concepts of Epistemic Injustice'**, *Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice*, eds. Ian James Kidd, José Medina, & Gaile Pohlhaus Jr. (2017)
- **'Epistemic Injustice, Ignorance, and Trans Experiences'**, co-authored with Katharine Jenkins, *Routledge Companion to Feminist Philosophy*, eds. Garry, Khader, & Stone (2017)
- **'Epistemic Injustice and the Preservation of Ignorance'**, *The Epistemic Dimensions of Ignorance* eds. M. Blaauw & R. Peels (Cambridge University Press, 2016)
- **'What's the Point of Blame? A Paradigm Based Explanation'**, *Noûs* 50 (1) 165-183; (2014)
- **'Styles of Moral Relativism – A Critical Family Tree'**, *Oxford Handbook of the History of Ethics*, ed. Roger Crisp (OUP, 2013)
- **'Epistemic Justice as a Condition of Political Freedom'**, *Synthese* Vol. 190, Issue 7 (2013) pp. 1317-1332



# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

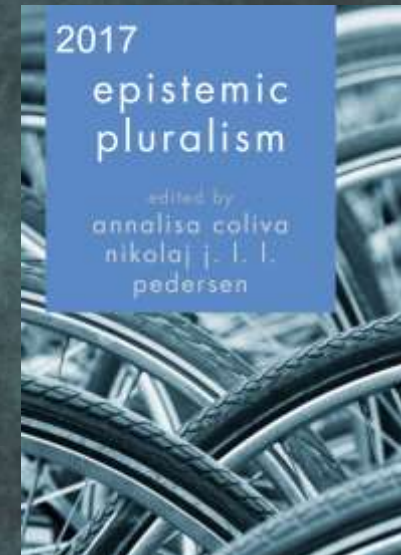
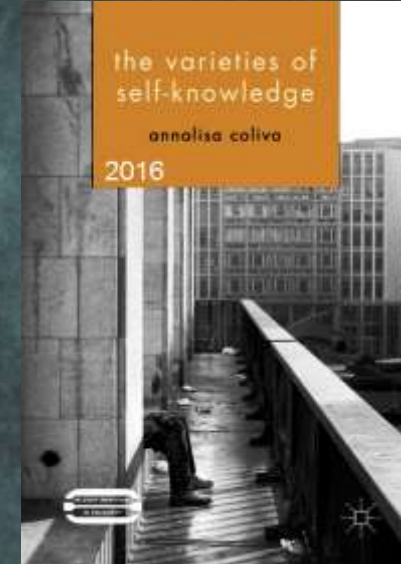
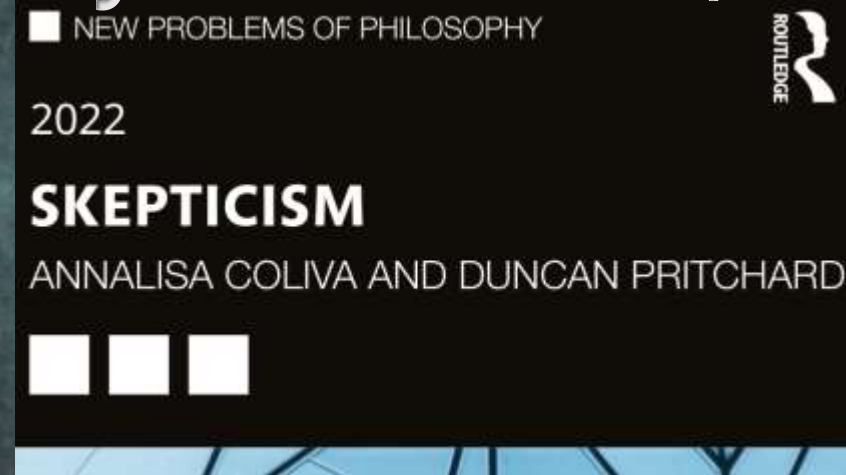
## 3. Analisa Coliva, University of California, Irvine

### Major themes:

- Extended Rationality
- Hinge Epistemology
- Pluralism
- Self-knowledge

In *epistemology*, I have developed a constitutivist form of “hinge epistemology”—a term that I coined for a new trend in epistemology inspired by Wittgenstein’s remarks in *On Certainty*. I have explored its bearing on the structure of justification, skepticism, relativism, testimony, disagreement, and knowledge of basic logical laws and other basic principles of human inquiry.

At the interface between *epistemology* and the *philosophy of mind*, I have developed a pluralistic account of self-knowledge and have explored its bearing on the issue of self-deception, Moore’s paradox, belief revision, and the possibility of intrapersonal disagreement.

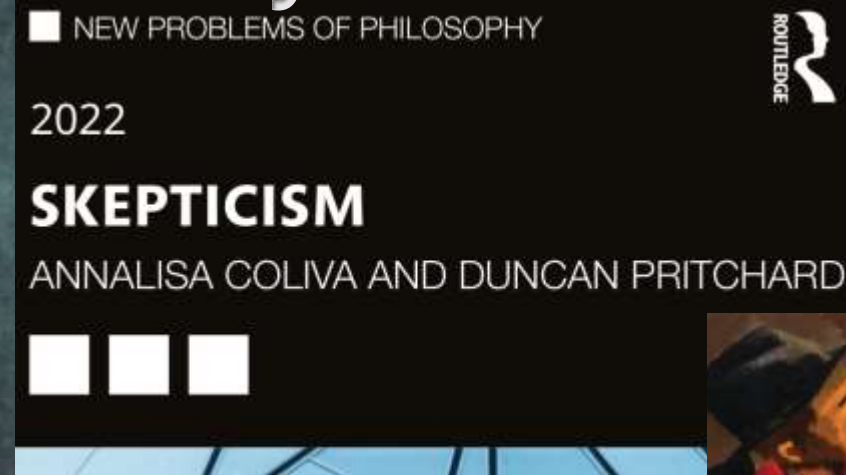


# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

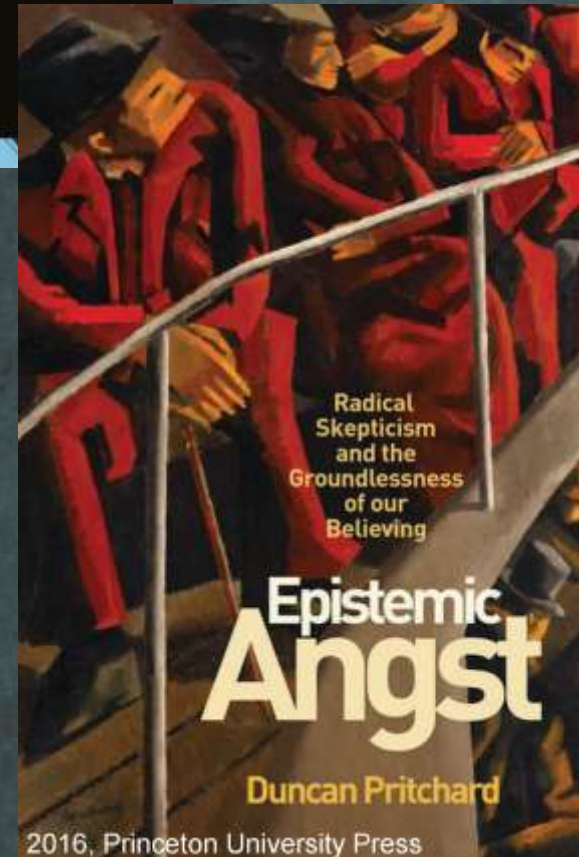
## 4. Duncan Pritchard, University of California, Irvine

### Major themes:

- Disjunctivism
- Hinge Epistemology
- Epistemic Luck
- Groundless Belief



- Tempting Fate: Risk, Luck and the Meaning of Life, (Princeton UP, forthcoming).
- Religious Hinges (with A. Coliva & G. Schönbaumsfeld), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, in preparation).
- What is the Value of Truth? (with C. Rannali). (Oxford: Wiley, in preparation).
- Wittgenstein on Knowledge and Certainty (with D. Moyal-Sharrock), (Cambridge UP, 2024).
- Scepticism (with A. Coliva), (Routledge, 2022).
- Scepticism: A Very Short Introduction, (Oxford UP, 2019). [Translated into Greek, Japanese & Portuguese].
- Epistemic Angst: Radical Skepticism and the Groundlessness of Our Believing, (Princeton UP, 2015).
- Epistemological Disjunctivism, (Oxford UP, h/bk 2012; p/bk 2014).
- The Nature and Value of Knowledge: Three Investigations, (with A. Haddock & A. Millar), (Oxford UP, h/bk 2010; p/bk 2012).
- Epistemic Luck, (Oxford UP, h/bk 2005; p/bk 2007).



