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TESTIMONY AND A PRIORI KNOWLEDGE

ABSTRACT

Tyler Burge offers a theory of testimony that allows for the possibility of both testimonial a priori warrant and testimonial a priori knowledge. I uncover a tension in his account of the relationship between the two, and locate its source in the analogy that Burge draws between testimonial warrant and preservative memory. I contend that this analogy should be rejected, and offer a revision of Burge's theory that eliminates the tension. I conclude by assessing the impact of the revised theory on the scope of a priori knowledge.

The epistemic status of testimony bears on the scope of a priori knowledge in at least two ways. If testimonial knowledge is a priori, then the scope of a priori knowledge expands beyond its traditional bounds. On the other hand, the premise that testimonial knowledge is a posteriori plays a pivotal role in an influential argument against the existence of a priori knowledge.[1] If this argument is sound, then the scope of a priori knowledge recedes from its traditional bounds.

Tyler Burge (1993) offers a theory of testimony that allows for the possibility of both testimonial a priori warrant and testimonial a priori knowledge.[2] I uncover a tension in his account of the relationship between the two, and locate its source in the analogy that Burge draws between testimonial warrant and preservative memory. I contend that this analogy should be rejected, and offer a revision of Burge's theory that eliminates the tension. I conclude by assessing the impact of the revised theory on the scope of a priori knowledge.

Section I distinguishes three questions regarding the epistemic status of testimony and identifies the primary focus of my investigation. Section II uncovers a tension in Burge's account of the relationship between testimonial warrant and testimonial knowledge, and argues that it derives from the fact that his account of testimonial warrant is informed by two different, but incompatible, analogies: one with preservative memory and one with perception. Sections III, IV and V address three approaches to resolving the tension: rejecting the analogy with preservative memory, rejecting the analogy with perception, and reconciling the two analogies. The first approach is defended. Section VI assesses the impact of this approach on the scope of a priori knowledge.

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I

Burge addresses three issues regarding testimony that bear directly on the a priori:

1. Is testimony a fundamental source of warrant?
2. What is the epistemic status of beliefs warranted by testimony?
3. What is the epistemic status of the epistemic principle governing testimonial warrant?

A source of warrant is fundamental just in case a cognizer need not certify the epistemic credentials of that source in order for beliefs based on it to be prima facie warranted. If testimony is not a fundamental source of warrant, it follows immediately that beliefs warranted by testimony are not warranted a priori.[3] If it is a fundamental source, then the epistemic status of beliefs warranted by testimony remains open.

Burge maintains that testimony is a fundamental source of warrant. He endorses the following epistemic principle, the Acceptance Principle (1993, 469):

> (AP) A person is a priori entitled to accept a proposition that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are stronger reasons not to do so.

(AP) entails that a cognizer need not certify the credentials of a source in order to be entitled to accept a belief on the basis of the testimony of that source.

Testimony involves communication, which typically involves perception in one of its forms. The epistemic status of beliefs warranted by testimony turns on the role of perception in testimony. If perception plays a warranting role, then it follows immediately that beliefs warranted by testimony are not warranted a priori. But if it plays only a causal or enabling role, then the epistemic status of beliefs warranted by testimony remains open.

Burge maintains that perception plays only a causal or enabling role by appealing to an analogy with preservative memory:

> In interlocution, perception of utterances makes possible the passage of propositional content from one mind to another rather as purely preservative memory makes possible the preservation of propositional content from one time to another. Memory and perception of utterances function similarly, in reasoning and communication respectively .... They function to preserve and enable – not to justify. (1993, 481)

What then is the status of the entitlement provided by (AP)? According to Burge,

> In interlocution, the individual's basic default entitlement normally derives from the presumptive intelligibility of a message understood, not from anything specific in the words perceived. (481)

Basic default testimonial entitlement is normally a priori since it derives from conceptual understanding.[4]

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Burge, however, stresses that testimonial warrant is not always a priori. (AP) represents the epistemic default position with respect to testimonial warrant. But we are not always in that position. We often rely on empirically based information about the source's trustworthiness and expertise. We sometimes make inferences from perceptual beliefs about words to conclusions about their content. When testimonial warrant involves such empirical elements, it is not a priori.

