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Assertion, Common Ground and Epistemic Injustice

According to philosophers such as Robert Stalnaker and Mitchell Green, people can add to the common ground by performing different speech acts – typically by making assertions or asking questions. That is, people can influence which propositions are presumed to be shared among those partaking in a conversation. In my talk, I am going to apply this framework to the phenomenon of epistemic injustice, which has gathered much interest in recent years. In doing so, I am going to look at three varieties of epistemic injustice: testimonial injustice, inquiring injustice and interpretative injustice. I am going to argue that what all these varieties of epistemic injustice have in common is that they prevent speakers from adding to the common ground in the way intended by them. Thus, they are excluded from participating in a given conversation in an important sense. I am going to end by looking at some of the harms that speakers have to suffer from as a consequence of being excluded in this way.