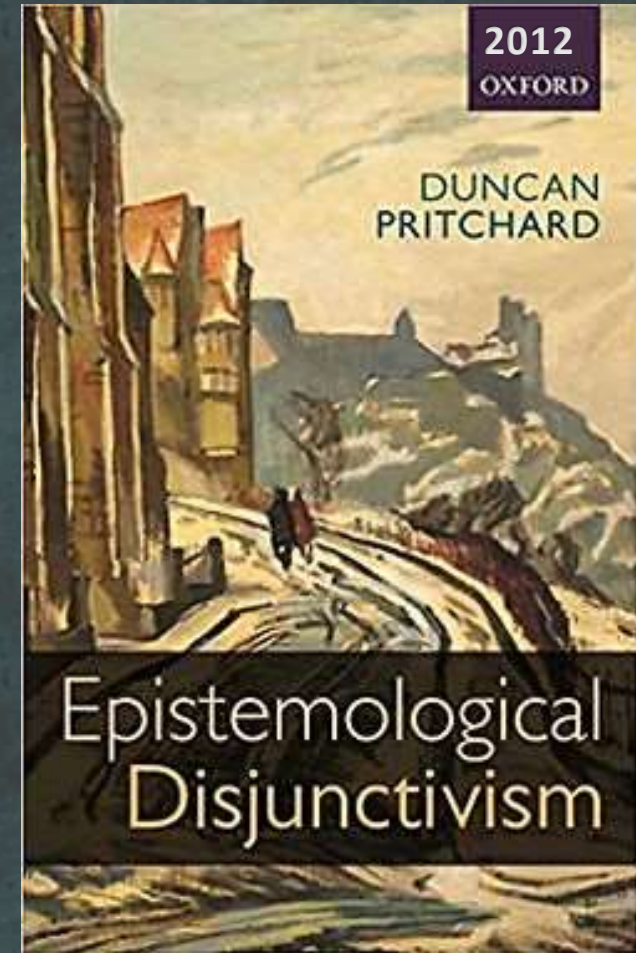
# Disjunctivism

This position has been defended by a number of other epistemologists, in addition to Pritchard. The most prominent of them is John McDowell, who contends that a state in which it looks to *S* as if *p* is *either*:

1. a state of *S*'s seeing that *p*, and thereby being put in a position to know that *p*, and so acquiring an indefeasible reason for believing that *p*, or
2. a state in which it merely looks to *S* as if *p*, in which *S* acquires no such reason, and so is not put in any such position.

We might compare disjunctivism to the Ishraqi view that when it seems to us that we perceive something, either

1. The perceived object in the external world is also present in the mind; or
2. What is present in the mind is a defective confusion of shadows.

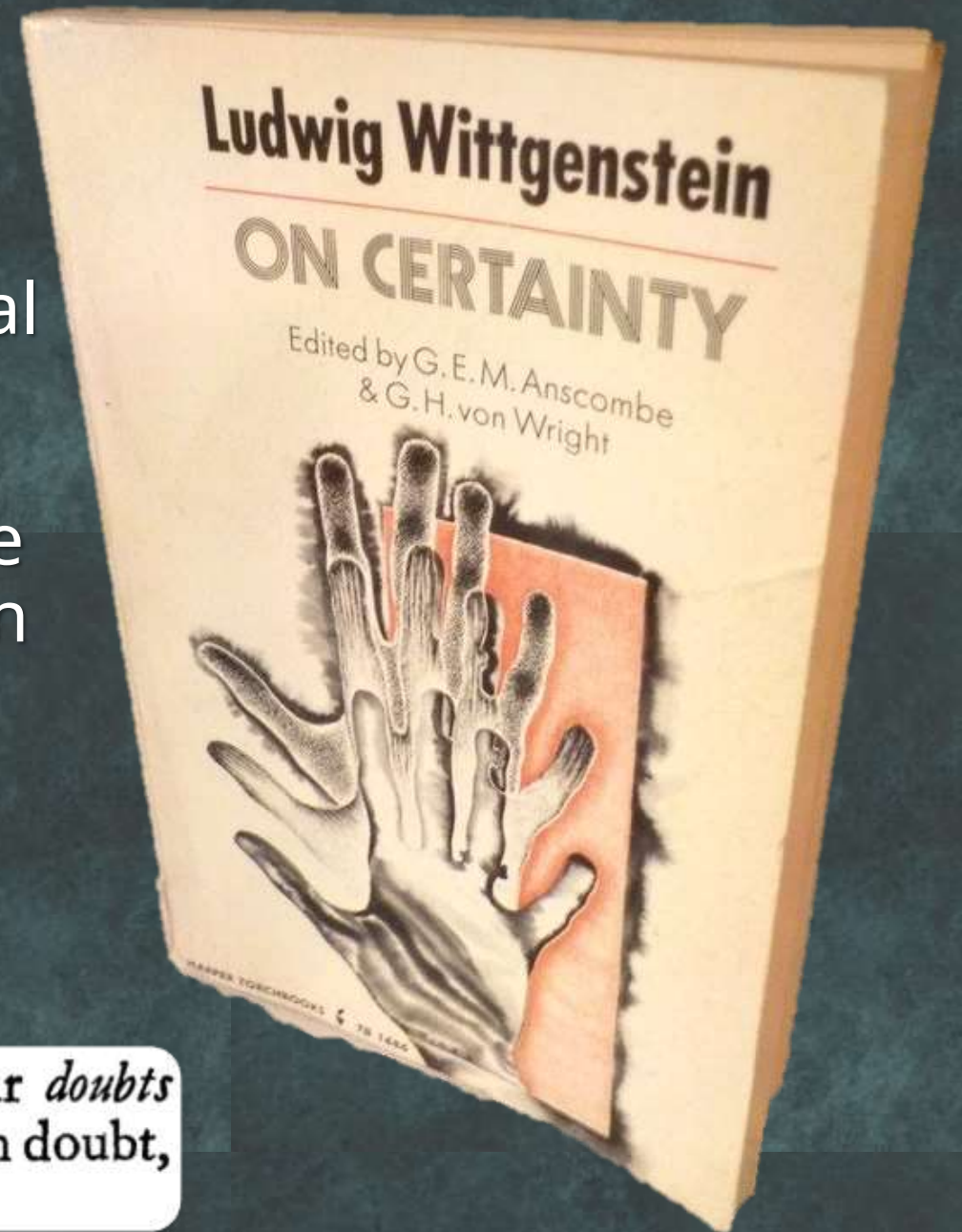


# Hinge Epistemology

is a style of epistemology derived from Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*.

Just as the hinges of a door are exceptional because they stay put while the door moves and they enable it to open and close, there are some propositions that we normally think that we cannot be mistaken about but which set the stage for the investigation of the truth of other propositions and for the exchange of information in ordinary communication.

341. That is to say, the *questions* that we raise and our *doubts* depend on the fact that some propositions are exempt from doubt, are as it were like hinges on which those turn.



*On Certainty* leaves many questions about hinge epistemology unanswered. We can divide the questions into two:

- I. **What did Wittgenstein have in mind? (exegetical questions)**
- I. **What is the most philosophically plausible way to develop a hinge epistemology? (epistemological questions)**

Fortunately, a number of very capable philosophers have produced an impressive body of literature for the purpose of answering both the exegetical and epistemological questions.





Annalisa Coliva

University of California, Irvine



Crispin Wright

University of Stirling  
New York University



Danièle Moyal-Sharrock

University of Hertfordshire



Duncan Pritchard

University of California, Irvine  
Macquarie University



Michael Williams

Johns Hopkins

- Hinges are not foundations. They are not the source of all inferential justification.
- Hinges are not the same as the self-evident propositions of Avicenna.
- Hinges are not the certainties of Descartes.
- Hinges are not the *synthetic a priori* propositions of Kant.
- They are what determines the framework, *Bezugssystem*, with reference to which our questions and doubts can make sense.

Wittgenstein compares them to a riverbed that may shift over time, but that determines the channel through which our thoughts flow during inquiry. They are needed not only as a framework within which we justify our beliefs, but also find reasons for doubt and questioning.



# Are Hinges Rational?

If hinges are commitments, we might ask whether it is rational to hold such commitments. Wittgenstein denies that hinge commitments are decided upon by a process of deliberation. We just find ourselves with them. So, we can say that they are not *deliberatively rational*. If they are not *beliefs*, they are not theoretically rational. This leads Moyal-Sharrock to consider hinges *arational* and *non-epistemic*.

On the other hand, Crispin Wright holds that hinges have propositional content that we are *entitled* to accept, where *entitlement* is practical, and hinge propositions do not have rational *justification*, where *justification* is epistemic.

In her book, *Extended Rationality: A Hinge Epistemology* (2015), Annalisa Coliva argues that hinges should be considered to be *rational* by extending the concept of *rationality*. Hinges are rational because they are constitutive elements of our epistemic practices, not because they have epistemic justification.