If (AP) itself is warranted, then it is warranted either a priori or empirically. Here it is important to recognize that the epistemic status of (AP) and the epistemic status of beliefs warranted by testimony are logically independent of one another. From the fact that (AP) is warranted a priori (a posteriori), it does not follow that beliefs warranted by testimony are warranted a priori (a posteriori). Conversely, from the fact that beliefs warranted by testimony are warranted a priori (a posteriori), it does not follow that (AP) is warranted a priori (a posteriori). Burge maintains that (AP) is warranted a priori and offers an independent argument for that contention (1993, 470–3).

My primary concern is with the second question and, in particular, with Burge's account of the relationship between the epistemic status of default testimonial entitlement and the epistemic status of testimonial knowledge. Since Burge's contention that default testimonial entitlement is a priori presupposes that testimony is a fundamental source of entitlement, I propose to grant that presupposition. I will not address the epistemic status of (AP) since it does not bear on the epistemic status of default testimonial entitlement.

II

According to Burge, "In the absence of countervailing considerations, application of the Acceptance Principle often seems to provide sufficient entitlement for knowledge." Here Burge appeals to an analogy with perception:

> Our entitlement to ordinary perceptual belief is usually sufficient for perceptual knowledge…If there is no reason to think that the defeating conditions threaten, one has knowledge despite ignoring them. Something similar holds for acquisition of belief from others. Other things equal, ordinary interlocution suffices for knowledge. (1993, 485)

Consider a case where S knows that p solely on the basis of accepting that p from the testimony of another, and S is in the default position with respect to the acceptance in question. In such a case, (AP) entails that (a) S's belief that p is entitled to a degree that is minimally sufficient for knowledge, and (b) S's entitlement to believe that p is a priori. The conjunction of (a), (b), and the following widely accepted principle:

(APK) S knows a priori that p just in case S knows that p and S's belief that p is warranted a priori to a degree minimally sufficient for knowledge

entails

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(DTE) If S knows that p and S's warrant for the belief that p derives exclusively from default testimonial entitlement, then S knows a priori that p.

Burge, however, rejects (DTE).

In order to articulate why Burge rejects (DTE), we need to introduce a further distinction. Consider a person who knows something solely on the basis of the testimony of another. According to Burge, that person has his *own proprietary justification*, which consists of "his own entitlement to accept the word of the interlocutor, together with any supplementary justification the recipient might have that bears on the plausibility of the information." (1993, 485) Burge, however, maintains that "The recipient's own proprietary entitlement to rely on interlocution is insufficient by itself to underwrite the knowledge." He supports this contention with the following observations:

> the recipient depends on sources' proprietary justifications and entitlements (through a possible chain of sources). The recipient depends on at least some part of this body of justification and entitlement in the sense that without it, his belief would not be knowledge. The recipient's own justification is incomplete and implicitly refers back, anaphorically, to fuller justification or entitlement. (486)

Burge calls "the combination of the recipient's own proprietary justification with the proprietary justifications (including entitlements) in his sources on which the recipient's knowledge depends," the *extended body of justification* (486).

Burge rejects (DTE) because the default proprietary entitlement that the recipient derives from (AP) is not sufficient for knowledge. It is not sufficient for knowledge because it is incomplete and depends on the source's proprietary warrants.[5] Since the recipient's proprietary entitlement is incomplete and depends on the source's proprietary warrants, it does not follow from the fact that the recipient's proprietary entitlement is a priori that the recipient's testimonial knowledge is a priori. The proprietary warrants of the source on which the recipient's entitlement depends must also be a priori.[6] Knowledge whose warrant derives exclusively from default testimonial entitlement is a priori only if the extended body of justification is a priori.

There is a tension between Burge's two leading contentions regarding default testimonial entitlement:

(B1) In the absence of countervailing considerations, application of the Acceptance Principle often seems to provide sufficient entitlement for knowledge.

(B2) The recipient's own proprietary entitlement to rely on interlocution is insufficient by itself to underwrite the knowledge.

(B1) and (B2) suggest two different models of testimonial warrant. (B1) suggests that testimony is an independent source of warrant. It generates its own warrant without relying on other sources. The analogy with perceptual entitlement supports this model. (B2) suggests that testimony is a dependent source of warrant. It does

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not generate its own warrant but preserves the testifier's warrant. The analogy with preservative memory supports this model.

There are three options for addressing the tension in Burge's account. The first is to reject the view that testimony is a dependent source of warrant along with the analogy with preservative memory that informs it. The second is to reconcile the two models in some fashion. The third is to reject the view that testimony is an independent source of warrant along with the analogy with perception that informs it. My goal is to defend the first option. The defense consists of three parts. In section III, I reject the analogy between testimony and preservative memory. In section IV, I consider and reject two attempts to reconcile the two models of testimonial warrant. Finally, in section V, I reject an alternative argument in support of (B2).

III

Burge supports (B2) by invoking an analogy with the role of preservative memory in constructing long proofs. In constructing such proofs, one depends on memory to reinvoke earlier steps that are no longer occurrently before one's mind. The primary epistemic question is whether memory warrants the reinvoking of those earlier steps. Burge maintains that

> reasoning processes' working properly depends on memory's preserving the results of previous reasoning. But memory's preserving such results does not add to the justificational force of the reasoning. It is rather a background condition for the reasoning's success. (1993, 463)

In a later paper, Burge is more explicit in stating that memory not only preserves the earlier steps in the proof but also their original warrant: "If an argument is to support its conclusion, one must rely on purely preservative memory to preserve the past steps with the warrant unchanged." (2003, 300) Moreover, the warrant for the reinvoked step is the same as its original warrant: "The warrant for reinvoking a content in an inference must be presupposed to be the same as the warrant for establishing that content in the argument." (301) Hence, preservative memory is a dependent source of warrant: it does not generate the warrant that it confers on a belief, but merely preserves the cognizer's original warrant for that belief. The cognizer's warrant for the reinvoked step is the same as the cognizer's original warrant for that step. By analogy, testimony does not generate the warrant that it confers on a belief, but merely preserves the testifier's original warrant for that belief. The recipient's warrant for a belief based on testimony is the same as the testifier's warrant for that belief.

The preservative model of testimonial warrant is open to an immediate objection. Consider first an example that does not involve testimony. You and I walk into a room and encounter a page from a notebook on which is written what appears to be a proof for some mathematical proposition that p. You and I

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both know the premises of the apparent proof and understand the conclusion; but neither one of us, upon walking into the room, has any reason to believe that p. We both wonder: Is this a genuine proof that p? You quickly work through the apparent proof and realize that it is indeed a genuine proof that p. I, on the other hand, struggle. I think that I see how the first few steps go, although I am not entirely sure. Once I get beyond the initial steps, I cannot follow the proof even at some minimal level. Here it is clear that you are warranted in believing that p on the basis of the proof, but I am not. You grasp the proof; I do not. Your grasp of the proof warrants *your* belief that p, but it does not warrant *my* belief that p.

Let us now extend the example to the case of testimony. Suppose that I confess that I cannot follow the proof. You reply that p is indeed true. I understand what you say and believe that p on that basis. According to the preservative model, my belief that p is warranted and, moreover, my warrant for my belief that p is the same as your warrant for your belief that p. According to the preservative model, *my* warrant for my belief that p is *your* grasp of the proof that p. But, as the example above shows, your grasp of the proof that p does not warrant my belief that p.[7]

This example reveals an important disanalogy between preservative memory and testimony. Preservative memory involves only a *single* cognizer; but testimony involves (at least) *two* cognizers. The disanalogy is significant because warrant is *cognizer-sensitive*: whether a particular cognizer is warranted in believing that p depends (at least in part) on features of that particular cognizer, such as that particular cognizer's experiences, beliefs, and intellectual capacities. You are warranted in believing that p on the basis of the proof because *you* grasp the proof. I am not warranted in believing that p on the basis of the proof because *I* do not grasp the proof. The fact that I do not grasp the proof does not detract from your warrant, and the fact that you do grasp the proof does not enhance my warrant.