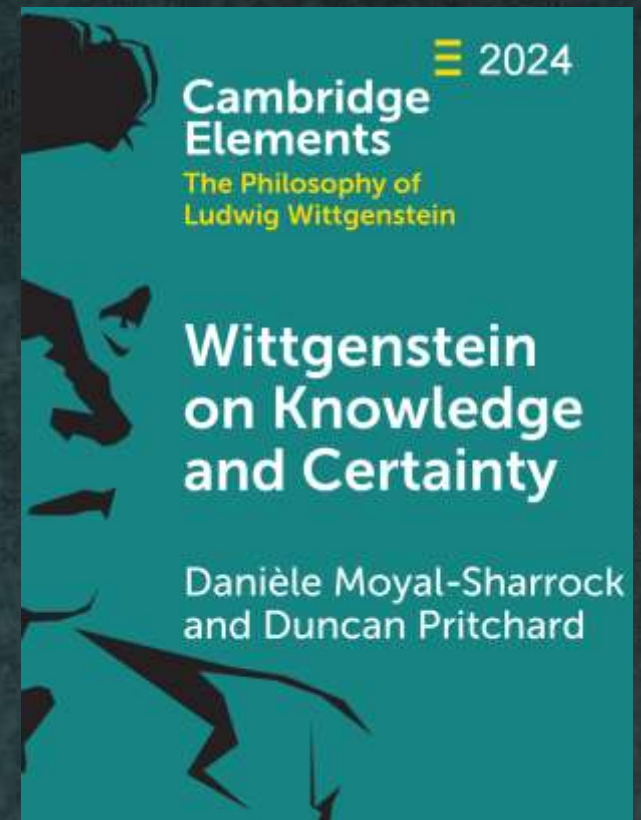


# Hinge Epistemology and the Challenge of Skepticism

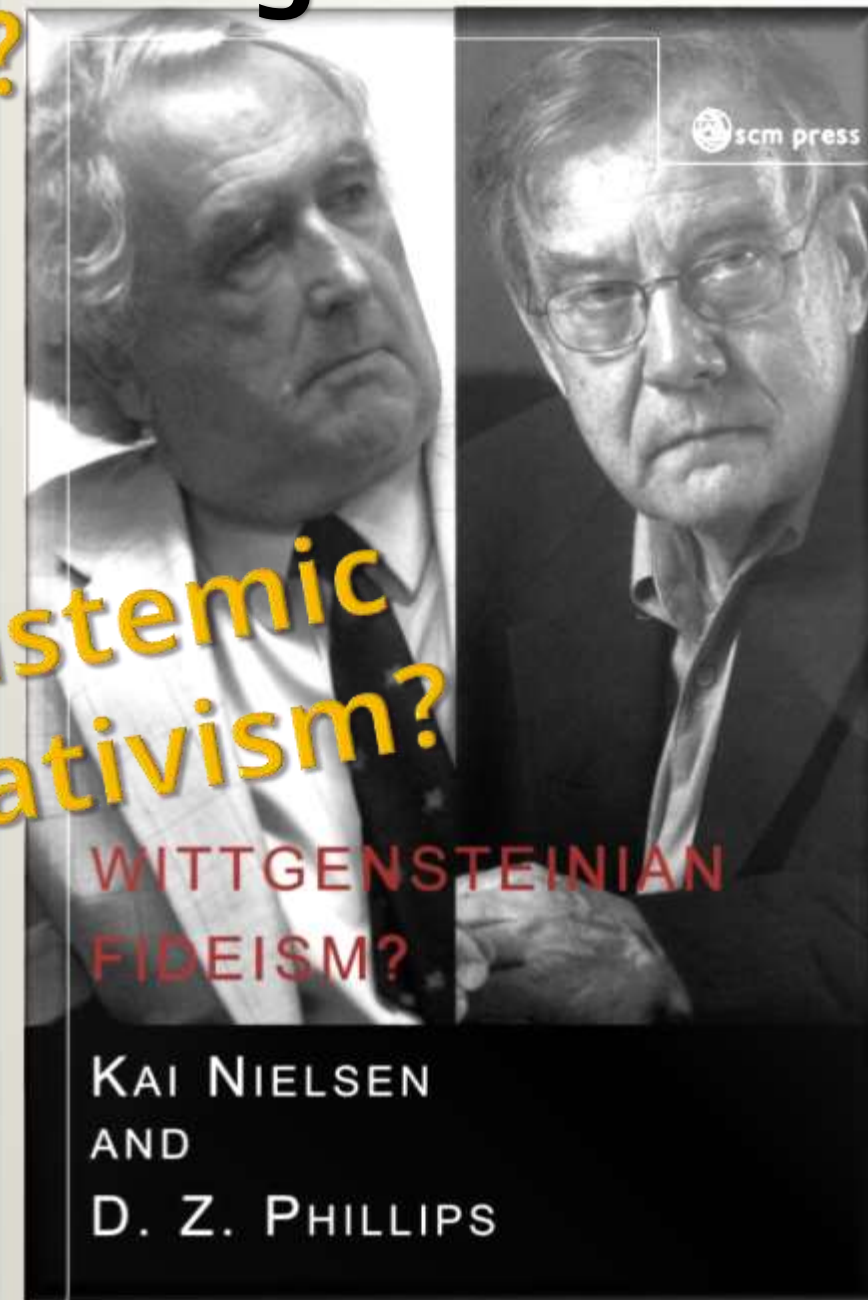
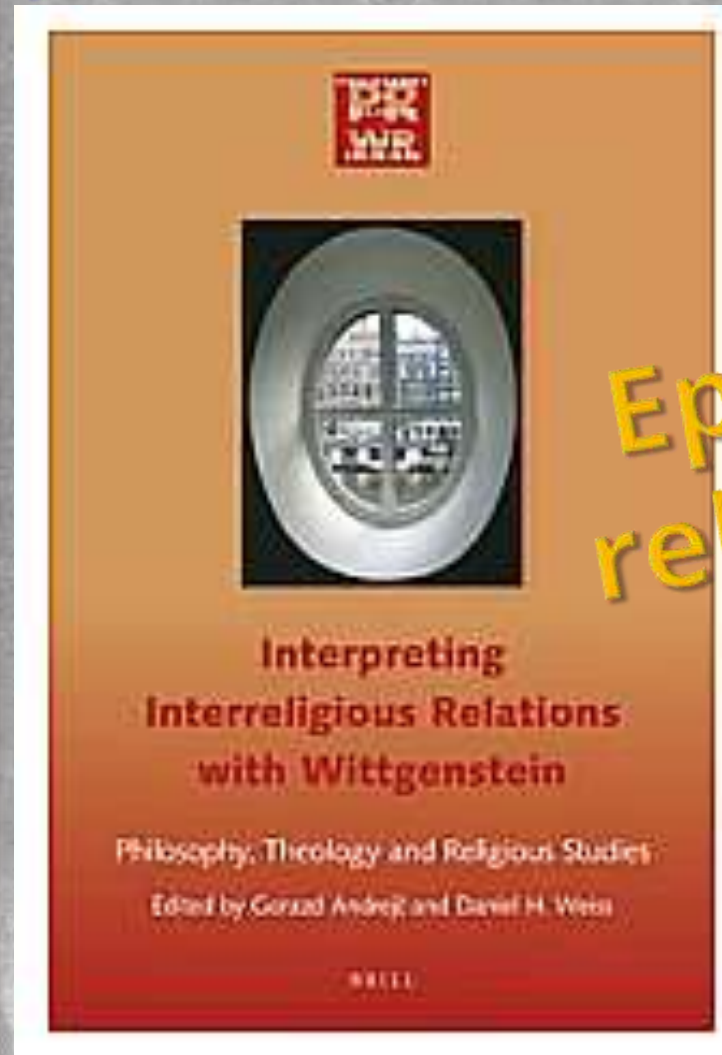
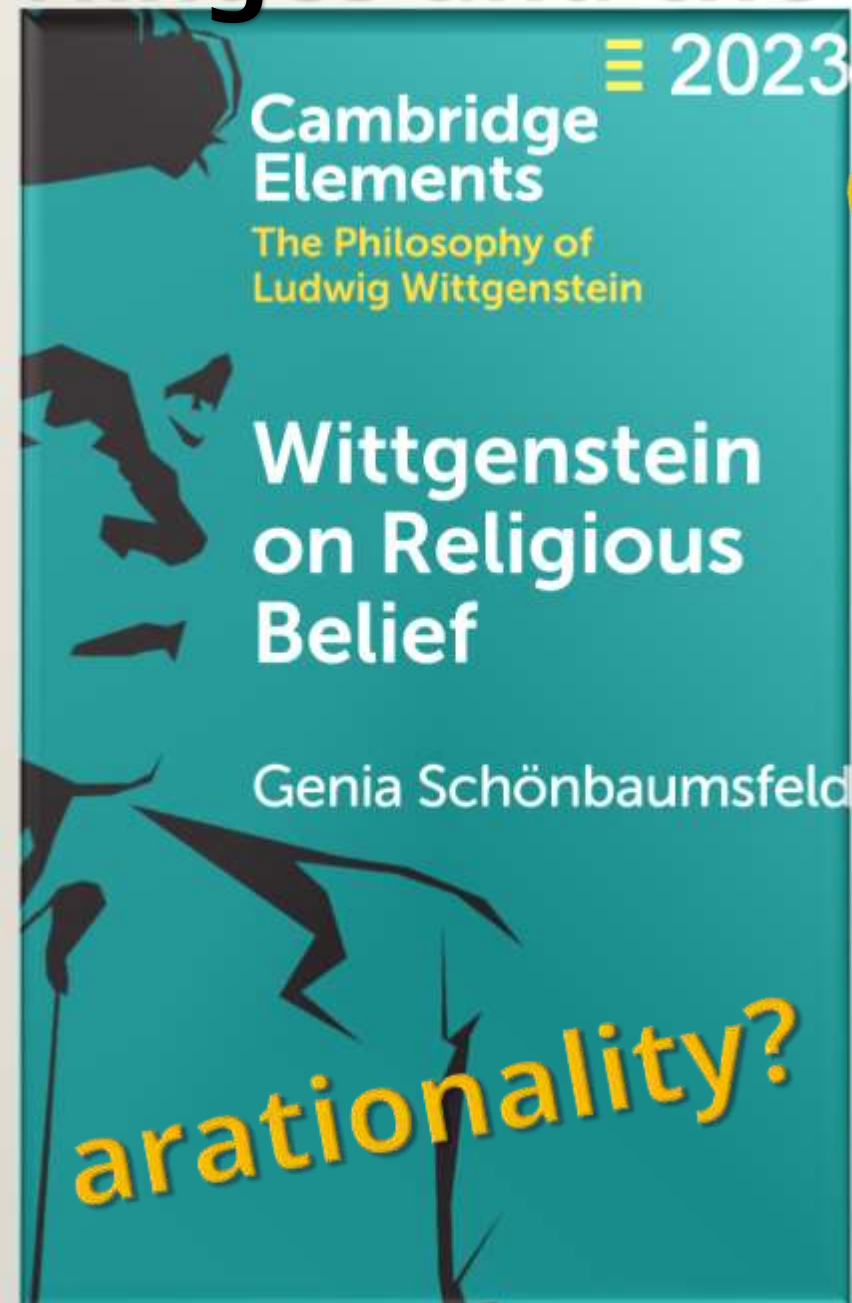
Hinge epistemologists agree that Wittgenstein provides us with a novel way to understand and respond to skepticism. They disagree about the details. Hinge epistemology does not try to show that we have evidence or a proof that at least some of our beliefs are veridical. The project is not like that of Descartes.