Consider again the case of preservative memory. Suppose that you are working through a proof and are warranted in believing that p on the basis of a grasp of the initial steps of the proof. At a later step in the proof, you reinvoke the proposition that p. You are warranted in believing that p by virtue of *your* grasp of the initial steps of the proof. Preservative memory *retains* the content of the earlier step together with *your* original warrant for it. On the preservative model, however, testimony *transfers* the testifier's content along with the *testifier's* original warrant to the recipient. If the testifier is warranted in believing that p on the basis of a grasp of a proof that p, then the *testifier's* grasp of that proof is transferred to the recipient. But *someone else's* grasp of the proof that p does not warrant the recipient's belief that p. Therefore, the fact that preservative memory retains the *same* cognizer's original warrant for the preserved content but testimony transfers *someone else's* warrant for the preserved content introduces an important disanalogy between the two cases.

In a later discussion, Burge acknowledges that his account of the role of preservative memory in constructing long proofs presupposes that a single cognizer instantiates each step of the proof. More specifically, he maintains that

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if the cognizer who reinvokes a step in a proof were not identical to the cognizer for whom it was originally warranted, then that warrant would not be preserved in the proof. Consider, again, an individual who constructs a proof for some mathematical proposition that p. Suppose that this individual is warranted in believing a premise of the proof by thinking it through and grasping it. In order for preservative memory to warrant reinvoking the step at a later stage in the proof, it must preserve both the content of the earlier step and its original warrant. Burge, however, maintains that

> If the individual only had a capacity that preserved content from some previous person's thought, warrant could not be preserved from the earlier instantiation. For the content had been warranted by the other person's thinking through the premise, not by any thinking-through by the agent of the inference. (2003, 301)[8]

Therefore, Burge concludes that constancy of content and warrant throughout an argument "is possible only through use of purely preservative memory with its presupposition of identity of the agent of the inference through the argument." (301) In short, identity of cognizer is an essential feature of preservative memory. Testimony, however, lacks this feature.[9]

IV

The second option for addressing the tension between (B1) and (B2) is to reconcile them in some fashion. I consider two attempts at such a reconciliation. The first, proposed by Jim Edwards (2000, 128), accepts (B1) at face value and reconstrues (B2) in a manner that is compatible with (B1):

> (B2*) The default entitlement to believe propositions one receives in interlocution presumes *so far as the status of the warrant to believe the proposition is concerned* a more primary epistemic warrant in the chain of interlocutors.[10]

By the status of a warrant, Edwards means whether it is an a priori or an a posteriori warrant.

Consider a recipient who (a) knows that p solely on the basis of the testimony of some testifier whose warrant for the belief that p is empirical, and (b) is in the default position with respect to that testimony. According to the Edwards proposal, the recipient's belief that p is warranted solely by virtue of the fact that the proposition that p is presented as true and is intelligible to the recipient. The recipient's warrant for the belief that p does not depend on, derive from, or presume the testifier's warrant. It is generated, not preserved, by testimony. Although the recipient's *warrant* for the belief that p does not depend on the testifier's warrant for the belief that p, the *status* of the recipient's warrant for the belief that p does depend on the status of the testifier's warrant for the belief that p. The recipient's warrant for the belief that p is a priori just in case the testifier's

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warrant for the belief that p is a priori. Since the testifier's warrant for the belief that p is empirical, the recipient's warrant is also empirical.

The Edwards proposal is implausible because it is incompatible with (APK). Since the proposal endorses (AP) and (B1), it follows that

(1) The recipient's default testimonial entitlement for the belief that p is minimally sufficient for knowledge; and
(2) The recipient's default testimonial entitlement for the belief that p is a priori.