The problem with the skeptic is one of trying to push demands for justification beyond what is reasonable.

According to Duncan Pritchard, there are certain hinges, ***über-hinges***, which are commitments to our basic worldview and which rule out radical skepticism. The *über-hinge* commitments are manifested in our lesser hinge commitments, according to Pritchard, but we cannot use *modus ponens* to derive refutations of skepticism from ordinary beliefs about furniture and where our hands are. Wittgenstein must reject closure, unrestricted *modus ponens*.



# Hinges and the epistemology of religious belief

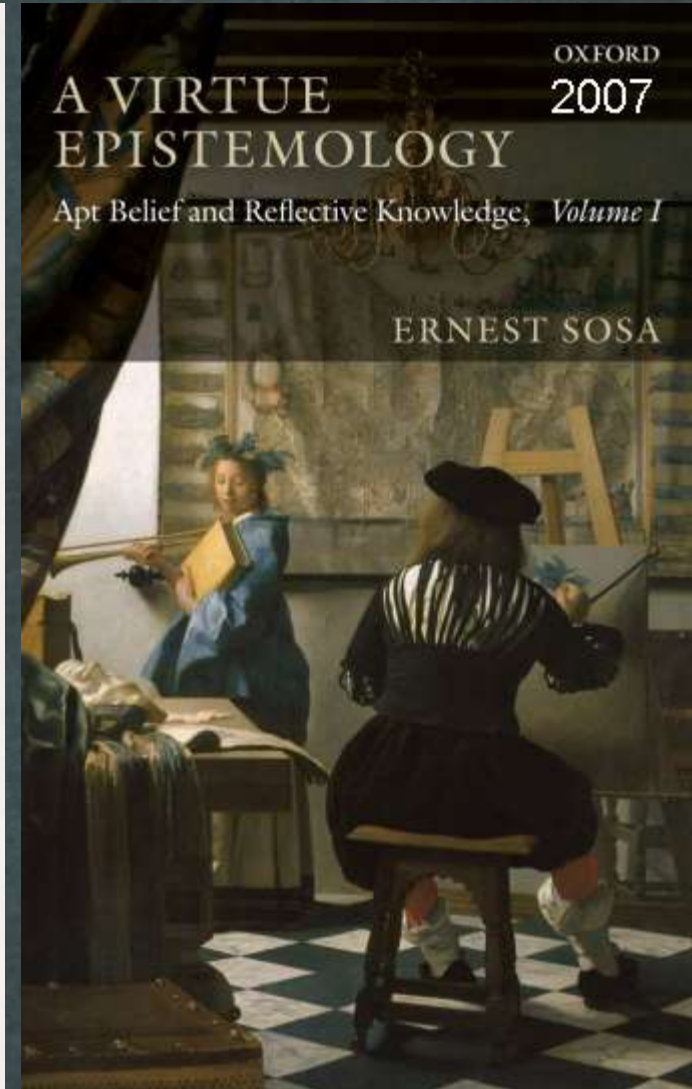
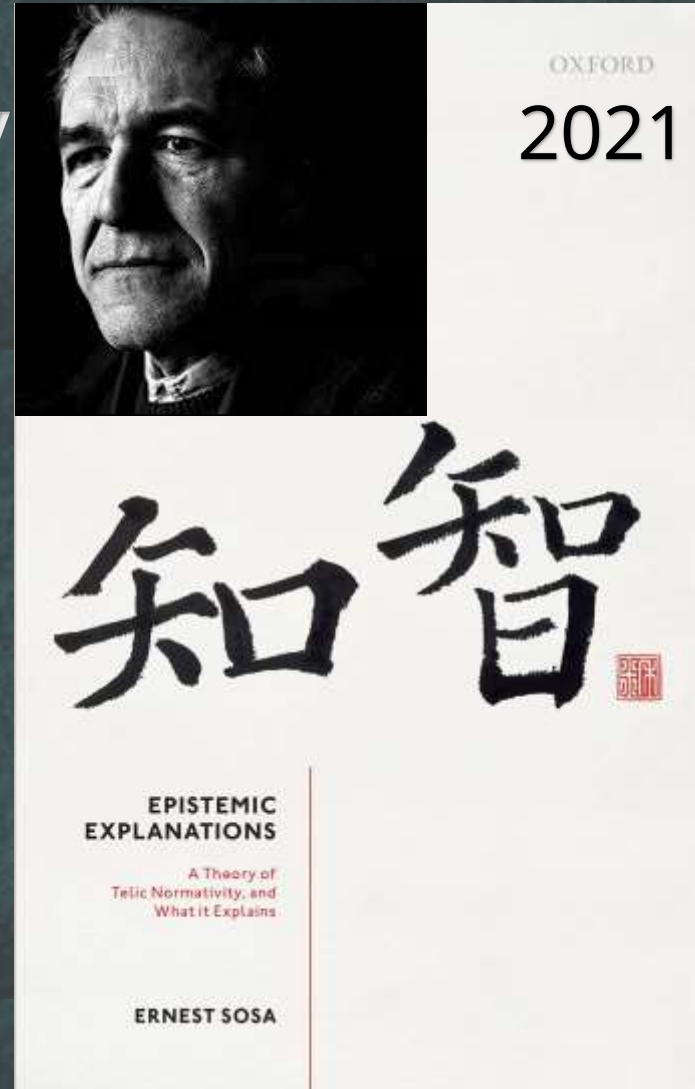
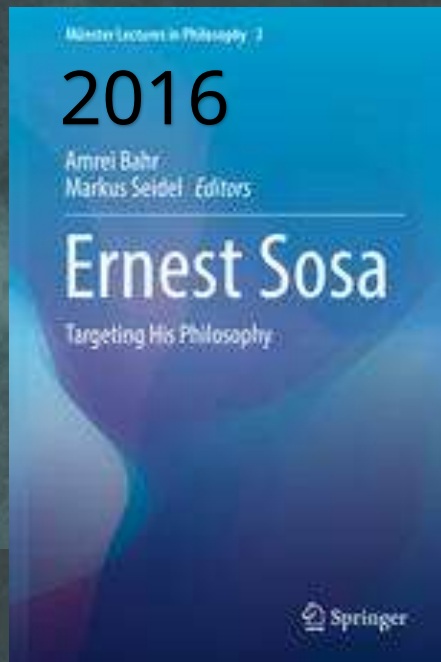
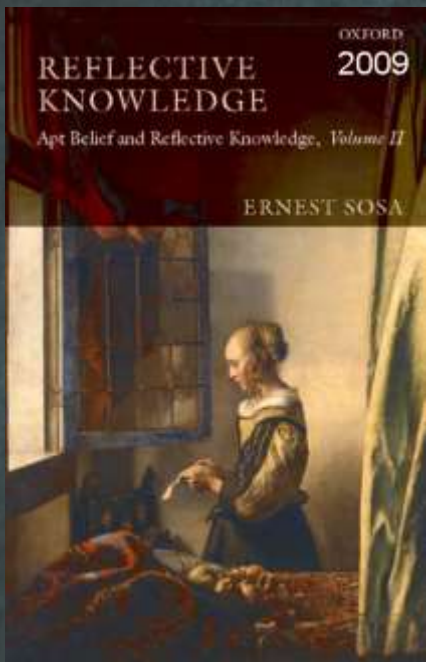


# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

5. Ernest Sosa, Rutgers University, formerly Brown U.

Major themes:

- Virtue Epistemology
- Explanation
- Safety
- Apt Belief



What is an epistemic virtue? Are epistemic virtues reliable? Are they motivated by a love of truth? Do epistemic virtues produce knowledge and understanding? How can we develop epistemic virtues? *The Routledge Handbook of Virtue Epistemology* answers all of these questions. This landmark volume provides a pluralistic and comprehensive picture of the field of virtue epistemology. It is the first large-scale volume of its kind on the topic. Composed of 41 chapters, all published here for the first time, it breaks new ground in four areas.

1. It articulates the structure and features of epistemic virtues.
2. It provides in-depth analyses of 10 individual epistemic virtues.
3. It examines the connections between epistemic virtue, knowledge, and understanding.
4. It applies virtue epistemology, and explores its impact on related fields.

PART I: EPISTEMIC VIRTUES: GENERAL STRUCTURE AND FEATURES

PART II: ANALYSES OF INDIVIDUAL EPISTEMIC VIRTUES

PART III: EPISTEMIC VIRTUES, KNOWLEDGE, AND UNDERSTANDING

PART IV: VIRTUE EPISTEMOLOGY: APPLICATION AND IMPACT



The Routledge Handbook of  
Virtue Epistemology

2019

Edited by Heather Battaly

# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

## 6. Jennifer Lackey, Northwestern University

### Major themes:

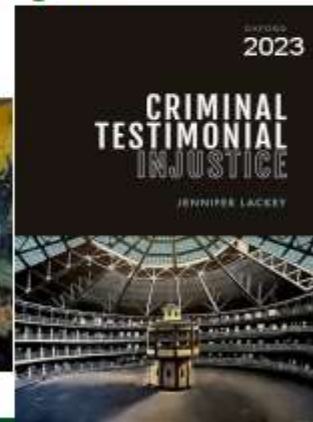
- Social Epistemology
- Testimony
- Applied Epistemology
- Epistemology and the Media
- Disagreement



**JENNIFER LACKEY, PH.D.**

Wayne and Elizabeth Jones  
Professor of Philosophy,  
Northwestern University

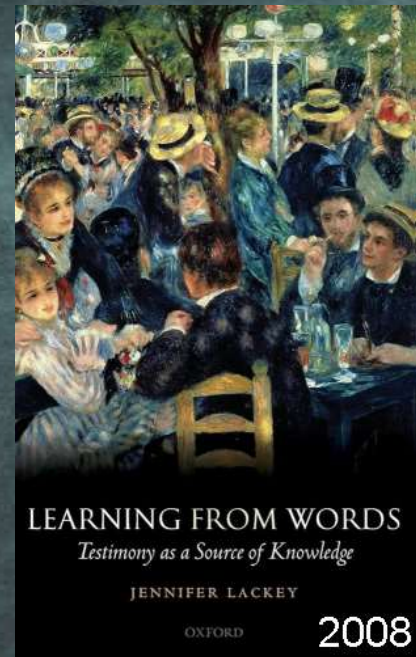
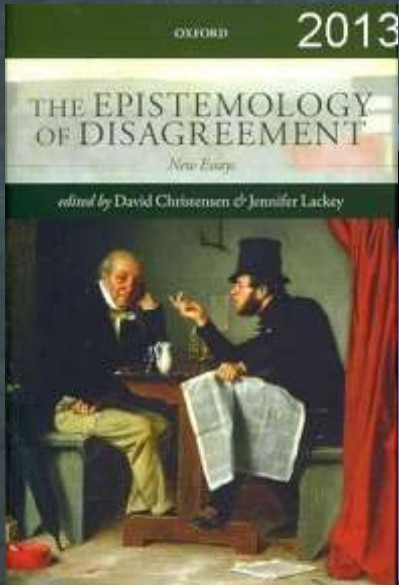
Director, Northwestern Prison  
Education Program



**Noûs**

ARTICLE  
**Eyewitness testimony and epistemic agency**  
First published: 11 June 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12380>

**ECHO CHAMBERS, FAKE NEWS,  
AND SOCIAL EPISTEMOLOGY**



**When is trust epistemically warranted?**

# Trust. When is it warranted and when should it be withheld? When are beliefs based on trust justified?

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRUST

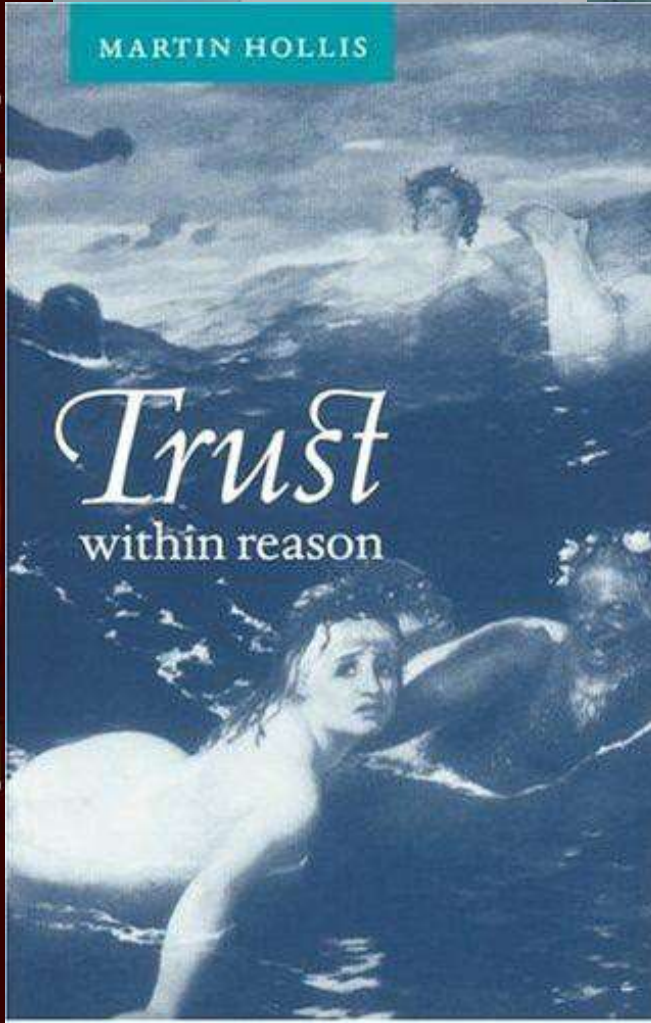


edited by PAUL FAULKNER & THOMAS SIMPSON

OXFORD

MARTIN HOLLIS

## Trust within reason



Routledge Studies in Trust Research

## TRUST IN EPISTEMOLOGY

Edited by  
Katherine Dormandy



## TESTIMONY, TRUST, & AUTHORITY



BENJAMIN McMYLER

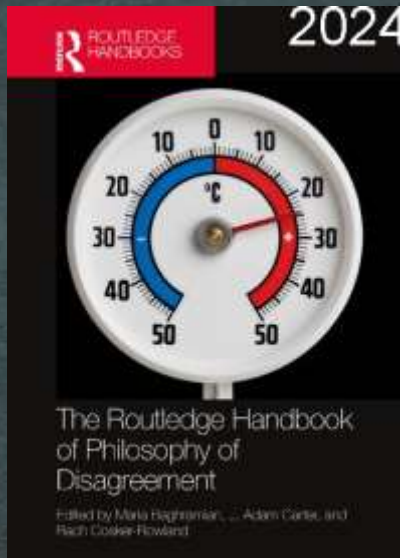
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# Prominent Voices in Epistemology Today

## 7. J. Adam Carter, University of Glasgow

### Major themes:

- The Epistemology of AI
- Disagreement
- Zetetic Epistemology
- Meta-Epistemology
- Practical Knowledge

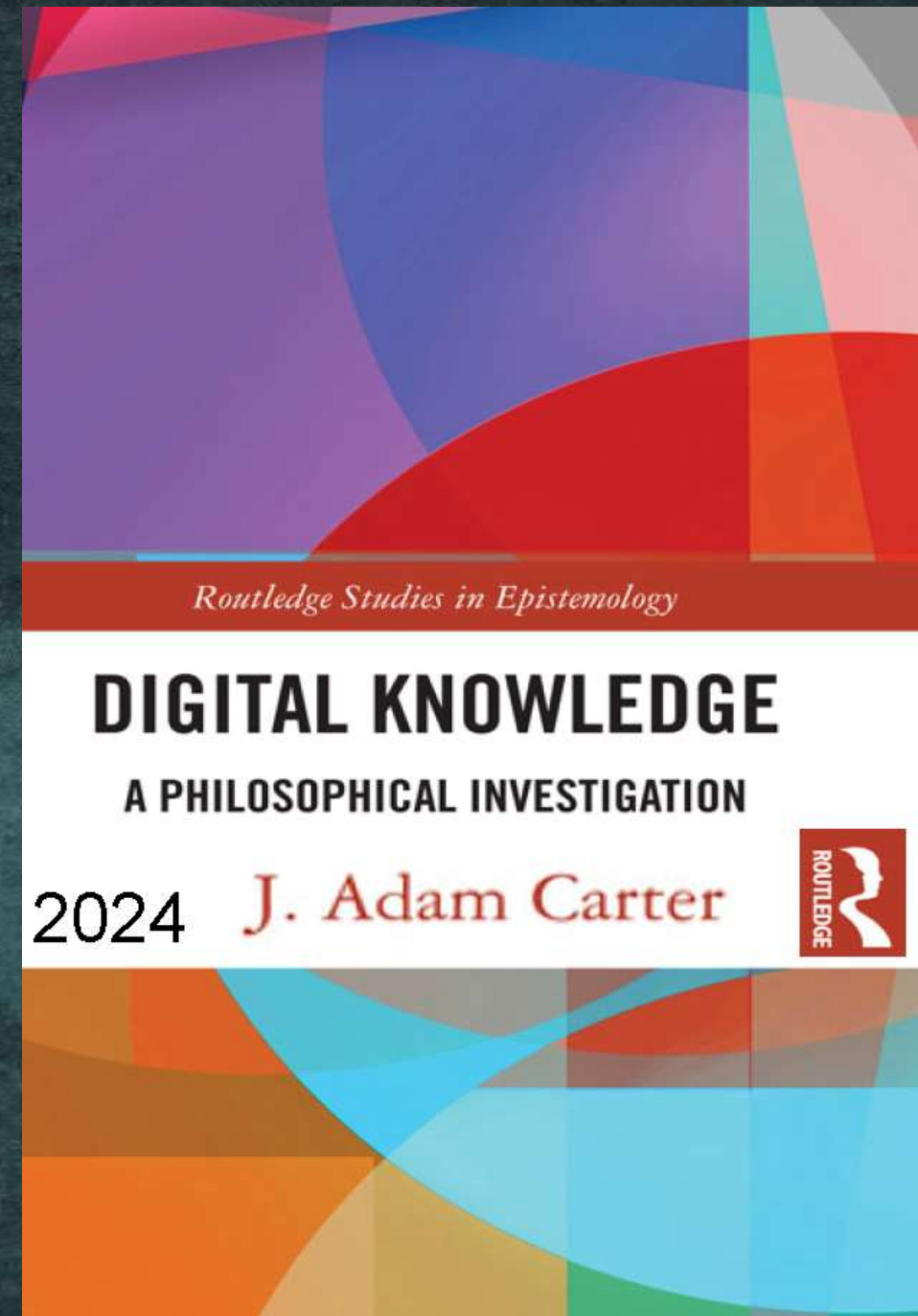


1. *Knowing How and Learning How: An Epistemic Theory of Control* (w/ T. Kearl)  
Forthcoming with Cambridge University Press.
2. *Social Epistemic Autonomy* (w/ N. Levy).  
Forthcoming with MIT Press.
3. *Epistemology in the Subpersonal Vale* (w/ R. Rupert).  
Forthcoming with Oxford University Press: New York.
4. *A Telic Theory of Trust*  
2024. Oxford: Oxford University Press. OUP page
5. *Stratified Virtue Epistemology: A Defence*  
2023. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. CUP page
6. *Digital Knowledge*  
2023. London: Routledge. Routledge page
7. *Autonomous Knowledge*  
2022. Oxford: Oxford University Press. OUP page Reviewed here (by L. Olin) and here (by C. Tweedt).
8. *This is Epistemology* (w/ C. Littlejohn).  
2021. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell. Wiley-Blackwell page
9. *The Philosophy of Group Polarization: Epistemology, Metaphysics, Psychology* (w/ F. Broncano-Berrocal).  
2021. London: Routledge. Routledge page
10. *A Critical Introduction to Knowledge-How* (w/ T. Poston).  
2018. London: Continuum. Bloomsbury page
11. *Metaepistemology and Relativism*  
2016. Palgrave MacMillan. PDF | Amazon