The conjunction of (1), (2), and

(APK) S knows a priori that p just in case S knows that p and S's belief that p is warranted a priori to a degree minimally sufficient for knowledge,

entails

(3) The recipient knows a priori that p.

But, according to the Edwards proposal, (3) is false because the testifier's warrant for the belief that p is empirical. So, in effect, the proposal maintains that the status of a person's warrant for the belief that p is partially determined by the status of *someone else's* warrant for that belief. The contention that the status of a person's warrant for a belief is not fully determined by the status of *that person's* warrant for the belief has no independent plausibility.

There is an alternative strategy for reconciling the tension between (B1) and (B2) that does not have the implausible consequence of the Edwards proposal.[11] This strategy takes (B2) at face value and reconstrues (B1) in a manner that is compatible with (B2):

(B1*) In the absence of countervailing considerations, if a proposition that p is presented as true and is intelligible to the recipient, then (a) the recipient's belief that p is warranted to *some* degree, (b) that degree of warrant does not depend on, derive from, or presume the testifier's warrant for the belief that p, but (c) that degree of warrant is *not* minimally sufficient for knowledge.

In cases where the recipient knows that p solely on the basis of such testimony, there are two sources that contribute to the recipient's warrant for the belief that p: (a) the recipient's own proprietary entitlement that derives exclusively from (AP); and (b) the testifier's warrant for the belief that p, which is preserved via testimony. Both sources are necessary, and neither alone is sufficient, for the recipient to have a degree of testimonial warrant minimally sufficient for knowledge.

The alternative strategy has the virtue of being compatible with (APK). In cases where the recipient knows that p solely on the basis of testimony and the testifier's warrant for the belief that p is empirical, the recipient's knowledge is also empirical since it is partially based on the testifier's empirical warrant for the belief that p. Unfortunately, it is also vulnerable to the objection presented in section III against the preservative model of testimonial warrant. Consider the case of a testifier who

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(a) knows that p on the basis of grasping a proof that p and (b) presents p as true to a recipient who does not grasp the proof. According to the alternative strategy, if p is intelligible to the recipient, then the recipient's belief that p is partially warranted by the *testifier's* grasp of the proof that p. But it is implausible to maintain that the recipient's belief that p is even partially warranted on the basis of *someone else's* grasp of a proof that p.

V

In section III, I argued against (B2) by rejecting the analogy between testimony and preservative memory. In section IV, I argued that two attempts to reconcile (B1) and (B2) fail. The only option that remains is to accept (B1) at face value and to reject (B2) outright. Burge, however, offers an alternative supporting argument for (B2). Consequently, unless there is a response to that argument, the remaining option is foreclosed.

Some care must be exercised in assessing (B2). (B2) is incompatible with (B1) only if it asserts that default testimonial entitlement is not sufficient for knowledge *because* it does not confer a degree of warrant that is minimally sufficient for knowledge. This reading of (B2) is supported by the analogy with preservative memory. It is also suggested by Burge's claim that default testimonial entitlement is incomplete and depends on the testifier's warrant. That claim suggests that, in the absence of the testifier's warrant, default testimonial entitlement does not confer a degree of warrant minimally sufficient for knowledge.

There is, however, an alternative reading of (B2). It can be read as an application to the specific case of testimonial knowledge of the more general Gettier principle:

(G) Warranted true belief is not sufficient for knowledge.

(G) makes a claim about the conditions that *knowledge* must satisfy; it does not make a claim about the conditions that *warrant* minimally sufficient for knowledge must satisfy. When applied to testimonial knowledge, (G) entails

(G*) Default testimonial warrant plus true belief is not sufficient for knowledge.

(G*) also makes a claim about the conditions that *knowledge* must satisfy; it does not make a claim about the conditions that testimonial *warrant* minimally sufficient for knowledge must satisfy. It does not entail that default testimonial warrant does not confer a degree of warrant minimally sufficient for knowledge; it entails that testimonial warrant minimally sufficient for knowledge in conjunction with true belief is not sufficient for knowledge.