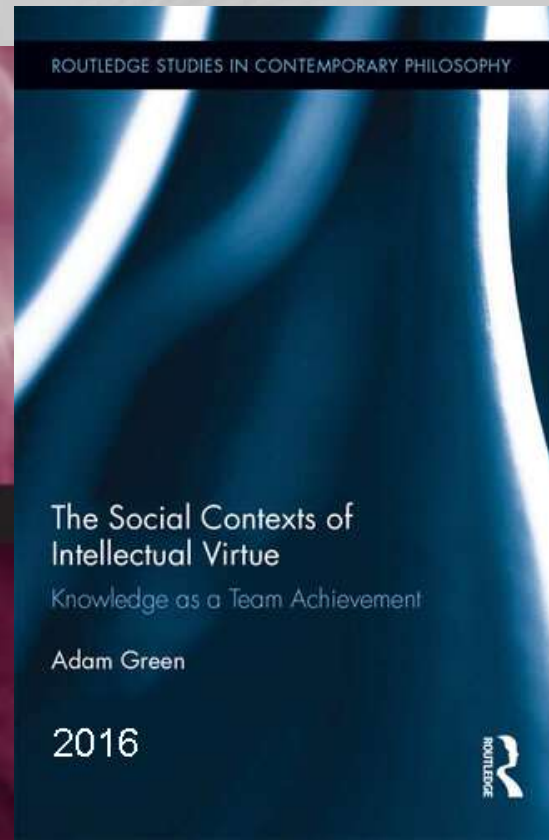
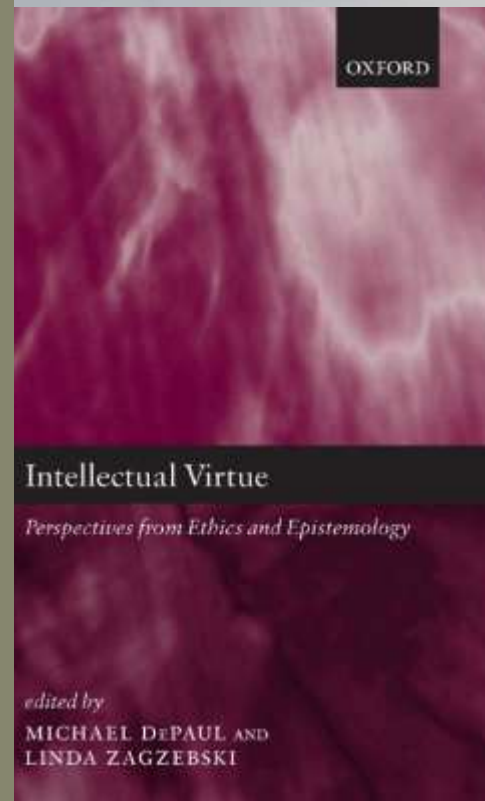
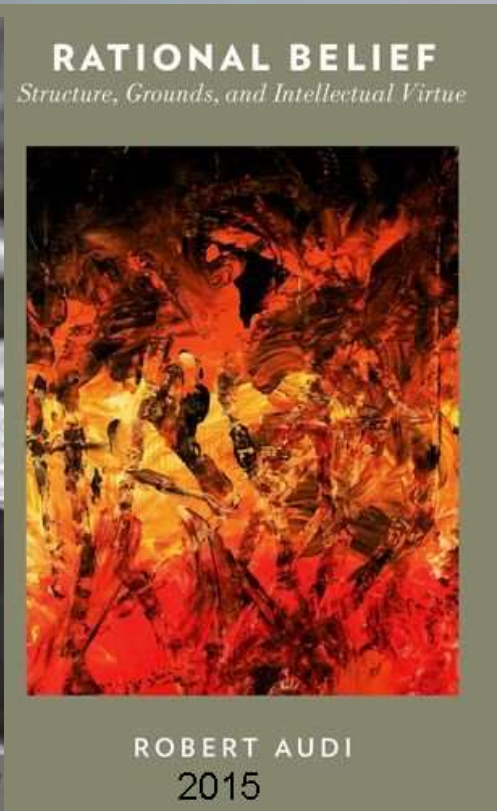
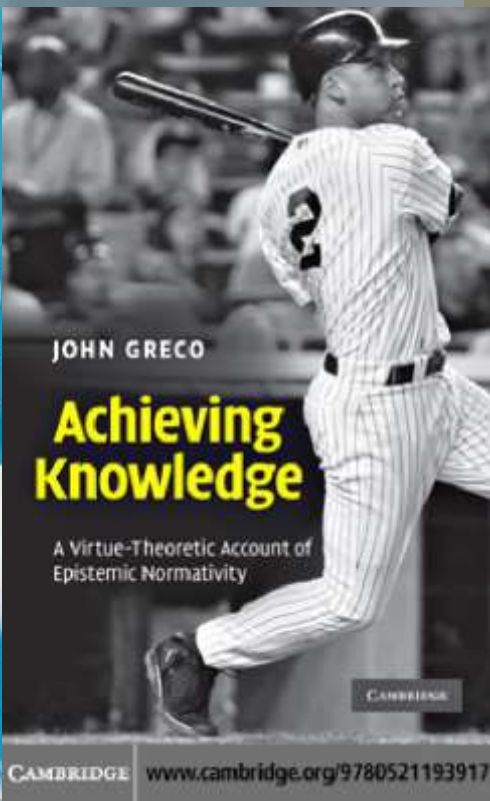
*Digital Knowledge: A Philosophical Investigation* is the first book to squarely and rigorously investigate digital knowledge: what it is, how to make sense of it in connection with received theories of knowledge, and where it is going. Key questions J. Adam Carter examines along the way are the following:

- How is mere digital information converted into reliable digital knowledge?
- To what extent can digital knowledge be vindicated against sceptical challenges, and in what ways might digital knowledge stand distinctively subject to defeat?
- What is the epistemically optimal way for us to decide which tasks to outsource entirely to intelligent machines, and to what extent is further outsourcing appropriate (or not) to verify the results of that same outsourced cognition?
- Are there any ways in which the expansion of the datasphere threatens to make knowledge less, rather than more, easy to come by? If so, are there any promising ways to safeguard, epistemically, against such threats?

Using fascinating examples throughout, such as the recent chess match between Stockfish and Google's AlphaZero, smartphones and personalisation, *Digital Knowledge: A Philosophical Investigation* is ideal for researchers investigating this fascinating area at the intersection of traditional mainstream epistemology, the philosophy of cognitive science, the philosophy of technology, and computer science.



# Further issues in epistemology today: Intellectual Virtue. How are the intellectual virtues understood in different theological traditions?



# Further issues in epistemology today: **Moral Epistemology.** How do we know what is right and wrong? How do we know what is good and bad?

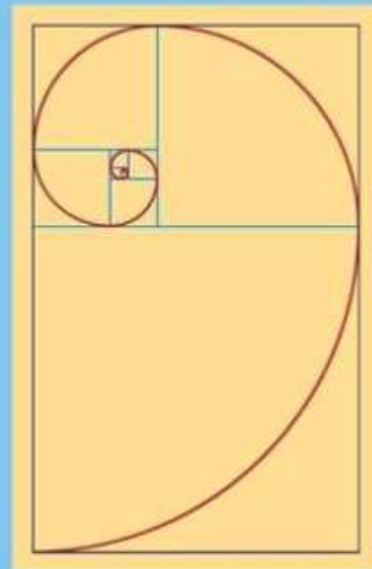


The Routledge Handbook of  
Moral Epistemology

2019

Edited by Aaron Zimmerman, Karen Jones,  
and Mark Timmons

Oxford, 2017  
Exemplarist  
Moral Theory



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2019



I suspect that there is a special reason why the social aspects of knowledge have been underemphasized within moral epistemology in particular. For many moral philosophers, the *method of reflective equilibrium* is the correct account of how moral inquiry should ideally be conducted, and thus stands at the very center of moral epistemology. At least as it is often presented and understood, the method naturally encourages an individualistic picture of moral inquiry: in principle, an individual could flawlessly execute the method while sitting alone at her desk. Although the method of reflective equilibrium embodies genuine and important insights, I will argue that it does not have the kind of centrality for moral epistemology or moral inquiry that has been claimed for it.

MORAL KNOWLEDGE

SARAH McGRATH

# Further issues in epistemology today:

**Evidentialism.** Is the evidence one has for a belief

sufficient for its justification?

Can one have justified beliefs that are independent of the

evidence? A number of

prominent philosophers have

written on this topic, most

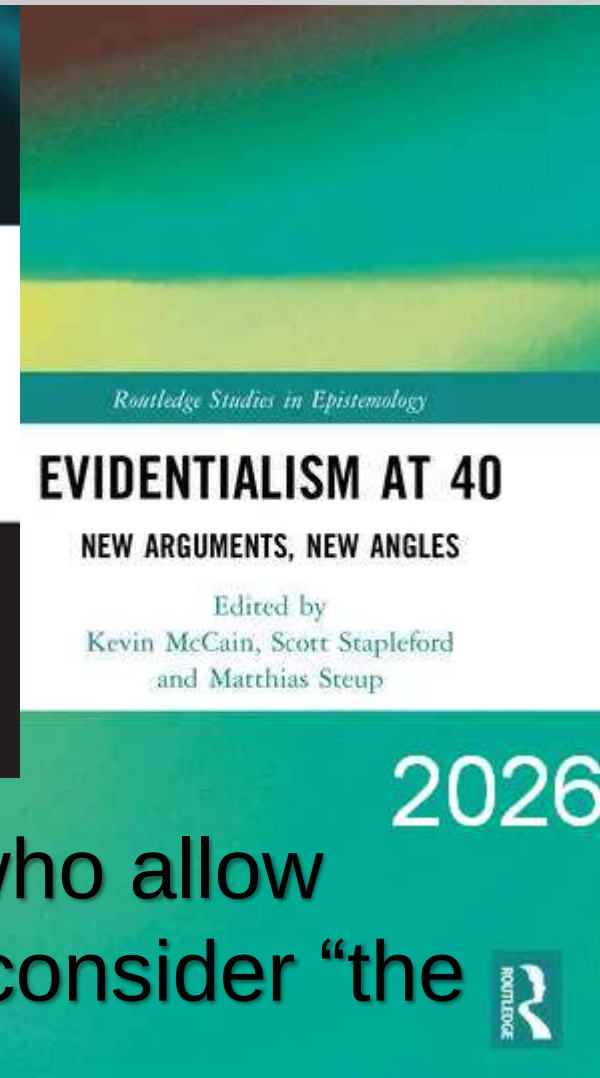
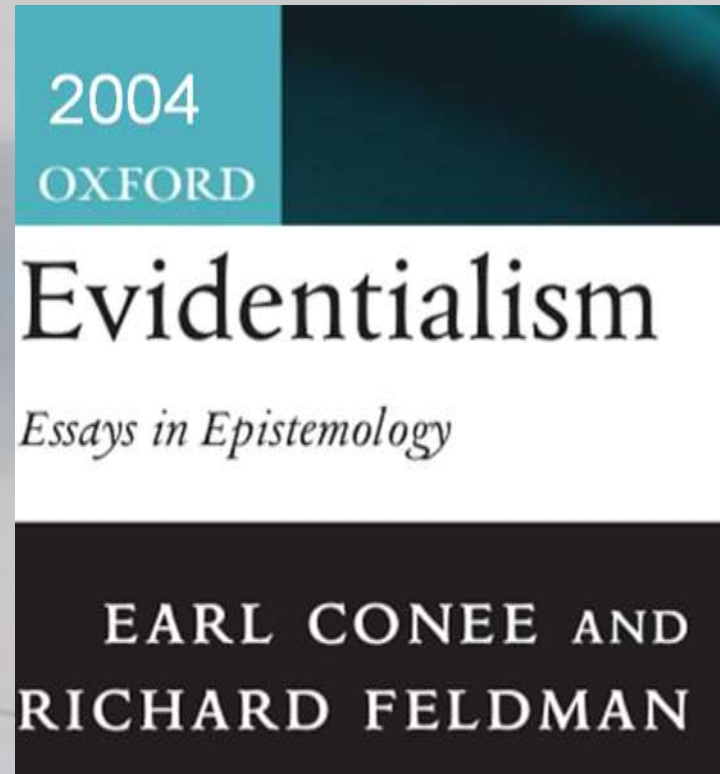
notably Conee, Feldman, and

McCain. Opposed to these

Evidentialists are pragmatists and permissivists, who allow

that beliefs can be justified by what evidentialists consider “the

wrong kinds of reasons.”



**Evidentialism** has roots in the positions taken about the ethics of belief at the turn of the century by William Clifford and William James. James sought to defend faith for pragmatic reasons in cases in which the evidence is not strong enough to decide the issue. Evidentialism continues to be discussed in the philosophy of religion, but also crosses into the philosophy of science with questions about the underdetermination of theory by evidence.

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**True Faith: Against Doxastic Partiality about Faith (in God and Religious Communities) and in Defence of Evidentialism**

Katherine Dormandy

Department of Christian Philosophy, University of Innsbruck

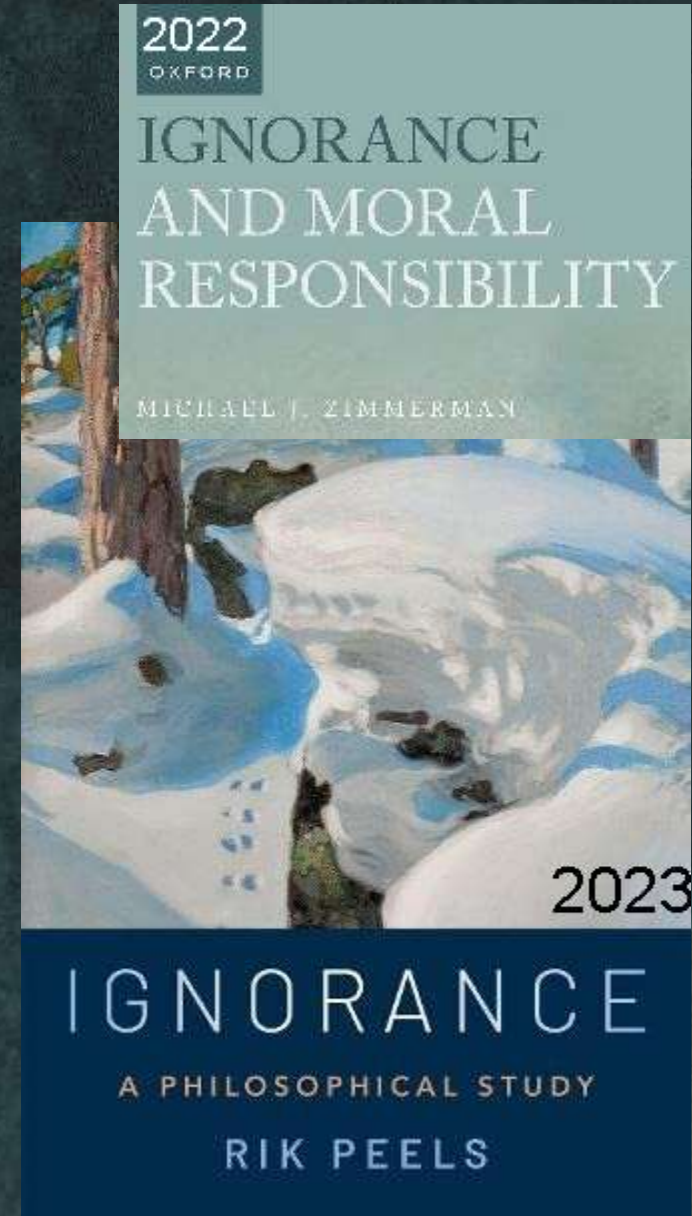
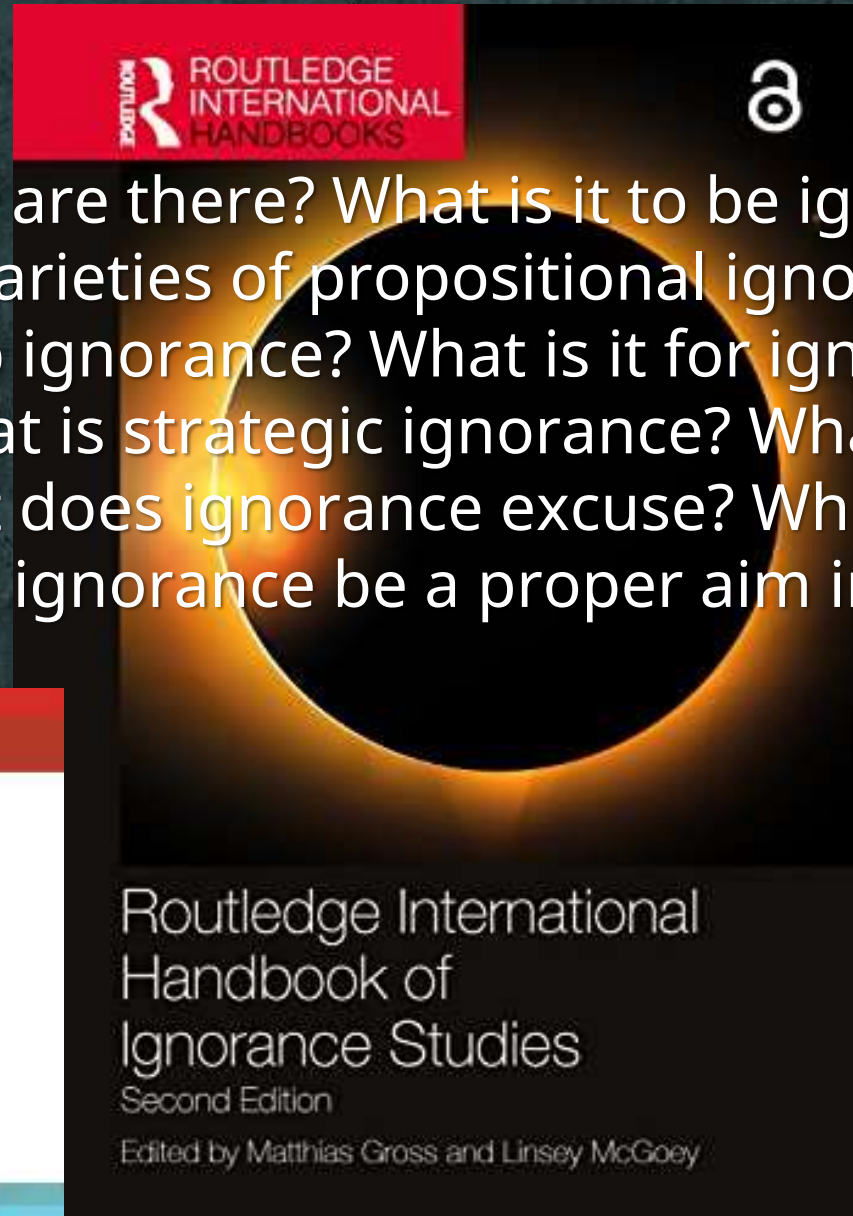
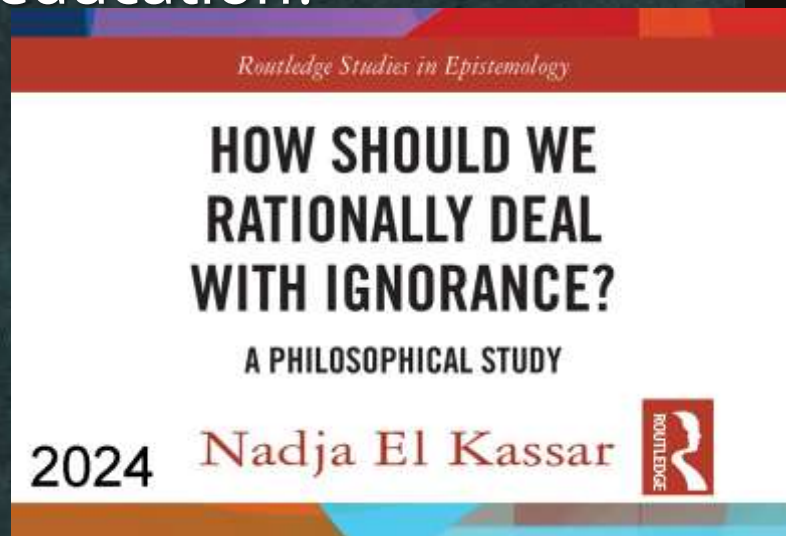
K. Dormandy (Innsbruck) has a monograph in preparation that defends a version of evidentialism:  
*Faith in Evidence*