If we turn to Burge's defense of (B2) (1993, 486 n.24), it appears to be directed at the conditions necessary for *knowledge*, as opposed to the conditions necessary for *warrant* minimally sufficient for knowledge:

> Because the interlocutor must have knowledge and because of Gettier cases, the interlocutor must have more than true, justified belief if the recipient is to have

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knowledge. The recipient's dependence for having knowledge on the interlocutor's having knowledge is itself an instance of the Gettier point. The recipient could have true justified belief, but lack knowledge because the interlocutor lacked knowledge.

This argument establishes, at most, that the testifier's failure to know that p is one of those Gettier conditions that prevents the recipient's warranted true belief that p from being a case of knowledge. It does not establish that the recipient's warrant for the belief that p is incomplete, or that it depends on the testifier's warrant, or that it is not minimally sufficient for knowledge. Therefore, Burge's supporting argument for (B2) supports only (G*). (G*), however, is neutral with respect to (B1) and (B2). It does not favor either the generative or preservative model of testimonial warrant. It merely states that, whatever the correct account of default testimonial warrant, such warrant together with true belief is not sufficient for knowledge. Since Burge's argument does not support (B2), (B2) can be rejected outright, which resolves the tension in his account of testimonial warrant.

VI

I conclude by assessing the bearing of my proposed revision of Burge's account of testimonial warrant on the two issues regarding the scope of a priori knowledge that were introduced in the opening paragraph. I address the second issue first. The premise that testimonial knowledge is a posteriori plays a pivotal role in an influential argument against the existence of a priori knowledge. Philip Kitcher (1983), drawing inspiration from W. V. Quine's (1963) celebrated "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," maintains that a priori warrant entails indefeasibility by experience. He goes on to contend that most, if not all, beliefs traditionally claimed to be warranted a priori are defeasible by testimony, and concludes that a priori knowledge is at best quite limited and at worst nonexistent.[12]

Burge's account of testimonial warrant appears to provide proponents of the a priori with the following rejoinder to the argument. Kitcher's argument takes for granted that beliefs warranted by testimony are warranted by experience. Burge's account of testimonial warrant, however, shows that Kitcher's assumption is false. Therefore, Kitcher must provide examples of experientially warranted nontestimonial defeaters for beliefs traditionally claimed to be warranted a priori in order for his argument to go through.

This rejoinder suffers from two shortcomings. First, if Kitcher's conception of a priori warrant is correct, then Burge has not shown that default testimonial entitlement is a priori. Although Burge maintains that such entitlement does not depend on experience, he also allows that it is defeasible by experience. But, given Kitcher's conception of a priori warrant, warrant that is defeasible by experience is not a priori. Burge and other proponents of the a priori favor a narrower conception of a priori warrant: warrant that does not depend on experience. But in the absence of a defense of the narrower conception, the rejoinder is question-begging.[13]

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Even if we reject Kitcher's conception of a priori warrant, the rejoinder suffers from a second shortcoming. On Burge's account, only default testimonial entitlement is a priori. Once the recipient moves out of the default position by taking into account experientially based information regarding the trustworthiness or expertise of the testifier, testimonial warrant becomes a posteriori. Therefore, it is a consequence of Burge's account that any belief that can be warranted a priori by testimony can also be warranted a posteriori by testimony. One simply has to move the recipient out of the default position. Since Burge's account of testimonial warrant does not entail that beliefs warranted a priori by testimony are warranted *only* a priori by testimony, it does not provide a rejoinder to Kitcher's argument.

The remaining issue is whether my revision of Burge's account has the consequence that default testimonial entitlement is a priori. If it does, then any proposition that is intelligible to a cognizer can be warranted a priori for that cognizer. All that is necessary is that (a) some testifier present that proposition as true to the cognizer, (b) the cognizer be in the default position with respect to the testifier, and (c) the cognizer not possess any defeaters for that proposition. Consequently, if default testimonial entitlement is a priori, the scope of a priori knowledge expands beyond its traditional bounds.