*Part I: The Epistemic Norm*

*Part II: The Faith Norm*

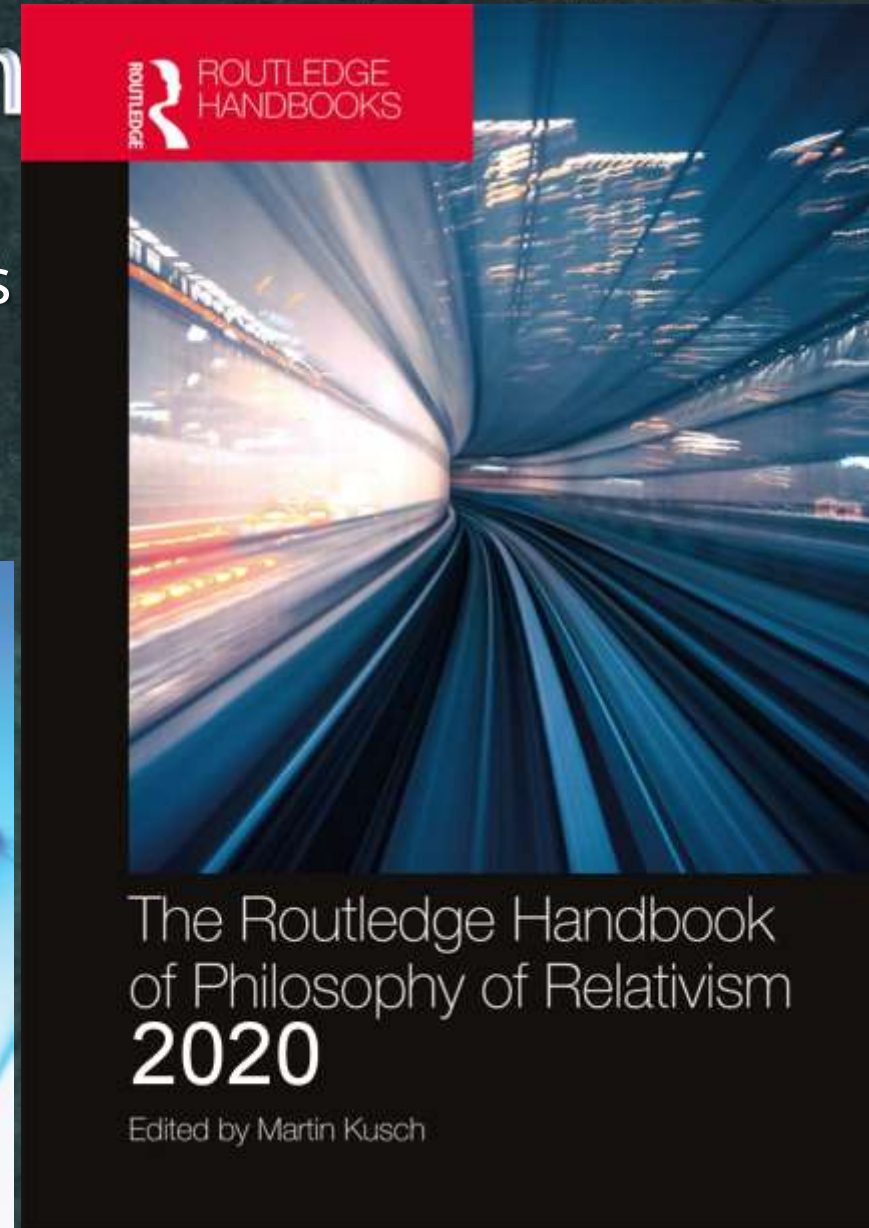
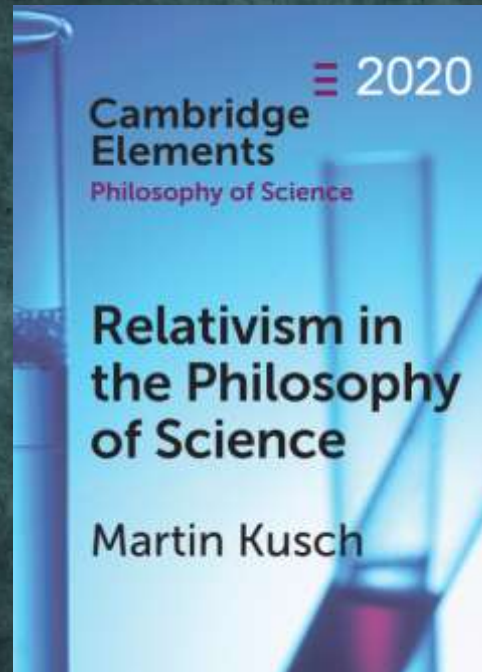
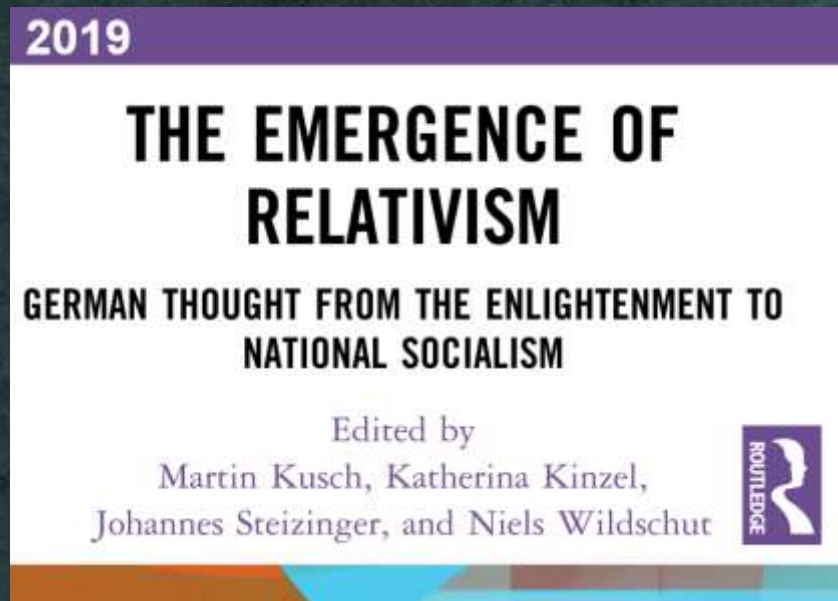
# Further issues in epistemology today: Ignorance.

What kinds of ignorance are there? What is it to be ignorant of a proposition? What varieties of propositional ignorance are there? What is group ignorance? What is it for ignorance to come in degrees? What is strategic ignorance? What is "white ignorance"? What does ignorance excuse? When is ignorance culpable? Can ignorance be a proper aim in education?



# Further issues in epistemology today: Epistemological Relativism

This topic takes us to an area that overlaps with the philosophy of science. One of the leading philosophers in this area is Martin Kusch (University of Vienna). Part 5 of the Routledge Handbook is on epistemological relativism, and includes articles by Pritchard, Coliva, and Carter.



This completes our survey of trends in contemporary analytic epistemology. The survey is highly selective and could be repeated with different figures and topics. Different approaches to epistemology can be found in other philosophical traditions, such as the phenomenological and postmodernist ones. Muslim philosophers are also beginning to make significant contributions to the field.