My revision of Burge's account does not entail that default testimonial entitlement is a priori. Whether such entitlement is a priori turns on the answer to two further questions. Is testimony a fundamental source of warrant? Does perception play a warranting role in testimony? I have not addressed the first question; I assumed an affirmative answer for purposes of this paper. If that assumption is false, then default testimonial entitlement is not a priori.[14] With respect to the second question, I rejected one line of argument that Burge offers in support of the claim that perception does not play a warranting role in testimony: the analogy with preservative memory. Burge, however, offers an alternative line of support which I have not addressed. He contends that the role of perception in interlocution is different from its role in entitling beliefs about the external world (1993, 476–9). If that contention is mistaken, then default testimonial entitlement is not a priori.[15]

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NOTES

1 The argument is presented in section VI.
2 Burge's terminology is somewhat idiosyncratic. He maintains that entitlement and justification are species of warrant, which is a necessary condition for knowledge. In what follows, I defer to his terminology, although it should be noted that he sometimes uses 'justification' to refer to both species of warrant. For a more detailed discussion of Burge's conception of entitlement, see Casullo (unpublished).
3 I assume here that certifying the credentials of a source of testimony involves certifying its trustworthiness or expertise, which requires some empirically warranted beliefs.
4 According to Burge: "Traditionally, a justification or entitlement was a priori if it could be derived from conceptual understanding – however experientially dependent the understanding might be." (1993, 479)
5 In order to avoid the complexities introduced by chains of testimonial warrant, I assume that the source's warrants are not testimonial.
6 Burge maintains: "It seems most natural to think that a strand of justification that runs through the extended body into the individual's proprietary body of justification must be a priori for the recipient's knowledge to be a priori." (1993, 487)
7 I am not claiming here that your testimony that p does not warrant my belief that p. I am claiming that your grasp of a proof that p does not warrant my belief that p.
8 Burge offers a second example that reinforces this point:

> Suppose that a perceptual belief's representational content and warrant are maintained over time by purely preservative memory in an argument. …If the content, as preserved at the later time, had derived from an earlier instantiation of the content

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> in another person (a person who had the perceptual experiences), the warrant for the later instantiation could not be the same as the warrant for the earlier one (the warrant for the perceptual belief). For the recipient, the putative agent of inference, did not have the perceptions. So the recipient cannot have the same warrant. Transference across persons would not preserve warrant for a step in an inference. (2003, 300)

9 Burge recognizes that the fact that testimony involves two cognizers introduces a crucial disanalogy between testimony and preservative memory, but does not explicitly reject the preservative model of testimony because of the disanalogy:

> Of course, mathematicians accept lemmas from others, even if the recipient has not thought through the proof. And there is simple acceptance of the word of others in less mathematical domains. In both cases the recipient's warrant for acceptance will never be the same as the original prover's or informant's warrant for the lemma, if the recipient relies on the source. Dependence on another forces a difference in the warrant had by the dependent recipient(s) from that had by the ultimate source. The recipient is warranted through interlocution. The source is not. Transitions across persons through communication do not have the same epistemic status and thus cannot be preservations of steps in an inference or argument. (2003, 301–2)

10 Edwards does not endorse the proposal. The quoted statement is numbered '(7)' in the original article. The emphasis is the author's. McGrath (2007) proposes, but does not endorse, a similar reconciliation for the case of memory.

11 Malmgren (2006, 219 n.44) attributes a version of this view to Burge: "the recipient's overall warrant is a compound, made up of her own a priori entitlements plus (in the case where she knows) of her source's warrant." She does not explicitly address the issue of whether the recipient's own entitlement is minimally sufficient for knowledge. If it is, some explanation is required of why the source's warrant is necessary for knowledge.

12 For a discussion of the contention that all beliefs traditionally claimed to be warranted a priori are defeasible by testimony, see Casullo (forthcoming).

13 For defenses of the narrower conception, see BonJour (1998), Casullo (2003), and Goldman (1999).

14 For more on this question, see the essays in Lackey and Sosa (2006).

15 Christensen and Kornblith (1997) and Malmgren (2006) maintain that Burge's contention is mistaken. Burge (1997) responds to Christensen and Kornblith.

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